

# 2025 Legislative Session Preview

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# Election Results – State Executives

## NEW

- Governor – Bob Ferguson
- Attorney General – Nick Brown
- Commissioner of Public Lands – Dave Upthegrove
- Insurance Commissioner – Sen. Patty Kuderer

Returning: Lt. Gov. Denny Heck; Secretary of State Steve Hobbs; Treasurer Mike Pellicciotti; Auditor Pat McCarty; Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal

# Ferguson Transition

- To be sworn in January 15<sup>th</sup>. Also State of the State address and Inaugural Ball.
- Named his executive team – all from AGO except Jaime Martin of Snoqualmie Indian Tribe.
- Named a 53 person “transition team.” First meeting was Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Focus is on first action over the 1<sup>st</sup> 100 days – Tactical, actionable.
  - 12 subcommittees – Chairs/Co-chairs, recommendations for action, solving problems.
  - E.g., Meals/Strong Schools and Workforce Development/Higher Education.
- Starting to name his cabinet and his policy advisers – likely all NEW.
- Biggest areas of focus: affordability, housing, public safety, protecting the rights of all Washingtonians.

# State Legislators

## Senate and House Democratic Majorities

- Senate Ds gain 1: 30-19 – supermajority for Democrats
- House Ds gain 1: 59-39 – supermajority for Democrats

## 30 new legislators – elected and appointments to come

- 9 open seats in the Senate – all but one filled by a current House member
- 3 appointments: 26<sup>th</sup> (Randall), 33<sup>rd</sup> (Keiser) and 48<sup>th</sup> (Kuderer)
- 18 new faces in the House – finished orientation 1<sup>st</sup> week of December

May continue to see changes due to executive branch changes, and then legislative openings

# Other Leadership Changes

- Sen. Jamie Pedersen, D-Seattle, new Senate majority leader
  - Sen. Derek Stanford, D-Bothell, new Senate Ways & Means Vice Chair.
  - Sen. Yasmin Trudeau, D-Tacoma, new Senate Capital Budget.
  - Sen. Liz Lovelett, D-Anacortes, new Deputy Majority Leader.
- House Republicans reorganized November 23<sup>rd</sup> – 3 of 4 top spots changed.
- House Democrats announced same leadership; committee member changes.
- Senate Republicans selected leaders, committee assignments.
  - No changes in high-level leadership.

# 2025 Session Reminders

- 105-day session – Begins January 13<sup>th</sup>, ends April 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Priority is to adopt two-year budgets for operations, transportation and capital programs.
- Number of bills aren't capped and can be introduced throughout session.
  - For majority of bills, must be passed out of policy committee by Feb. 21; fiscal committee by Feb. 28; and House of Origin by March 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - Pre-filing bills began December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Focus on Advocacy Week is February 10-14.
- Focus Day is Monday, February 17.

# House Committee Assignments

Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, House Education

- Rep. Skyler Rude, Ranking Republican

Rep. Timm Ormsby, House Appropriations

- Vice Chairs: Steve Bergquist, Nicole Macri, Mia Gregerson
- Rep. Travis Couture, Ranking Republican

Rep. Steve Tharinger, House Capital Budget

- Vice Chairs: Lisa Callan, Emily Alvarado
- Rep. Mike Steele, Ranking Republican

Rep. Tana Senn, House Early Learning &  
Human Services

- Rep. Carolyn Eslick, Ranking Republican

# Senate Committee Assignments

## Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education:

- Chair Lisa Wellman, D-Mercer Island
- Vice Chair Claire Wilson, D-Federal Way, Early Learning
- Vice Chair T'wina Nobles, D-University Place, K-12 Education
- Ranking Republican Paul Harris, R-Vancouver
- New members: Sen. Adrian Cortes, D-Battle Ground; Sen. Drew Hansen, D-Bainbridge Island.
- Holdovers: Sen. Perry Dozier, R-Waitsburg; Sen. Jim McCune, R-Eatonville.

## Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development:

- Chair T'wina Nobles, D-University Place
- Ranking Republican Judy Warnick, R-Moses Lake; Sen. Matt Boehnke, R-Kennewick.



# Senate Ways & Means Committee

- Chair June Robinson, D-Everett
- Vice Chair Derek Stanford, D-Bothell (operating)
- Vice Chair Yasmin Trudeau, D-Tacoma (capital)
- Asst Capital Mike Chapman, D-Sequim (capital)
- Ranking Republican Chris Gildon, R-Puyallup (operating)
- Ranking Republican Vice Chair Mark Schoesler, R-Ritzville (capital)
- Asst Ranking Nikki Torres, R-Pasco (operating)
- Asst Ranking Perry Dozier, R-Waitsburg (capital)

- Revenue collections are flat, slowed but are expected to pick up.
- Caseloads for anything “children-related” are higher than projected for the 2025-27 biennium from June 2024 (except charter schools):
  - Transition to Kindergarten expected to be 36% higher than projected.
  - Foster youth are 11% higher.
  - Working Connections childcare is, on average, 5.8% higher.
  - K-12 enrollment, bilingual and special education services are slightly higher.
- Climate Commitment Act funds in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of FY25 slowed; carbon auction 12/5 was up but not at 2023 levels.
- Capital gains is not meeting expected levels for current biennium.
- Both are “lower than booked” in the 2023-25 four-year outlook.
- K-12 is a \$3B maintenance level – overall four-year outlook has budget writers concerned.

## Budget Expectations

# Governor's Budget: Book 1, Book 2

## Investments in education:

- \$0 for Big Three

## What Governor Inslee funds:

- \$1.3 billion in inflationary adjustments for teachers
- \$35.4 million for meals during school year, summer
- \$13.2 million for OSPI apportionment system
- \$2.3 million on financial health advisers

## Revenue

- Wealth tax on income above \$100 million = \$10.3 billion over 4 years
- B&O tax changes on certain businesses = \$2.5 billion over 4 years

# Governor's Capital Budget

SCAP		\$563.4 million	
Small District Modernization grants		\$333.3 million	For districts with fewer than 1,000 students; up to \$6 million/project.
Seismic safety		\$78.5 million	
Indoor air quality		\$10 million CCA	For grants to districts with enrollments exceeding 3,000 students for indoor air quality assessment, installation, repair, or replacement of HVAC, air filtration enhancements, and general air quality improvements that improve student health and safety.
		\$15 million CCA	For school districts with less than or equal to 3,000 students for assessment, installation, repair, or replacement of HVAC, air filtration enhancements, and general air quality improvements that improve student health and safety.
Repair		\$31 million	\$11 million emergency repair \$5 million ADA compliance \$15 million for urgent repair
Healthy Kids		\$15 million	
Career Prep and Launch		\$5 million	

# Big Three: Constitutional Investments

## Special Education Funding – approx. \$1 billion for 2025-27

Rep. Gerry Pollet, D-Seattle –  
Kitchen sink

Rep. Monica Stonier, D-Vancouver –  
small multiplier increase,  
inclusionary practices grants

Sen. Jamie Pedersen, D-Seattle –  
may sponsor

## MSOC – approx. \$1 billion for 2025-27

Rep. April Berg, D-Mill Creek – 20%  
increase in all categories; Seattle CPI  
annual inflationary adjustment;  
small school factor; rebase every 4  
years.

Sen. T'wina Nobles, D-University  
Place – haven't seen the bill yet.

## Transportation – waiting for amounts

Special passengers: special  
education, foster youth, homeless,  
skill centers.

OSPI to bring new funding formula  
forward.

# Why the Constitutional Big 3?

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Provides financial stability to school districts.

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Focuses on elements the State should be paying for in ample ways; reduces reliance on enrichment levies, dipping into reserves.

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Fills in the gaps caused by inflation, fewer or smaller state investments in COVID and post-COVID years that didn't keep pace with inflation.

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Supports all students regardless of ZIP code.

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When you hear: "To support these, we'll need new revenue" ... please say, "These things are constitutionally required and shouldn't be dependent on new revenue. Our students and schools are depending on you."

## How does this differ from the “Big 5”?

- Big 3 is a coalition of all the major education associations and has been working this issue since last spring.
- Big 5 has the Constitutional 3 but is more Seattle/Puget Sound specific.
- First put forward by UW professor David Knight.
- The other 2 elements vary:
  - Progressive revenue.
  - More funding in high-poverty schools and/or equity to support high-poverty students.
  - Levy lift and corresponding levy equalization support.

# What has OSPI asked for?

In addition to the Constitutional Big 3, Superintendent Reykdal is asking for:

- Staffing ratios and living-wage salaries – particularly classified salaries.
- Behavioral and mental health.
- Dual credit programs, particularly Running Start.
- Supporting community partners and their programs.
- And a lot more ...

Investment request is a little less than \$2 billion in the 2025-27 biennium.

Also has capital budget priorities: small increase for SCAP; continued investment in Small District Modernization Grants and tsunami/seismic safety grants.



# WSPTA Top 5

- Closing the Funding Gaps – Special Education, MSOC, Transportation.
- Addressing the Student Mental Health Crisis.
- Addressing Funding, Inclusion and Supports in Special Education.
- Preventing and Reducing Gun Violence and Suicide.
- Expanding School Construction Funding Options.

# Focus Day and Focus on Advocacy Week

- Focus Day is February 17 – President’s Day
  - NEW location for gathering – United Churches of Olympia (11<sup>th</sup> & Capitol Way)
  - Hoping to also have a “crash pad” on the Hill.
  - SPI Chris Reykdal speaking 12:15-12:45 PM.
  - Please sign up, start getting meeting requests prior to session for existing legislators; first week of session for newly elected.
- Focus on Advocacy Week is February 10-14
  - Every day will showcase one of the Top 5.
  - Encourage everyone to participate.
  - Opportunities to schedule virtual meetings with your legislators.



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## What to Expect from WSPTA Advocacy

- Updated Advocacy Toolkit.
- Weekly newsletters with look back, look ahead, committee schedule, bill tracking list with hyperlinks.
- Opportunities to testify on WSPTA priorities and resolutions.
- Action Alerts, when needed.
- Blog posts showcasing Advocacy in Action.
- Your Advocacy Committee meets weekly to discuss session, bills, how to advocate.



Questions?