

## Local school district contacts:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**2019 WASA / WSSDA / WASBO LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE**

DAY ON THE HILL • OLYMPIA, WA • FEBRUARY 11, 2019

# HOT TOPICS

## Information for Legislators

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**WSSDA**  
Washington State  
School Directors' Association

**WASBO**  
Washington Association of  
SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

PRESENTED BY

The Washington Association of School Administrators  
The Washington State School Directors' Association  
and The Washington Association of School Business Officials

## STUDENT/SCHOOL HEALTH & SAFETY

In 2016 and 2018, the Legislature enacted various policies that have laid the foundation for significant improvements to support student and school safety statewide. During the interim, legislators, state associations, school districts, communities, parents, and students engaged in multiple processes to develop recommendations for improving statewide student and school safety. The needs are urgent. This session, many bills have been introduced that take different approaches to addressing challenges for our students and schools.

WASA/WSSDA/WASBO urge the Legislature to:

- **Enhance funding for student support staff personnel** by increasing allocations within the prototypical model for Health and Social Service Personnel (specifically for school nurses, counselors, and school psychologists), Guidance Counselors, and Student/Staff Security personnel.
- **Establish a statewide safety support system** to assure every district has access to support developing and implementing safety plans, threat assessments, and coordinating support/crisis services among school districts, regional mental health providers, community partners, emergency management, and law enforcement.

## EQUITABLE EDUCATION INVESTMENTS

EHB 2242 (2017), the *McCleary* Education Funding Plan, and E2SSB 6362 (2018), provided for significant additional investments in basic education; however, specific components of those two bills need further review and adjustment to ensure programs are fully funded and do not create—or exacerbate—inequities between districts.

WASA/WSSDA/WASBO urge the Legislature to:

- Provide **sufficient funding for special education** (between \$300–\$400 million) to eliminate the current underfunding, thereby relieving school districts from using local levy dollars for this basic education obligation.
- **Increase local school district levy capacity and access to Local Effort Assistance (LEA)** to allow districts to continue to fund local community priorities in their schools. Any additional levy capacity must include clear limits to ensure levy funding doesn't get bargained away; and a commensurate increase in LEA.
- **Fund the full cost of providing health benefits for all eligible school employees** as the School Employees' Benefits Board program is implemented. If the state cannot afford the full cost of providing benefits to all eligible employees, the current collective bargaining tentative agreement should not be ratified, thereby delaying implementation. School districts should not be required to use local levy funds for this unfunded mandate.

## SCHOOL FACILITIES

Improved state funding for school construction improves student learning. Legislators who served on the Joint Legislative Task Force to Improve State Funding for School Construction should be thanked for their efforts. The Capital Budget writers should be encouraged to follow the priorities in the Task Force report and begin to make progress on improving state financing of school construction.

WASA/WSSDA/WASBO support:

- **Small Rural Schools Grant Program.** SB 5572 creates a new grant program to modernize schools in districts under 1,000 students. These districts have such low property values they can't raise the amount of local funds required under SCAP to repair and modernize their schools.
- **Simple Majority in School Bond Elections.** SJR 8201/SB 5066 and HJR 4203/HB 1184 would reduce the 60% required for bond passage to a simple majority. SJR 8202/SB 5252 is a possible compromise to reduce the 60% supermajority for school bonds to 55%.
- **Improvements to School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP) Funding.** The state's outdated funding formulas for the Construction Cost Allowance and Student Space Allocation need to be improved to ensure funding more closely reflects actual construction costs and educational space needs.

## SCHOOL DAY DEFINITION

In Superintendent Reykdal's School Day Task Force recommendations on defining a 'school day' he acknowledges teachers are highly trained professionals performing complex full time work (approximately 1,782 hours per year), compressed into 180 days. Following collective bargaining last summer and fall in almost every district in the state, teacher salaries have increased to competitive, market levels.

WASA/WSSDA/WASBO urge the Legislature to clearly define the minimum professional duties and expectations for teachers for their work in the school building beyond instructional time—and not leave this to collective bargaining. The definition needs to recognize that the professional responsibilities, time, and effort required to provide the state's statutory program of basic education exceeds the required number of instructional hours and includes such things as preparation and planning, collaboration with other teachers, meeting with parents, and evaluation of student learning.