



Washington State  
School Directors' Association

# Legislative Update

February 25, 2013

By [Marie Sullivan](#), WSSDA Director of Governmental Relations

## Pace begins to pick up, but bill intros slow

With the February 22 deadline for policy bills to pass out of committee come and gone the number of non-fiscal bills being introduced has begun to slow down. Both the House and Senate passed several bills off of the floor today and floor action is interspersed between public hearings and executives sessions in fiscal committees.

Next up is Friday, March 1, the deadline for fiscal bills that are not “necessary to implement the budget” to be passed by fiscal committees.

## Bid limit bills advance

The House Capital Budget Committee passed [SHB 1633](#) on a vote of 10-1, sending the bill to the Rules Committee. The bill would increase the threshold for school districts to use department staff to perform repairs and improvement projects on district property that don't exceed a total of \$75,000. The House bill includes an automatic price adjustment.

Last Thursday the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee passed [SSB 5724](#) to Senate Rules. The amended bill also has a \$75,000 limit for in-house projects, but the automatic inflation clause was removed through an oral amendment.

Research with school districts indicated that not every district will take advantage of the new threshold, and many will continue to use outside contractors for projects when in-house staff don't have the expertise. However, some districts estimated a savings of 10 percent to 50 percent, depending on the project, so proponents remain positive that the bills will make it to the governor's desk.

SHB 1633 is sponsored by Rep. Chad Magendanz, R-Issaquah; SSB 5724 is sponsored by Sen. Jim Honeyford, R-Sunnyside.

## Senate bill would eliminate TRI, reference to “180 school days”

[SB 5852](#) was on Monday's Senate introductions and referred to Senate Ways & Means. The bill has three main components:

- Eliminates the reference to a school year as a minimum of 180 days. Instead, the bill maintains the current 1,000 instructional hours, and the increase to 1,080 instructional hours according to an schedule adopted by the legislature, but not before the 2014-15 school year.
  - Under this change, school district employee contracts would no longer be tied to days but to the minimum instructional hours and the State Board of Education would not be allowed to waive the instructional hour requirement.
  - The bill also would remove the “day” requirement from private schools.

- Eliminates separate contracts for certificated instructional staff in excess of state salary and benefits parameters, commonly known as TRI – pay for additional time, responsibilities, incentives (and innovative activities).
  - As described in statute, TRI was for professional development, specified by the school district to close one or more achievement gaps, focus on the development of STEM learning opportunities, and to provide arts education.
  - In place of TRI, school districts would be allowed to make locally funded salary enhancements for nonbasic education functions that would be unique to the school districts. The enhancement would be up to 10 percent of the state amount for the school district's state-provided salaries.
  - This element is similar to a recommendation from the Compensation Technical Work Group report in June 2012 as a way to address regional differences in salary compensation.
- Creates a five-district pilot program for master teachers in STEM subjects. The bill would appropriate \$15 million to pay salaries of the STEM AP teachers identified in the pilot schools.
  - OSPI would create the pilot program by August 1, 2013, for the 2013-14 school year.
  - The purposes of the pilot program are to elevate the status of STEM AP teachers, create opportunities to serve as master teachers while remaining in the classroom, provide mentor teachers to other teachers in the building, and compensate these teachers at a much higher level.
    - The STEM AP master teacher would be required to teach at least one AP course, serve as instructional leaders and mentors in their building, work on a year-round schedule, provide professional development and training, and create curriculum, demonstration lessons, and field test new learning strategies.
    - The master teacher would not be subject to the collective bargaining agreement of the school district and would receive a salary of no less than \$100,000.
    - The bill would limit the number of designated master teachers to no more than three per school during the pilot program.
  - To qualify, the school district would use multiple measures, including:
    - Evaluations;
    - Assessments of content knowledge;
    - Demonstration of practical professional experience, including working in industry or research;
    - Ability to improve student academic achievement in the STEM fields and AP programs
    - Have a record of building leadership and of teaching students not at grade level, not on track to graduate college, and not career ready;
  - Evidence of the above qualifications would be based on a three-year rolling average of the percent of students taught by the teacher that complete an AP class, score at least a three on an AP exam, and percent of students that meet or exceed the state standard on assessments, disaggregated by student subgroups. All of these would require a minimum of 70 percent of the teacher's students.
  - OSPI is directed to report on the pilot program and its effectiveness by December 1, 2014. The report must also include a recommendation as to whether or not the pilot program should be continued, expanded or modified.

### **A look ahead at committee schedules**

Committees are still holding schedules close to the vest, but here is a quick look at what's coming up. Keep in mind the following list is only for bills being tracked by WSSDA. The committee agendas include many other bills up for public hearing and/or executive session. Check the [legislative web site](#) for current schedules.

Tuesday, February 26

1:30 p.m., House Appropriations, HHR A

Public hearing:

- [SHB 1177](#) - Modifying the education accountability system to allow state criteria, resources, and strategies to be used for assistance and intervention.
- [SHB 1313](#) - Establishing minimum standards for sick and safe leave from employment.
- [SHB 1642](#) - Establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.
- [SHB 1723](#) - Concerning early learning opportunities.
- [SHB 1753](#) - Regulating interpreter services.
- [SHB 1817](#) - Adding eligibility criteria for higher education financial aid.
- [HB 1913](#) - Addressing service credit for certain school employee service workers.

1:30 p.m., Senate Ways & Means, SHR 4

Public Hearing:

- [SSB 5624](#) - Aligning high-demand secondary STEM or career and technical education programs with applied baccalaureate programs. (Hearing is on proposed Substitute).
- [SB 5709](#) - Concerning a pilot program to demonstrate the feasibility of using densified biomass to heat public schools.
- [SJR 8205](#) - Amending the Constitution to require a two-thirds majority vote of the legislature to raise taxes.
- [SSB 5243](#) - Establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.
- [SSB 5365](#) - Increasing the capacity of school districts to recognize and respond to troubled youth.
- [SSB 5588](#) - Requiring an analysis of how school districts use school days.

Wednesday, February 27

1:30 p.m., House Appropriations, HHR A

Executive Session:

- [SHB 1134](#) - Authorizing state-tribal education compact schools.
- [SHB 1477](#) - Providing flexibility for how school districts address truancy of students.

### **Clarification**

In the February 24 Legislative Update, references were made linking bills in the *Les Misérables* list and their sponsors to “model legislation proposed by the national organization American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).” This link between bills and ALEC model legislation is incorrect, and WSSDA sincerely apologizes for the error.

As reported in a previous Legislative Update, as a member of a national organization WSSDA hears about concepts that have been introduced or adopted in other states such as Florida, Oklahoma, and Indiana. The “Florida Formula” is touted by former governor Jeb Bush as increasing student achievement, and several bills under consideration this session in Washington have similarities to strategies promoted by Bush.

Other bills under consideration by the Washington legislature, such as suicide prevention training, CPR as a graduation requirement, an increased emphasis on digital learning, and putting “epi-pens” in schools are also being introduced in state legislatures across the country.

The purpose in mentioning these national links is to point out that Washington isn't alone in considering legislation on accountability, student achievement, service delivery, and new school district mandates. It will be up to the Washington state legislature to make choices that best serve the students and schools of our state as the legislative session unfolds.

You are receiving this email because you are subscribed to WSSDA's Email information services. To create, modify or cancel a subscription, please use our [online request form](#) or contact WSSDA's mail@wssda.org, 360.252.3016). Your request will be processed as soon as possible.