



As leaders governing our state's public schools, the 1,477 members of the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) appreciate the challenges faced by our fellow elected officials at the state level. We greatly value the Legislature's effort to deliver on the promise to make significant investments in K-12 public education. Our young people deserve nothing less.

WSSDA remains a steadfast partner with the Legislature to:

## » Ensure student health and safety

Comprehensive safety resources to support students and schools are needed. Please:

- **Enhance funding for wrap-around support services.** Fund school nurses, social workers, counselors, mental health professionals and other support staff at nationally recommended staff-to-student ratios. Fund programs focused on social-emotional learning, digital citizenship, bullying and hazing prevention and threat assessments.
- **Establish support structures at the regional and local levels for managing school crises.** Improve coordination between schools and regional mental health providers, community partners, emergency management and law enforcement.
- **Provide for school security personnel according to local needs.**
- **Adequately fund public health research and education on firearms-related issues.**

## » Promote student success

High-quality staff who better reflect our student populations are needed, as are innovative and relevant educational pathways for students. Please:

- **Increase funding for efforts to attract, recruit and retain high-quality, diverse staff.**
- **Adopt student-centered graduation requirements.** Delink state-mandated tests from graduation and link state-mandated credit requirements with career pathways aligned with each student's goals.
- **Increase availability of quality public early childhood education programs for low income children and English learners.**

## » Increase funding model equity

2017 and 2018 education funding policies resulted in unintended consequences and inequities across districts. Please:

- **Fully fund special education.** Increase and align special education funding with districts' actual costs and update the current funding model.
- **Level the playing field for districts in budgeting and bargaining.**
  - Reestablish and fund a statewide salary schedule.
  - Modify the current methodologies used to calculate district regionalization funding.
  - Fund statewide supports to improve consistency and accuracy of information needed by districts to budget for and bargain sustainable agreements.
- **Fund school employee health care benefits.**
- **Restore access to local funding for local needs and hold districts harmless.**
  - Replace the current formula for levies with one based on a designated percentage of each school district's budget and fund Local Effort Assistance (LEA) at a minimum of 50% of the amount levied. OR, improve the current formula by raising the amount of levy authority available and increasing LEA funding to at least \$2,500 per student.
  - Formulas should protect against steep losses in levy authority due to circumstances beyond district control.

## » Invest in public school facilities

Student success requires adequate school facilities. State law stipulates that the state pay an average of half the cost of school construction. Please:

- **Revise the school construction funding formula.** State funding must recognize the real costs of building and modernizing schools.
- **Support multiple pathways for districts to access school construction funding.**
  - Advance a constitutional amendment that would empower voters to approve school bonds by a simple majority.
  - Increase ways for districts to access funding for new construction, modernization, and/or repairs or retrofits necessary for school safety, security, and class-size reductions.
- **Increase dedicated funds for school construction in addition to the Common School Trust.**