



2018 SESSION: Legislative Priorities

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to prioritize funding for programs and services that close opportunity gaps and support high achievement so that every student in Washington graduates from high school career- and college-ready.

Top legislative priority: Fund Special Education

Washington State's Special Education program remains underfunded, which necessitates districts' use of local funds to meet federal mandates under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The State Board of Education urges the 2018 Legislature to eliminate districts' reliance on local dollars for this basic education purpose by increasing the per-student state funding for students with an Individualized Education Plan from 0.93 FTE to 1.09 FTE and by increasing safety net account funding from \$31 million to \$47 million.

Support for other timely policy and budget requests:

- Persistent educational opportunity and achievement gaps exist across the P-20 spectrum among various student groups based on race, ethnicity, special needs, income, and English language proficiency. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to increase personnel and programmatic investments proven to close these egregious gaps, including culturally responsive teaching and learning.
- Far too many of our students are suffering deeply, and students throughout our K-12 system need educators' help to bolster their abilities to manage emotions, set and accomplish goals, establish and sustain relationships, and make responsible decisions. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to invest in social-emotional and trauma-informed educational approaches.
- Hundreds of schools across our state are poised to be identified for *targeted or comprehensive support* in the new Achievement Index. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to provide financial and programmatic support for persistently low performing schools and technical support for challenged schools in need of improvement.
- Strong guidance and planning around post-secondary preparation has been shown to be critical for students. The 2017 Legislature made the High School and Beyond Plan more meaningful by expanding it to the middle school level. The State Board of Education urges the Legislature to provide the financial and programmatic support at the middle school level required to effectively implement the new changes.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Kaaren Heikes, SBE's Director of Policy and Partnerships, at 360.725.6029 or Kaaren.Heikes@k12.wa.us.