

April 25, 2021

And ... that's a wrap!

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The Legislature is expected to adjourn “sine die” April 25 by midnight. Over the past week, there was a lot of action, including the release of the compromise, agreed-to two-year operating, capital, and transportation budgets. Once released from a conference committee, the only vote a legislator can take is Yes or No.

[ESSB 5092](#) is the 2021-23 operating budget and includes the 2021 supplemental operating budget. The bill was released at noon on April 24; of the six conferees, only the four Democrats signed the report; the two Republicans voted to not recommend. That isn't a huge surprise, since Republicans reportedly were excluded from the negotiations, even up to the end. In addition, the operating budget relies on the transfer of \$1.8 billion from the state's rainy day fund, and a capital gains tax (as well as about a dozen other revenue increases) to balance the four-year outlook. Democrats have the majority votes to pass the bill, which will likely happen before the final gavel falls.

Unlike the operating budget, [ESHB 1080](#) (the capital budget) passed unanimously in both the House and the Senate, and the conference committee report-out was a virtual lovefest of the participants, who touted a strong bi-partisan approach to the largest construction budget in the state's history.


For a comprehensive look at the operating and capital budgets, use the [LEAP website](#) and the following links:

- [Operating Budget](#) (use documents from the Proposed Final (4/24/2021 – or As Passed Legislature)
- [Capital Budget](#) (use documents from the As Passed Legislature (4/24/2021))

An initial budget overview of both produced for Washington State PTA members can be found here:

- [Operating budget comparison](#)
- [Capital budget comparison](#)

Of the many decisions made on K-12 funding in the operating and FY21 supplemental budgets, apparently, budget writers decided to omit enrollment stabilization for the Learning Assistance Program for the 2021-22 school year. While the “system impact” calculated by OSPI is relatively small – about \$13.5 million – it is just one more indication that budget writers relied too heavily on the federal stimulus funds to backfill state obligations and didn't step up to their responsibility and commitment to keep districts whole for the 2020-21 school year.



Climate Cap & Invest bill passes House, Senate concurs with changes

What the Senate had to do in three months, the House had to do in less than two weeks ... pass a comprehensive climate action bill. And they did it – substantially rewriting the bill to incorporate policy from the competing Washington Strong proposal, giving federally recognized tribes veto rights over projects that would harm sacred sites and cultural resources, balancing interests from the energy sector and businesses in clean energy and pulp and paper. Washington State PTA was asked to sign on to a coalition letter in support of the bill’s passage. [See the letter here.](#)

Bill signings

The Governor will continue bill signing next week, including signing bills on Monday, April 26, on bills to modify truancy requirements; prohibiting the inappropriate use of Native American names, symbols, or images as public school mascots, logos, or team names; increasing grant limits for early learning facilities; and extending the mastery-based learning workgroup.

Most bill signings are being done in the Governor’s conference room with no public and few staff. They are televised on TVW and can be found on the Governor’s [bill action page](#). The Governor will have 20 days, not counting Sundays, after the regular session ends to complete bill signing. Bills will go into effect if not signed. If not specifically dated, bills will go into effect July 25, 2021 (90 days after the end of the regular session).