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Washington State PTA Calls on Legislature to Dedicate Revenue to Fully Fund Public Education and Advance Equity Across Districts

Tacoma, WA (February 5, 2026): The Washington State Parent Teacher Association (WSPTA), representing more than 80,000 parents, students, educators, and community members across the state, urged lawmakers today to fulfill the state's paramount duty to amply fund public education and address widening inequities across Washington's school districts.

"Every child in Washington deserves a fully funded, high-quality public education, and right now, too many are being shortchanged," said Tori Emerson, President of Washington State PTA. "Our state made a promise in its constitution, and families across Washington are counting on lawmakers to keep it."

Districts and Families Are Carrying the Unequal Burden

As House and Senate Democrats consider new revenue this session to address the projected state shortfall in the operating budget, WSPTA asks legislators to prioritize K-12 education funding and wrap around supports.

Districts are facing growing class sizes, shortages of nurses and paraeducators, delays in special education evaluations, and cuts to staff and programs to just balance their budgets. Many are facing financial instability, and some are even in binding conditions. Local levies are supposed to be used only for things like extracurricular activities that enrich basic education. However, due to chronic underfunding by the state, districts are forced to cover basic services such as special education staffing, utilities, insurance, curriculum and other materials, supplies and operating costs, as well as student transportation with their enrichment levy dollars.

This shift has created deep inequities: property-wealthy districts can raise more levy dollars with less of a tax burden on their voters, while property-poor districts cannot.

Students Feel the Impact

“Kids see the cuts, the shortages, the overcrowded classrooms and they think we don’t believe they’re worth the investment,” said Megan Larkin, Advocacy Director for Washington State PTA. “More revenue must be dedicated to our schools, but not on the backs of struggling families.”

Our schools are community hubs, places families trust. They are the heart of our neighborhoods and, in these troubling times, more essential than ever. For children facing food insecurity or housing instability, school may be the only place they are fed, safe, and cared for.

Key Funding Gaps Must Be Addressed

WSPTA is calling on lawmakers to take action and close the funding gaps in:

- Materials, Supplies & Operating Costs (MSOC): The gulf between what the state pays districts for basic operational costs and supplies and what it costs to run our schools continues to widen. This session lawmakers should pass legislation that would invest \$107 million into MSOC in the 2026-27 school year, and another \$250 million in the 2027-29 biennium. While not completely bringing MSOC current to actual costs, SB 5918 and HB 2147 would make a significant dent. It’s time for the Legislature to pay what the courts have said is their paramount duty.
- Transportation: Fund transportation at real costs so every child can get to school safely, reliably, and without districts shifting dollars away from classrooms or other key necessities.
- Special Education: Still short even after last session’s investments, the state must adequately fund special education so students with disabilities get the services they are legally entitled to without districts raiding enrichment levies.

WSPTA believes enrichment levies must be restored to their intended purpose: enhancing student experiences and support, not filling basic funding gaps. The legislature must step up this session and dedicate revenue and the investments needed specifically to our public-school districts.

To read more, see Washington State PTA Advocacy Director Megan Larkin’s [full statement](#).

About Washington State PTA

Founded in 1905, the Washington State PTA is the state’s largest, non-profit volunteer child-advocacy organization, committed to ensuring every child’s potential becomes a reality. Washington State PTA advocates for policies that strengthen public education, support families, and promote the well-being of all children and youth. To learn more about Washington State PTA, please visit www.wastatepta.org.