



Washington State
School Directors' Association

Legislative Update

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

March 24, 2014

Quick glance 2014 session summary

Several school directors have requested a short session summary to share with their boards. In addition to the 2014 webinar that was conducted last Friday (link is posted below), here's a brief summary of the main legislation WSSDA tracked that affects students, school directors, and schools. Keep in mind that Gov. Jay Inslee has not acted on the budget or most of the legislation listed below, so it is possible legislative requirements may change.

Supplemental budgets

Operating budget:

- \$58 million in new investments for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC).
- \$2 million in restored basic education funding to districts that receive federal timber payments and have a poverty level of 57% (previous year). Restored state funding is capped at \$70,000.
 - Districts that receive more than \$70,000 in federal timber payments will have \$70,000 restored.
 - Districts that receive less than \$70,000 in federal timber payments will have their full amount restored.
- \$97 million shift from 1,080 hours in 2014-15; purpose is to begin phasing in 24-credit diploma including:
 - \$164.25 per student in grades 9-12;
 - Guidance counselor ratio in prototypical high school of 600 students is increased from 2.009 to 2.539;
 - Lab science classroom ratio is reduced to 19.98; and
 - 1,080 instructional hours will apply to the 2015-16 school year, grades 9-12, and 1,000 instructional hours for grades 1-8. Hours may be calculated using a district-wide average of instructional hours over grades 1-12. (E2SSB 6552)
- \$2 million "net" for miscellaneous expenditures, including:
 - \$558,000 for transportation formula funding adjustments
 - \$245,000 for various activities to increase cultural competency and close the achievement gap.
- \$2 million to expand beginning teacher program grants to districts for support of new teachers.

Capital budget:

- None adopted.
- No new grant programs for capacity issues or nutrition equipment assistance.

Students

- SSB 6074 – homeless student education outcomes
 - Three main activities: Identification, training, and communication.
 - Starting in the 2014-15 school year, districts must include information about support and services available to students who are homeless in existing materials, and share information throughout the year. OSPI has a brochure on its website that may be used.

- 2SSB 6163 – expanded learning opportunities (ELOs)
 - Creates a council to provide recommendations to improve a system of Expanded Learning Opportunities.
 - Defines ELOs as school-based in traditional day, week or calendar and structured learning environments outside the traditional day provided by community-based partners.
- SSB 6431 – youth suicide prevention programs
 - OSPI is directed to work with community organizations to help school implement youth suicide prevention activities, including training, responding to crises, partnering with local organizations.
 - \$148,000 appropriation for grants to schools at high risk.
- SB 6523 – the Real Hope Act
 - Expands the State Need Grant program to students who have completed their senior year of high school in Washington and obtained their diploma or equivalent, and who have lived in the state for at least three years.
- E2SSB 6552 – would authorize the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop rules to implement a 24-credit diploma, starting with the graduating class of 2019; supports use of CTE course equivalencies.
 - School districts may extend the requirement to classes of 2020 or 2021, following an application to the SBE. The board must approve the extension at its next scheduled meeting.
 - WSSDA will develop a model policy by June 30, 2015, and districts must adopt a policy before the 2015-16 school year to allow a student to graduate with 22 credits due to exceptional circumstances.
 - Starting with the class of 2015, removes the state requirement to complete a culminating project.
 - SBE rules must provide that the 3rd credit of math or science must be chosen by the student based on his/her High School and Beyond Plan and approval of parent, guardian, principal or counselor.
 - OSPI shall develop a list of CTE courses that are equivalent to math and science courses.
 - Starting in 2015-16, districts must offer students the opportunity to access at least one math or science CTE course from the OSPI list.
 - A task force is created to identify barriers to a 24-credit diploma and make recommendations regarding students with special needs with reports due each year.

School directors

- SHB 2105 – government meeting agendas
 - After June 11, 2014, regular meeting agendas must be posted online 24 hours prior to the meeting.
 - Districts with no official website or with fewer than 10 employees are exempt.
- SB 5964 – public records and open public meeting training, starting July 1, 2014.
 - Requires all elected or appointed school directors to complete training in the Public Records Act and the Open Public Meetings Act within 90 days of taking office or assuming official duty.
 - Requires elected officials to refresh training once every four years as long as they are in office.
 - Requires designated public records officers to take training no later than 90 days after assuming that responsibility.

School operations

- 2SHB 1709 – interpreters in schools
 - OSPI and the Office of Education Ombuds are directed to post information on agency websites regarding phone interpretation vendors on contract with the State.
 - School districts are encouraged to use the phone interpretation system to communicate with adults who speak a language other than English.
 - OEO is directed to create feasibility study regarding interpreters, including the use of volunteers.
- HB 2276 – residential schools and ESDs
 - Allows ESDs to enter into an agreement to provide a program of education for residential school students or detention facilities on behalf of the school district as a cooperative service program.

- HB 2575 – teacher assignment data
 - Starting with the 2014-15 school year, districts must include dates of teacher assignments and reassignments for each class or course offered in each school.
- SSB 5173 – unpaid holidays for faith, conscience or organized religious activity
 - Allows for two days of unpaid leave for employees and two days of excused absence from school for students.
 - School boards of directors must adopt a resolution with guidelines for unpaid leave.
 - The unpaid leave for employees must be allowed unless it would impose an undue hardship on the employer or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety.
 - The Office of Financial Management will develop rules to define “undue hardship.”
- 2SSB 6062 – posting school data on district and school web sites
 - Collective bargaining agreements must be posted to the district website by September 1, 2014, and within 30 days after approval, renewal or completion of future agreements.
 - By August 31, 2014, each district with an ASB fund must publish certain information on the district website or, if there are school website(s), on the school website, for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years.
 - Information must be updated by August 31 each year, and information from the five previous years must remain posted.
 - Information includes fund balance at the beginning and end of the school year, and summary data about revenues and expenditures during the year.
- SB 6128 – delivery of student medications
 - Creates a blanket option for a non-licensed employee who is asked to administer medications or perform nursing services to file a voluntary, written, current and unexpired letter of intent stating the employee’s willingness to administer the new medication or nursing service.
 - An employee who refuses to file a letter is not subject to reprisal.
 - Districts must designate a health professional to consult and coordinate with a student’s parents and health care provider regarding medications or services to be delivered at school.
 - The health professional must provide training and supervise school district personnel in proper and current procedures to deliver the medication or nursing service.
- ESSB 6242 – extending the Economy & Efficiency waiver through August 31, 2017
 - Allows up to five school districts to apply to the SBE for an E&E waiver or extension of their current waiver.
 - Three districts may have a student FTE of 150-500; two districts must be less than 150 student FTE.
- SB 6321 – Plan 3 contribution rate changes
 - After January 2015, a member of the Teachers Retirement System Plan 3 may only change their contribution rate when they change employers. This is a change from every year.
 - Must make the change within 90 days of changing employers.
- SB 6424 – seal of biliteracy
 - Encourages districts to award a seal of biliteracy to graduating high school students who meet OSPI-developed criteria of proficiency in a world language other than English.
 - Notation would be on the diploma and on a high school transcript.

More resources

WSSDA’s nearly hour-long webinar is available on the agency’s website [here](#). Look for a final session summary following bill action by Governor Inslee, no later than end of May. Unless otherwise noted, bills are effective 90 days following the end of the regular session (June 11, 2014).

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.