

Effective Advocacy

A Guide for School Directors in Washington State

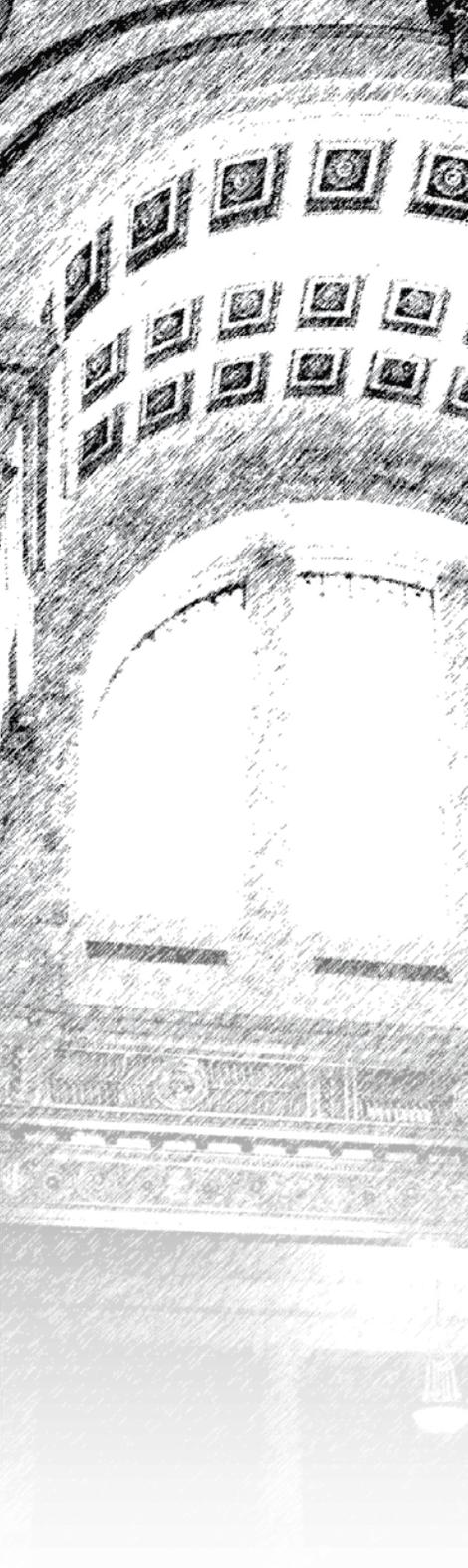
Foreword

As an elected school director, you work every day as an advocate for public education in your community. At each board meeting, crucial decisions that affect the lives and education of children are made as you determine the needs of the students and families you are accountable to. But are those needs being communicated to your elected representatives in Olympia and Washington, D.C.? If not, your board may be forced to revise or even reverse decisions made to improve your schools because of legislative and policy actions taken at the state and federal levels.

School board members are charged with the responsibility and duty to communicate the needs of public education. Because you have been elected to ensure the success of public education in your community, you are in an excellent position to inform and influence policymakers on public education issues. School board members' participation in the legislative process is vital to encourage support for local decision-making, oppose unfunded mandates and adequately fund public education — just to name a few important issues.

As a school director, you can make a difference and have a significant impact on the legislative process. Remember, as an elected representative, you share a common bond with legislators and members of Congress — the same constituents that elected them have elected you! But, like you, legislators can not read their constituents' minds. They must hear from you and your board about how legislative decisions will impact the lives of children in your classrooms.

The purpose of this manual is to encourage and assist you in influencing state and federal education policy. Being involved in the legislative process does not have to be intimidating and, in fact, it is surprisingly simple to make your voice heard by your legislators when you make advocacy a year-round part of your service as a school board member. By using this manual and other resources provided through the Washington State School Directors' Association, along with the development of your own board's legislative strategy, you can strengthen your political voice and make a positive difference in the lives of Washington's students.



“The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn.”

~ Sir John Lubbock, British Archaeologist

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“Only the educated are free.”
~ Epictetus, Greek philosopher

Introduction

Advocacy for School Directors

Most of us consider **advocacy** to be one of the four major functions of serving on a school board (along with **vision**, **structure** and **accountability**). But what exactly does advocacy mean? And how does one become a successful advocate?

In basic definitions, “to advocate” means “to support” or “to plead in favor of.” An advocate in the original sense was a legal counselor: one who pleads the cause of another. Today, it is important to think of advocacy in very broad terms, especially when it applies to the role of school directors.

Successful advocacy in the public sector is most often confined to the gradual shifting of opinion, be it individual or the collective “public” opinion. Because of this slow developing process, advocacy for school directors can be likened to the gentle art of persuasion, which takes both time and patience. So, how does advocacy occur in the life of a school board member? And how can you be most successful?

Advocacy occurs throughout your tenure as a school director, and it occurs at multiple levels. While this guide is primarily focused on legislative advocacy, it is important to recognize the many venues in which school director advocacy takes place.

- **Advocacy Within Your District.** In any attempt to advocate, one must first determine the policy position you are trying to put forth. Then you determine your audience, or whom you are trying to convince. Within your school district, that audience can be your fellow board members, the district superintendent, other district staff or the audience at a board meeting. The key to successful advocacy with each audience is to develop a relationship based on honesty, trust and a command of the issues.
- **Advocacy In Your Community.** Advocacy in the community takes many forms. As a school board member, you will often be “buttonholed” —in the supermarket, at the gas station, in church—by parents and community members over student or school issues. You will also find yourself in the midst of conversations about education issues while attending school events like a band concert or a soccer match.

These are powerful opportunities for grass-roots advocacy. As a school director, it is your responsibility in these situations to be a champion for the district and students — to explain the board’s position and, when necessary, to correct misinformation (keeping in mind at all times that school board members have no authority as individuals).

The building of coalitions, especially with other elected officials, is another key to successful community advocacy. Public schools do not operate in isolation. Schools and students are often directly impacted by the actions of the city and county governments, particularly decisions related to growth management and planning. Successful school boards become involved in these decisions through regular interaction with the elected officials of these entities. They also build support by strengthening relationships with community and civic organizations, business, labor and church leaders, and local news media.

- **Advocacy at the State Level.** Normally when we think of advocacy we think of the state Legislature, and rightly so. Since the 1976 “Doran” court decision on school funding and the subsequent 1977 Basic Education Act, the state of Washington has provided about 80 percent of school district budgets. K-12 education is the state’s “paramount duty” according our state constitution. And that paramount duty includes more than just providing dollars; it also means determining how the public school system is organized and operated. It is entirely appropriate for the state to establish a degree of uniformity and direction in how our 295 school districts spend over \$6 billion annually in state-approved tax dollars. It’s state-level accountability.

Our responsibility — as individual school boards and as a membership association — is to communicate with the Legislature and other state policymakers about education issues, particularly those that go to the heart of student learning. We advocate for quality schools statewide, with emphasis on our own local districts.

A significant portion of this guide is dedicated to helping school directors become effective advocates at the state level, acting through your school boards and through WSSDA. The association has a longstanding process of developing positions on legislative issues, positions which are generated by you — the membership. WSSDA also offers a number of opportunities for school directors to shape the association’s agenda and advocate for that agenda. These opportunities are described in greater detail in the following chapters.

Advocacy at the Federal Level. Although the federal government provides only four to six percent of most school district budgets, the actions of Congress (and of various federal agencies) have a tremendous impact on the way school districts operate. The best example is the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which sets forth specific targets for student learning and a series of sanctions for districts that are not meeting those targets.

As with the state Legislature, federal-level advocacy by school directors takes place from the school board level and collectively through WSSDA and the National School Boards Association (NSBA), which is composed of most state-level

associations. NSBA communicates with the Congress and federal agencies as WSSDA similarly does the state Legislature.

Advocacy in public education seldom results in instant gratification. The “gentle art of persuasion” is built upon creating good personal relationships, which are absolutely necessary for the development of trust. These relationships often take time and patience — especially with legislators and statewide elected officials who are so very busy. But once that trust is developed, it never ceases so long as the conversation is open and honest.

Advocacy. It’s integral to the job of being on the school board. You are an advocate whether you know it or not. The purpose of this publication is to provide ideas as to how you might become a more successful advocate, whether within your district, in your community, at the state level or in Washington, D.C. Your state association, WSSDA, takes advocacy seriously. Its officers, members and staff can help in your success. Please be sure to contact us if we can provide additional information and assistance.



“Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them.”

~ Lady Bird Johnson, former U.S. First Lady

Chapter 1

Advocacy at the Local Level

When we talk about advocacy, we naturally tend to think about working with the state Legislature and Congress. While advocacy is crucial at these levels, it is essential that school directors understand and perform their advocacy role in their districts and their communities.

Advocacy Within the District

School directors form the governance team of the district. The school board hires the superintendent, establishes a strategic vision, sets goals and objectives, establishes policy, approves budgets and resources, and evaluates progress. These functions are all part of the school board’s leadership responsibilities.

It is difficult to lead, however, if no one is following. That’s where advocacy comes in.

Here are some examples of how advocacy works within the school district.

Fellow Board Members. For any school director to be successful on board issues, you first need the support of at least two other board members. School directors have no individual authority. Your power lies only in collective actions of the entire board.

So advocacy, or persuasion, begins within one-on-one discussions with the other elected members of the board. Let them know your personal goals, your reasons for joining the board. Then, learn theirs. Your collective goals may not be the same, but neither might they be inconsistent. Develop collaboration. Allow the other board members to “win” occasionally, thus fostering the possibilities to achieve your own priorities. Don’t try to win everything, or you’ll win nothing. Have some patience.

(Note: Be sure you are not conducting board business in these conversations!)

The Superintendent. The board sets the policy, but the appointed superintendent administers the district. New board members should meet with the superintendent often; again, share your goals and priorities. Good superintendents want to make their boards happy... if you let them.

District Staff. It is a misperception that directors should not mingle with staff. Their jobs are theirs, and yours are yours; but that doesn’t mean that you cannot learn from one another. Again, state your goals and priorities, but realize that while you have no individual authority, your spoken words and deeds become the topic of coffee break chats at every building in the district almost instantly.

Developing a sense of trust is your responsibility. Staff members will share their knowledge and ideas when they know that board members aren't searching for dirt. Beware, however: some are naturally inclined to seek your favor, by any means. Dissension within the board is often the result, if not the intent.

Board Meeting Audience. While most board meetings are attended only by a few staff, all audiences are the same: they examine your every move and your every spoken word. Remind people (again) why you are there. Seek input; don't preach. The professionals know more about education than do you. The laypersons in the audience are there for their own special purpose; be attentive to their wishes, but don't commit too quickly. Trying to please your audiences creates short-term rewards and long-term inconsistencies which erode your ability to become a successful advocate. Always choose your words with care (especially if media representatives are present).

You are a member of the school board, not just another opinionated citizen. In-district advocacy is informal. The building of trust, the building of interpersonal relationships and the acquiring of knowledge will result in success. But it will be gradual, and therefore, frustrating. It requires patience. While most techniques to assist school directors to improve their in-district advocacy skills are matters of common sense and courtesy, WSSDA does provide workshops which allow new directors to anticipate solutions and develop strategies. These workshops may occur within your district, within your region (especially if your area has a county school directors association), or at the Association's Annual Conference.

Advocacy In Your Community

Whether you are chatting with a parent at the grocery store, speaking to the Rotary Club or meeting with the mayor, you are an advocate for your students and your schools. It is your job as a school board member to convey positive, accurate information about your district and public education.

Informal Advocacy in the Community. School directors are never really "off duty." The phone will ring during dinner, you will get plenty of e-mails, and you will frequently bump into people who have a concern or question about an issue in the schools. It is all part of being an elected official.

You will also be in situations—maybe in the stands during a football game or attending a school play—where someone is making negative or uninformed comments about a school, a district employee, or an education issue.

While these situations can be challenging, they should be viewed as an opportunity to be an advocate for your district. Respond to questions by explaining the rationale for policies or decisions, and provide information about the appropriate process for pursuing a concern. If someone is communicating something that is inaccurate, you have an obligation to speak up—politely but firmly—to set the record straight.

Building Coalitions and Relationships. The building of coalitions, especially with other elected officials, is the cornerstone of successful community advocacy. Public schools do not operate in isolation. Actions of the city council or the county commissioners (and their departments) can have a significant effect on your school district, especially if those actions take place in “silos.”

Think about the many governmental decisions that can impact your district: growth management, the approval of new housing developments, the location of sidewalks or bike paths, or water systems, or cable access, or bus routes or play fields. Successful school boards become involved in these decisions to coordinate planning. Nothing offends citizens more than insulated governmental decisions resulting in duplicated efforts and wasted taxpayer dollars. A few suggestions:

- Periodically meet with your city council, perhaps informally, to discuss common issues (the use of play fields, coordinated bus routes, bicycle paths along major roads with schools nearby).
- Meet occasionally with the county commission, to discuss growth management (they might be in the process of approving a new housing development in one area of your district, while your board is seeking property for a new school—on the other side of town!).
- Convene an annual “summit” of local officials—cities, counties, ports, utilities, transit, for example—to share current issues and projections for future challenges and opportunities.

Coalition and relationship building should not be limited to other governmental bodies. For example:

- Discuss whether selected members of your board or senior staff should regularly attend and participate in the local Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations. Share and seek information and perspectives regularly.
- Send your district’s newsletter to all citizens, not just parents (and not just registered voters!).
- Strengthen relationships with business, labor, philanthropic and faith leaders.
- Meet regularly with the newspaper editor or editorial board, not just when you want to complain or receive their support.

Community alliances demonstrate to citizens that their elected officials do not operate in a vacuum. Such alliances or regular meetings also allow for personal relations to develop. These relationships are invaluable, both when you need public support from outside the school district (for your levy or for anything controversial) and when you may need personal support from community public

opinion leaders (when your board is accused of doing anything inappropriate or unpopular).

In addition to workshops, WSSDA produces a nationally acclaimed publication, **On Call**, which provides numerous tips regarding coalition building within your non-school community. Coalition building and advocacy go hand in hand. But they require work and patience.



Chapter 2

Understanding the Legislative Process

The first step in effective legislative advocacy is to get informed. It is important that you, as an advocate, understand both the legislative process and the issues. Thorough preparation will make you a more confident and successful advocate.

This section will familiarize you with Washington state's legislative process and the resources you can use to get up to speed on issues that are important to you and your district.

Overview of the Washington State Legislature

The Washington State Legislature is made up of two houses (or chambers), the Senate and the House of Representatives. Washington has 49 legislative districts, each of which elects a Senator and two Representatives. Senators serve four-year terms and Representatives serve two-year terms. The Senate and House of Representatives meet in session each year to create new laws, change existing laws, and enact budgets for the state.

The legislative cycle is two years long. Within that two-year cycle, there are two kinds of legislative sessions: regular sessions and special (or "extraordinary") sessions. Regular sessions are mandated by the state constitution and begin the second Monday in January each year. In odd-numbered years, the regular session is 105 days; in even-numbered years, it is 60 days. Special sessions are called by the governor (or by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature) to address specific issues, usually the budget. There can be any number of special sessions within the two-year cycle, and they can last no more than 30 days.

The members of the House and Senate offer legislation, or bills, for consideration. The ideas for bills come from a number of places: something has happened in the last year that inspires new legislation, a member wishes to address an issue that is specific to his or her district, the Legislature decides to tackle a major issue (such as regulatory reform), changes in technology dictate a change in the State's laws, etc.

Once a member introduces a bill, the legislative process begins. The process has a number of specific steps. If the bill makes it through all the steps in the chamber in which it was introduced (the "first house"), it goes to the other chamber (or "second house") and goes through the same steps there. Each step is identified and explained below.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Introduction (or First Reading). A legislator introduces new piece of legislation, which is assigned a number. The first thing that happens to bills on the “floor” is introduction and referral to committee. This is also referred to as the bill’s first reading.

Committee Consideration. Leadership refers bills to committee, usually based the bill’s subject matter. (Bills that require an appropriation or that raise revenue must also go to a fiscal committee for review.) Working with leadership and staff, the committee chairs then schedule bills to be heard by the committee. Not all bills get scheduled, so a good number of bills never receive any action in committee.

Committees hold three kinds of meetings: (1) work sessions, where issues are determined and reviewed; (2) public hearings, where testimony from interested parties is taken; and (3) executive sessions, where the committee decides how it will report the bill to the whole house.

Committee Action. Bills can be reported in several fashions, the most usual being “do pass” (pass the bill just as it is), “do pass as amended” (pass the bill as amended by the committee), and “do pass substitute” (the committee offers a different version to take the place of the original bill). The members on the prevailing side sign the “majority” report; those members who disagree with the majority sign the “minority” report. Not all bills coming out of committee have minority reports.

As a bill moves through the committee process, the staff prepares the “bill report.” The bill report includes a legislative history of the bill, background on the issue, a summary of the legislation, the names of those who testified on the bill, and a summary of the testimony for and against the bill. The bill report is edited as the bill moves through the process. When the bill moves to the opposite house, that house prepares a bill report as well. A bill that has finally passed the Legislature would have House, Senate, and Final bill reports.

At the start of the session, both houses agree on dates by which bills have to be reported out of committee in order to be eligible for further consideration by the Legislature. There is a “cut-off” date for bills to be out of committee in the first house and one for bills to be out of committee in the second house.

Rules Committee. Once a bill has been reported by the appropriate committee(s), it is normally referred to the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee is where leadership exercises the most control over the process. The Rules Committee is made up of members from both parties. During each meeting of the committee, every member on the committee gets to select two or three bills that will move on to the next step in the process. Which bills a member selects

could be the result of a party caucus, or another member approaching that member, or a piece of legislation about which the member feels strongly.

The Rules Committee decides which bills will be scheduled for second reading, and whether they will go on the regular floor calendar or a consent calendar. Bills that will probably require some debate are placed on the regular calendar. Those that are probably not controversial may be placed on a consent calendar (which is called a suspension calendar in the House).

Second Reading. It is on second reading that members can offer amendments to the bill. Most bills that get this far get their second reading in the couple of weeks following the committee cut-off.

If a bill has been amended on the floor in the first house, it is ordered “engrossed.” Engrossing a bill means incorporating the amendments into the body of the bill so that the second house gets one document. If a bill has been amended in the second house, it is returned to the first house with the amendments attached so that the first house can decide whether or not it wishes to agree with the changes the second house made.

Third Reading. It is on third reading that the chamber debates the merits of the legislation. It is also where the roll call vote on final passage is taken. If the bill finally passes, it continues in the process. If the bill fails on final passage, it goes no further. Under certain circumstances, the chamber may decide to reconsider the vote that was taken; in that case, the chamber has twenty-four hours to make a motion to reconsider the bill.

If the bill passes third reading in the second house and the second house did not amend the bill, the bill has passed the Legislature.

At the start of the session, both houses agree on “cut-off” dates by which bills have to be finally passed out of the first house and finally passed out of the second house.

Concurrence, Dispute, and Conference Committees. If the bill has been amended by the second house, the first house has to decide whether it will concur in the amendments or not. Leadership decides which bills returned from the second house will be discussed and places those bills on the concurrence calendar (House) or concurring calendar (Senate). If the first house concurs in the amendments, the bill has passed the Legislature.

If the first house disagrees with the second house, it can ask the second house to recede from the amendments. If the second house recedes, the bill has passed the Legislature.

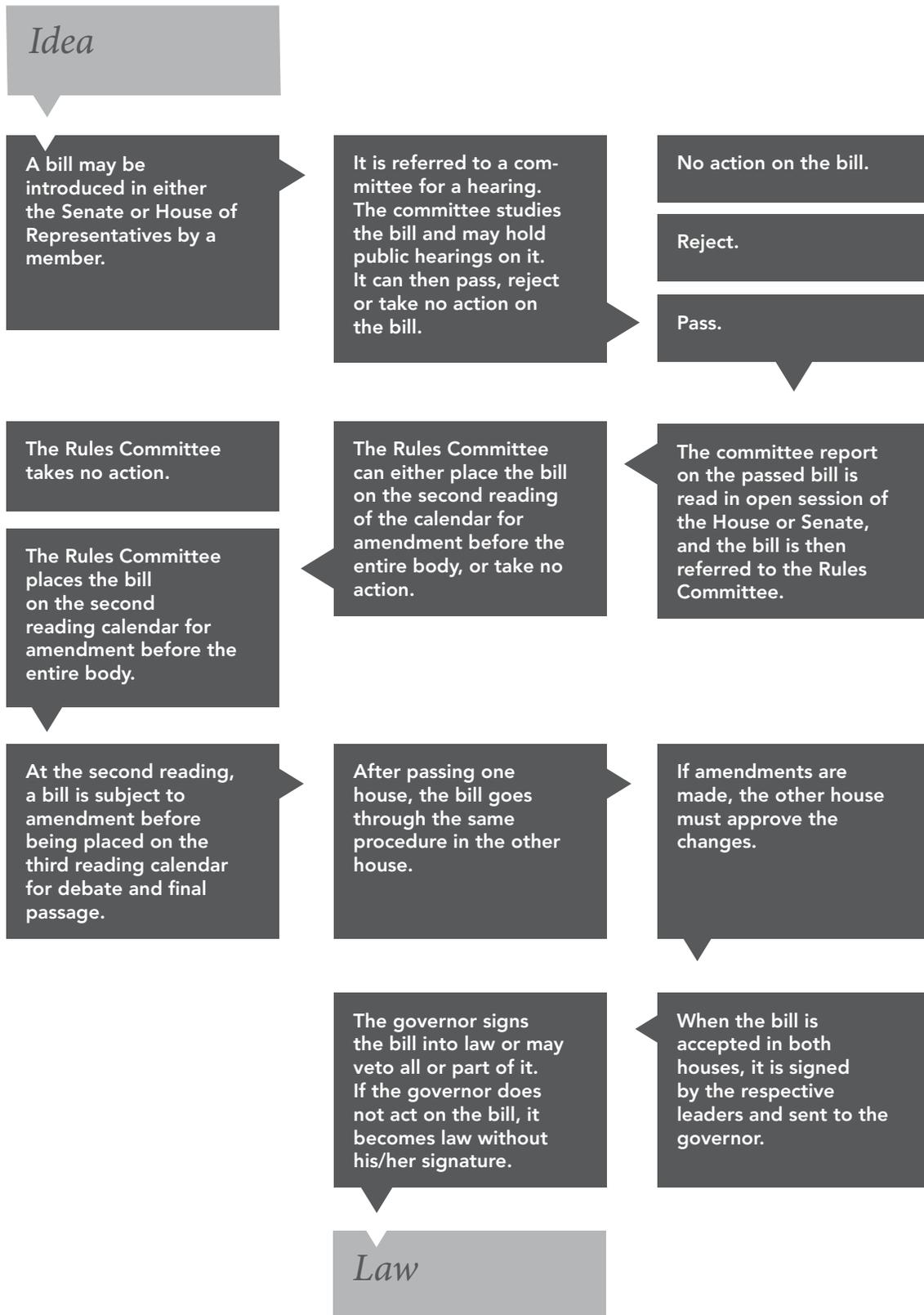
If the two houses cannot resolve their differences, one of them can ask for a conference committee. Members from each house meet to discuss the differences.

If they agree on what is to be done, the conference committee makes a report. Both houses must adopt the conference committee report for the bill to pass the Legislature. If one house does not adopt the conference committee report (whether by vote or inaction), the bill has not passed.

Governor's actions. The governor reviews the bill. The governor may decide to sign it, veto part of it, or veto all of it. If the governor vetoes part or all of it, the Legislature may override the veto by a two-thirds vote of both houses. (That rarely happens.) If the governor does not act on a bill after the allotted number of days, it is as if it was signed.

Effective date. Unless otherwise specified, bills become law 90 days after the adjournment of the session in which they were approved.

How a Bill Becomes a Law – Simplified View



The State Budget

Approval of a state budget is one of the Legislature's most significant (and most challenging) responsibilities. Since K-12 education accounts for approximately 40 percent of state spending, it is important that you have a good understanding of how the Legislature develops and approves the budget.

Washington adopts a new biennial (two-year) budget every odd-numbered year, which takes effect beginning July 1. For example, the budget approved for the 2009–11 Biennium remains in effect from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2011.

The work of developing a state budget begins well before the Legislature convenes in January. In August, state agencies submit budget requests to the state Office of Financial Management (OFM). These requests are analyzed by OFM and provided to the governor through November. Also at this time, the state Economic and Revenue Forecast Council provides a quarterly estimate of how much revenue will be available in the coming biennium.

Using this information, the governor develops a budget proposal that sets forth his or her spending priorities for the coming biennium. By law, the governor must submit a biennial budget plan to the Legislature by December 20.

In the Legislature, much budget work in the early part of the session is devoted to reviewing the governor's proposal and gathering additional information. Legislative budgets usually don't emerge until after the latest revenue estimate is issued, normally in mid-March.

By tradition, the House and Senate "take turns" in originating a budget proposal, with one chamber taking the lead every other budget cycle. Once a budget proposal is unveiled in one house, the other house normally brings out its own plan within a week or two.

In both the House and Senate, primary responsibility for developing a state budget proposal is assigned to a committee called Ways and Means (sometimes called Appropriations in the House). The House also has several subordinate committees assigned to specific areas of the budget, such as the Education Appropriations Committee (see "Legislative Committees that impact education," below).

Final approval of a state budget is a complex process that involves a tremendous amount of negotiation and compromise on the part of the governor, the two houses and the majority and minority caucuses (which is why odd-year sessions are 105 days compared to 60 days in even years). The budget is typically one of the last items the Legislature votes on.

The biennial budget passed by the Legislature can be modified in subsequent legislative sessions. These revisions are referred to as supplemental budgets.

Legislative Committees that Impact Education

Many issues beyond traditional “education” programs impact education. Pay close attention to legislative proposals dealing with such areas as state and local taxation, health care, personnel/labor issues and environmental mandates.

When looking to see if your legislators are on “key” committees that impact education, keep in mind the following committees that are important to public schools:

- The **House Capital Budget Committee** considers the state capital budget which approves money for the construction and repair of public buildings and for other long-term investments, such as land acquisitions and transfers. In addition, the committee considers state money that is either given or lent to local governments or nonprofit organizations for infrastructure, housing, and cultural and heritage facilities.
- The **House Early Learning and Children’s Services Committee** considers issues relating to early learning from birth to kindergarten, children and families, family support programs, and issues relating to at-risk youth and youth violence prevention.
- The **House Education Committee** considers kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) educational policy and finance issues.
- The **House Education Appropriations Committee** considers issues relating to funding of early learning, K-12, and higher education programs and agencies and makes funding recommendations to the Ways and Means Committee.
- The **House Finance Committee** considers issues relating to state revenues, such as increases or decreases in taxes, exemptions from taxes, and changes in the administration of taxes.
- The **House Rules Committee** considers all bills reported from policy and fiscal committees and determines whether, and in what order, to schedule their consideration on the floor of the House.
- The **House Ways and Means Committee** considers the operating budget bill, global fiscal issues such as pension policy and compensation, and bills with larger fiscal impacts.
- The **Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee** considers policy and finance issues related to schools and learning from birth through twelfth grade and preparation for later learning experiences.

- The **Senate Rules Committee** considers all bills reported from policy and fiscal committees and determines whether, and in what order, to schedule their consideration on the Senate floor by the full Senate.
- The **Senate Ways and Means Committee** is the Senate's primary fiscal committee. It has responsibility for developing operating and capital budgets and tax and pension policy.

Other key legislative agencies:

- The **Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee** (JLARC) is comprised of an equal number of House and Senate members, Democrats and Republicans. JLARC conducts performance audits, program evaluations, sunset reviews, and other analyses.
- The **Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee** provides state budget reports, fiscal publications, budget oversight reporting, and fiscal analysis.
- The **Washington State Institute for Public Policy** is governed by a Board of Directors that represents the legislature, governor, and public universities. The Institute carries out practical, non-partisan research—at legislative direction—on issues of importance to Washington state.

WSSDA's Role in the Legislative Process

School board members formed the Washington State School Directors' Association more than 80 years ago to provide a unified voice in advocating for public schools and student learning. Today, advocacy continues as a core element of WSSDA's mission.

Through WSSDA, school boards around the state develop collective positions on education-related issues that come before the Legislature. WSSDA also serves as a resource to assist school directors and school boards in their own advocacy efforts.

WSSDA's Legislative Priorities and Positions. WSSDA has more than 100 permanent association positions on education issues and almost 40 standing legislative positions on education-related legislative issues, all developed and adopted through the association's membership. These positions serve as the foundation of WSSDA's ongoing advocacy efforts in the state Legislature.

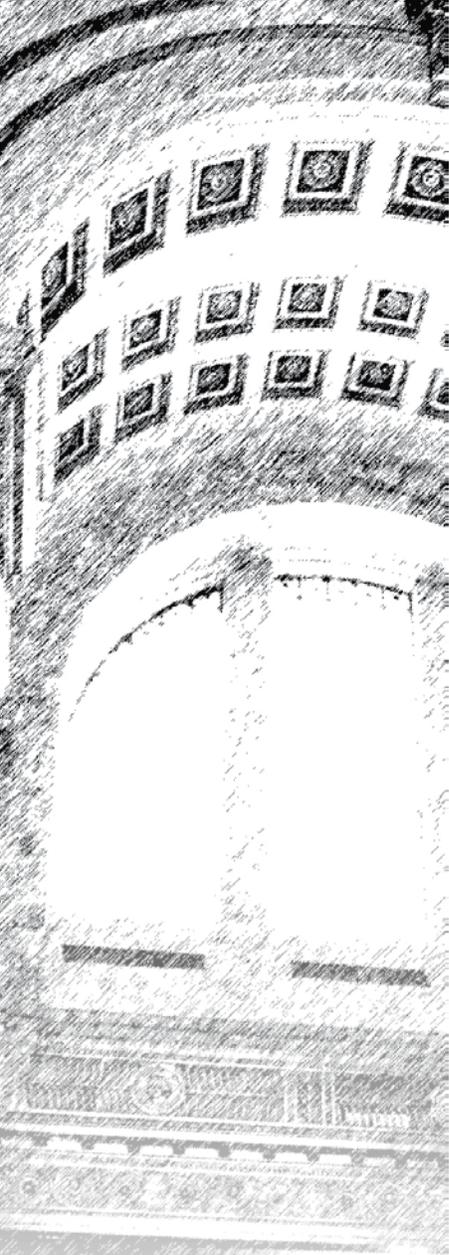
Advocacy at the state level is a year-round, grass-roots process. The process starts with individual school boards appointing a Legislative Representative to coordinate district legislative activities and keep the rest of the board apprised as issues develop.

At each WSSDA Annual Conference, school directors elect their Legislative Committee. This 25-member committee is comprised of two members from each of the state's eleven "director areas" (four from the very populated Director Area II, located around Puget Sound), plus the association's current vice president.

Each year during the spring, WSSDA's Legislative Committee solicits "legislative proposals," or ideas as to how to improve education laws and funding, from every school board. The Committee analyzes those proposals, adds some of its own, and then makes recommendations for the annual WSSDA Legislative Assembly.

Each fall, the Legislative Representatives from each school board meet at the Legislative Assembly to debate and vote upon the many proposals submitted through the Legislative Committee. Also at the Assembly, Legislative Representatives recommend the highest priorities for each year. These priorities are comprised of both the newly adopted "annual" proposals and the association's standing legislative positions. Those priorities are finalized by the Legislative Committee, and then ratified by WSSDA's elected Board of Directors, forming an association legislative agenda for each session.

Throughout the year and during legislative sessions school board members and WSSDA's Governmental Relations staff maintain contact with legislators and other policymakers to advocate on behalf of the association's legislative package. WSSDA's Governmental Relations staff meets regularly with the association's elected Executive Committee, Board of Directors and Legislative Committee to apprise them of developing issues and to seek continued direction in emergent legislative matters. WSSDA staff is directed to prioritize its time on those issues determined by the Board to be of greatest importance, but staff will also assist on any bill or budget proposal that has been approved by the delegates to the Annual Legislative Assembly. Also, each February or March, during the state legislative session, Legislative Representatives (with WASA, the school administrators) gather in Olympia to be briefed on how their legislative priorities are faring and to meet with legislators from their home districts.



“No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy, the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.”

~ Emma Goldman, political activist

Chapter 3

Advocacy at the Federal Level

With the “other” Washington situated at the opposite end of the country, it may seem like a daunting task to advocate at the federal level. It is essential, however, that school directors be engaged in communicating with their members of Congress and federal policymakers about how decisions made in Washington, D.C. are impacting schools and students here at home.

As you read through this publication, you will find that many of the tips and suggestions for effective advocacy can be applied to the federal level. In addition, there is a structure in place for school board members to work cooperatively to influence decisions made in the nation’s capital.

The Federal Relations Network

The Federal Relations Network (FRN) is a joint undertaking of the National School Boards’ Association (NSBA) and state school boards associations around the country. FRN provides structure through which school board members can stay up to date on federal issues and work in concert to advocate for public education and the federal level.

The WSSDA FRN actively supports NSBA efforts to influence federal legislation by making regular and vigorous contacts with the Washington congressional delegation to explain the impact of federal education legislation on school operations in this state. It also works to alert NSBA and members of this state’s Congressional delegation about issues affecting education in this state that are related to actions of the federal government.

The WSSDA FRN and staff maintain regular communications with members of Congress, NSBA, WSSDA’s elected leaders and local school board members. The effectiveness of the FRN program is directly related to the number of school directors who understand the impact of federal action on their districts and actively communicate their concerns and opinions to their members of Congress.

Members of the WSSDA FRN have a number of responsibilities. These include:

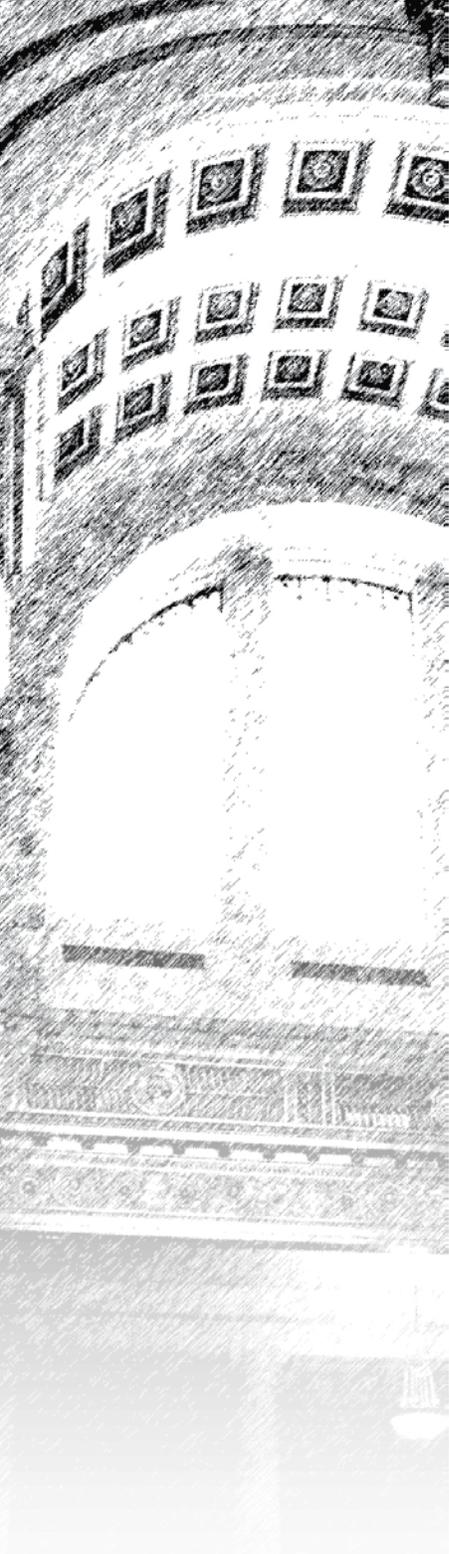
- Communicating to their respective members of Congress the views of NSBA and WSSDA relative to federal legislation and rules and regulations affecting education.
- Providing information relating to federal legislation, rules and regulations to the legislative representative on each school board in their Congressional

District and encouraging those representatives to report regularly on federal issues during their school board meetings.

- Identifying key board members in their Congressional District who enjoy the confidence of their Member of Congress and urging them to support the FRN efforts.
- Identifying board members who will actively support FRN efforts through regular contacts with their Congressional representatives.
- Encouraging school board members to communicate with groups and leaders in their communities about the impacts of federal actions on public education.
- Attending WSSDA Regional Meetings to discuss specific federal education issues as well as to build awareness and support for FRN activity.
- Developing resolutions on federal issues, when appropriate, for consideration by the WSSDA Legislative Committee or Resolutions Committee.
- Establishing personal contacts between local school officials and their members of Congress, when appropriate, to increase awareness of the impact of federal actions on local school operations.

NSBA coordinates a national Federal Relations Network conference each February in Washington, D.C. to give FRN members an opportunity to hear first-hand briefings on federal education issues, and to spend a “Day on the Hill” meeting with members of their respective Congressional delegations to discuss those issues.

FRN members are appointed each year by WSSDA’s president-elect. For more information about the FRN, contact WSSDA’s governmental relations department.



Chapter 4

Effective Advocacy

How to Make Your Voice Heard in Olympia

Legislators value clear, concise and informative communication from education advocates. Board members are in a good position to know what state-level policies work and don't work in public schools. Here are some proven ways to communicate effectively with your legislators.

Learn As Much As You Can About Your Legislators

It's important to learn as much as possible about your legislators before you contact them. This may influence the arguments you make and the action you take. Learn the following:

Committee assignments. The committees your legislators are assigned to indicate their primary areas of interest and influence. For example, a legislator sitting on the Ways and Means Committee will be a critical player in the battle for education funding.

Remember that it is important to keep all legislators advised on education issues. Ultimately, they all vote. Think long-range: Committee memberships change and your legislator—now well-informed through contact with you—may one day serve on a key committee.

Voting records. Knowing how your legislator voted in the past on key education issues will give you an idea of where each is likely to stand on the issue at hand. It may also help you shape your arguments.

Staff members. Legislative assistants play a key role because their contacts, opinions and knowledge are passed on to their legislator. Get to know your legislator's assistant by name, and make sure the assistant knows your name. They are the gate-keepers and can assure you an appointment or a returned phone call and make sure your message is delivered.

Personal information. Knowing some personal details about your legislator can help establish ties. Where did each go to elementary school, high school or college? What are their professions? What is their governmental service background? Did they serve on a school board or other local government position? What are their hobbies? Consider inviting your legislators back to their "old" school to see first-hand what's going on now.

Sample Letter to Your Legislator

School District Letterhead

The Honorable Pat Smith
Washington State Senate
xxx _____ Building
P.O. Box xxxx
Olympia, WA 98504-xxxx

Dear Senator Smith:

(If you know the legislator personally, customize the greeting by striking out the formal salutation and writing in the legislator's first name.)

I am writing as President/Chair of the Anytown School District Board of Directors. On behalf of our board and our district, I urge you to support SB 5678, which provides adequate and stable funding for Washington's public schools.

With the enactment of SB 5678 our district will be able to . . . [Insert local information]

Thank you for your leadership in support of Washington's public schools. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Jean Doe
President
Anytown School District Board of Directors
(xxx) 456-1234

Writing Your Legislator

Personal, thoughtful letters have a considerable impact.

The most effective way to write to your legislators is as an entire board. Individual letters are the next best. To get letters written in the often brief time-frame of legislative politics, have a board policy in place authorizing a point person to write on behalf of the board or for the board chair's signature. (Check with Marilee – Sample Policy? See Page....???)

When writing, keep the following in mind:

- Focus on one issue or bill per letter and identify the bill by name and number.
- Express your point of view and explain why your legislator should be supportive. Be brief and courteous.
- Briefly explain the local impact of the legislation—just the facts.
- Request that your legislators take a specific position on the bill. If you want their support, you may want to ask them to cosponsor the bill or to vote for its passage.
- Ask for a response from your legislator.
- When writing an individual letter, use your signature and personal letterhead and state that you are a board member. If it is a collective letter written by the board, have the chair sign it and put it on the board's letterhead.
- Make sure your return address is on the letter (envelopes often get lost) so that your legislator can respond.

For the fastest response to letters, address them to:

The Honorable [Full Name]
Washington State Senate
xxx _____ Building
P.O. Box xxxx
Olympia, WA 98504-xxxx

Dear Senator [Last Name]:

-or-

The Honorable [Full Name]
Washington State House of Representatives
xxx _____ Building
P.O. Box xxxx
Olympia, WA 98504-xxxx

Dear Representative [Last Name]:

NOTE: If the time-frame is too short for regular mail, consider faxing your letter. Most legislators have published fax numbers which can be obtained from the Legislature's Web site at www.leg.wa.gov.

E-mailing your legislator is also an option for shorter messages. However, because of the volume of e-mails legislators receive, yours may be retrieved by a staff member or accidentally deleted and never seen by your legislator. A hard copy letter mailed or faxed is by far your best choice.

Refer to the Legislature's Web site for legislators' interim and regular session snail-mail and e-mail addresses and phone and fax numbers.

Calling Your Legislator

Phone calls are an effective and fast way to communicate with your legislator, especially when a critical vote is coming up.

Phone calls can remind legislators that constituents are closely monitoring their votes. Sometimes you may be able to have a major conversation with your legislator. Other times, your calls may simply be tallied by the receptionist and your legislators are then given counts of constituents for and against the particular issue.

When phoning your legislator, keep the following in mind:

- Ask to speak with the legislator or legislative assistant, or briefly state your position to the receptionist. This is one of the times your carefully nurtured relationship pays dividends!

- Give your name, your title (school director or school board member) and your school district.
- Focus on one issue or bill. Whenever possible, identify the bill by number and name.
- Briefly state what position you want your legislator to take on the issue. Be prepared to give a locally based rationale for your position.
- Ask for your legislator's position on the bill.
- If asked, give your address so that you can receive a written response.

To contact your legislator when the Legislature is session: call the toll-free Legislative Hotline 800.562.6000 and ask to be connected to your legislator's office. You can also call directly. Legislative phone numbers are available the Legislature's Web site (www.leg.wa.gov).

Meeting Face-to-Face With Your Legislator

Meeting in person with your legislator is the most effective way to make your views known and influence legislation.

You can visit your legislators in Olympia or meet with them when they're back home. During legislative sessions, legislators often hold town hall meetings in their districts or attend other community functions, often in the evenings or on Saturdays.

Also consider inviting your legislator to visit a school in your district to see programs in action! If a face-to-face meeting cannot be arranged, consider setting up a conference call with your legislator and several other education advocates.

Tips for setting up meetings:

- Write or call your legislator's Olympia office and ask to schedule a meeting. State the subject(s) to be discussed and the time needed. Most meetings in Olympia last 15 to 20 minutes, although they can last longer especially if a coalition of people is included.
- Depending on the issue, arrange to make your visit along with several other board members, educators or community members to demonstrate broad support for your position. Let the legislator's office know who will be attending the meeting with you.
- Call WSSDA's Governmental Relations team to let us know that you have a meeting scheduled. We'll provide you with the latest information for your meeting.

Tips for a successful meeting:

- Call the legislator's assistant to discuss issues in advance of meeting and afterwards.
- Hold a pre-meeting with everyone who will be lobbying to make sure all agree on your position. Decide in advance who will discuss which points so that your visit runs smoothly.
- Be concise and focus on just a few issues or bills. Remember, your legislator may have no understanding of the bill, so be prepared to educate!
- Whenever possible, speak from personal experience. Provide brief anecdotal evidence of how this issue affects your school district, and therefore the legislator's constituents.
- Ask directly for your legislator's support. If legislators are supportive, ask them to lobby other legislators to support your position. If they disagree with you, express respectful disappointment, and rebut their argument if you have the facts to do so. Be courteous—you'll have other issues to take up in the future.
- Always provide a concise, one-page fact sheet or letter describing your position to be left with your legislator as a reminder of the issues and your visit.
- After the meeting, write a letter to thank legislators for their time and reinforce your position. This is also a good opportunity to address any questions asked or to provide additional information.
- Contact WSSDA and let us know how your legislator responded to the issues.

How to Testify in Committee

Committee hearings are an integral part of the legislative process. These hearings are an opportunity for legislators to take public input on a bill as they begin refining it for consideration by the full House or Senate.

Legislative hearings are conducted informally. They are not judicial proceedings and the rules are somewhat relaxed. Anyone may testify.

The committee chair will open the hearing on a particular bill. Frequently, opening comments will be made by the bill's sponsor or by committee staff. Sometimes, however, the chair will ask for testimony from proponents and opponents immediately.

The chair will organize the hearing to ensure that the committee members hear relevant information, that interested persons are given the opportunity to express their positions, and that the hearing does not exceed the time available.

Most committee hearings are limited to two hours and may have several matters pending. The chair will attempt to be fair and provide each person an opportunity to testify. It may be necessary, however, to restrict testimony so that everyone is given an opinion to express his or her opinions. You may be called to testify with others to save time.

While you do not need formal training to testify, there are many things you can do to prepare that will strengthen your impact in presenting to a legislative committee.

Before you attend the hearing:

- Prepare your remarks. Time is usually limited, so be brief and direct. Written testimony should not be read at committee hearings. Committee staff will distribute copies of written testimony to members of the committee if you bring a sufficient number—one for each member. Writing your comments in outline form will be helpful when you speak, and you should summarize your written testimony.
- Avoid duplication. If other persons will be offering similar testimony at the hearing, try to coordinate your testimony and avoid duplication. Well organized testimony is the most effective.

At the hearing:

- Be punctual. Usually there is only one public hearing at which testimony is taken on a particular bill. If you arrive at the last minute or are late, you may not get an opportunity to testify—especially if the bill in question is controversial or has a high degree of interest.
- Sign in. Locate the sign-up sheet near the entrance of the hearing room and write your name, address, and whether you favor or oppose the bill. After you sign in, check to see if copies of proposed amendments or substitute bills are available, take your written materials to the committee staff for distribution, and talk to the committee staff if you are going to be using the presentation equipment.

When you are called to make your remarks:

- Introduce yourself. Begin by giving your name to the chair and committee members, where you are from, the organization you represent (if any) and your purpose for testifying. For example,
“Mr. or Madam Chair and members of the committee, I am John Doe from

Spokane. I am here representing _____ (or myself). I/we support this bill because ...”

- Be brief and be sure your remarks are clear. Avoid being too technical and do not repeat previously made remarks. You do not need to be nervous or worried about how you present your testimony.
- Be prepared for questions and comments from committee members. These are designed to gain additional information, but don't answer if you are not sure of the answer. Tell the members you will send a written answer to the committee, and then follow through.

Strengthening Your Message With a Coalition

Coalition building is a natural part of your local leadership as a board member and it can be a powerful advocacy tool.

When working on a specific advocacy effort, decide if a coalition will help achieve your goals. Think about the nature of the issue; some have a broader appeal than others.

Look to other boards, teachers, parents, administrators, other local elected officials, business leaders, and education advocates to join your effort. Ask yourself who else has a stake in the outcome of the issue and how important it is to them. Also, consider who may have a particular influence with decision-makers.

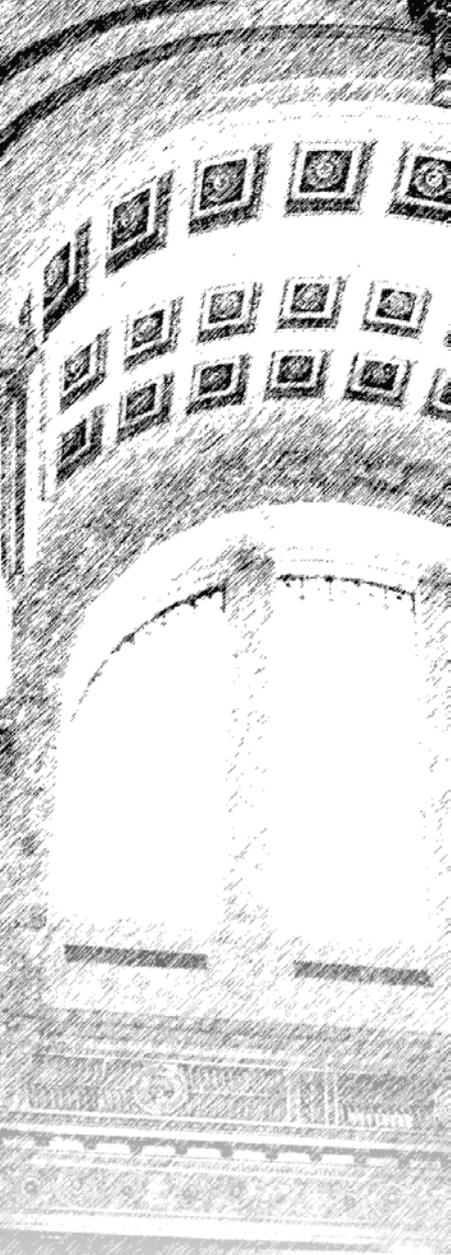
A team including your board president/chair, superintendent, local education association representative, and the head of your parent advocate group makes a strong statement to your legislator.

Top 10 Tips for Effective Advocacy With Your Legislators

- Tip 1** Research your legislators' backgrounds, committee assignments, and voting records on your issues.
- Tip 2** Develop relationships with your legislators by routinely visiting, writing and calling.
- Tip 3** Don't overdo your advocacy. Only communicate when you have something important to say.
- Tip 4** Invite your legislators to visit your schools. Plan a tour of your school district to showcase successful programs in action.
- Tip 5** Advocate using with your real life experience. It's your most persuasive tool.
- Tip 6** Set priorities. When everything is important, nothing is important.
- Tip 7** Shore up allies from your community to demonstrate broad support.
- Tip 8** Don't forget the news media. Getting your message out to the news media can influence your legislators and public opinion.
- Tip 9** Always be positive and courteous. In politics, there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies.
- Tip 10** Everyone likes a pat on the back. Remember to thank each of your legislators for jobs well-done.

The Five Cs of Coalition Building:

- 1. Consistency.** Focus on one issue and make sure everyone agrees on the goal. An easy way to reach solidarity is to have coalition members sign a "coalition letter" to your legislator that outlines your position. Also, if you are working on a statewide campaign, check in with WSSDA to ensure that your message is consistent with other boards.
- 2. Commitment.** Your issue does not have to be the top priority of every coalition partner—but partners do need to commit to action that furthers the cause. Never have a meeting without giving out assignments—signing a joint coalition letter, making a phone call, agreeing to attend a lobby visit with you.
- 3. Convenience.** Make getting involved easy for your coalition partners. The easier it is, the more likely they will help.
- 4. Communication.** Keep in touch with your allies by phone, e-mail, fax or mail. You can work effectively with groups or individuals even if you rarely see them. Regular communication ensures that all partners continue to understand and agree on the goals and message of your advocacy.
- 5. Compromise.** Sometimes bringing diverse groups together requires compromise. Decide where you have flexibility that does NOT compromise your overall goal. Compromise on some points that are not truly important to you to gain the strength of numbers and the diversity of coalition partners.



Chapter 5

The News Media

A Powerful Advocacy Tool

Never underestimate the power of the press. Not only does it help shape public opinion, it can be one of the most powerful advocacy tools. Legislators look to the news media to “take a pulse” on what is important to their constituents. If you educate the news media effectively, your issues are likely to get positive coverage that goes straight to your senator and representatives.

Writing Letters-to-the-Editor and Guest Opinions

Letters-to-the-editor and opinions written by readers (called op-eds) are useful ways to speak out on an issue, respond to an article or editorial, or express your position in your own words.

Letters and guest opinions often are read by legislators and can do double-time as a advocacy tool.

Concentrate on writing letters-to-the-editor or guest columns for your local newspaper since that will have the greatest impact in Olympia. Even a letter or op-ed that does not get published is valuable because it may be considered by a newspaper’s editorial board. Or it may cause the paper to write a story on the issue.

Hints for effective letters and guest columns

- Be brief and focus on one issue. If the letter is too long, the newspaper may edit out some important facts. How long is too long? Look at your newspaper’s opinion page for guidelines on submittal and word limits. If this isn’t available, count the words in an average letter-to-the-editor. The average op-ed is usually longer, between 500 and 750 words.
- For a letter-to-the-editor, refer to a recent event or an article that appeared in the newspaper and include the article’s date and title.
- When applicable, close your letter or op-ed by asking readers to contact their legislator or other policymakers about the issue.
- Give your address, title and phone number so the newspaper can verify authorship.
- Clip your published letter-to-the-editor or op-ed and mail or fax it to your legislators.

Meeting With Editorial Boards

A lead editorial supporting your cause makes a powerful statement.

It is unlikely, however, that this will happen without some effort on your part. Meeting with newspaper editorial boards in advance to explain your views can be the catalyst for a favorable editorial that will address the issue at home as well as in Olympia.

To facilitate a successful meeting:

- Request a formal meeting by writing a letter to the editorial page editor or by calling the editorial office. Briefly explain the issue you would like to discuss and who will be with you at the meeting.
- Go to the meeting prepared to lay the facts on the table as well as your background materials. If possible, bring the board president and other leaders from a coalition, if one exists, to lend weight to the meeting.
- Although a face-to-face meeting is more effective, you can also simply write to the editorial page editor, send your background material, and follow-up by phone.
- When preparing the background material, try to include both the local and broader implications of the issue so the editor can see that it hits home and is of wider concern.
- Once you have made contact with members of the editorial board, keep that relationship going. Send a thank you note for the meeting and another note if they run a favorable editorial.

Holding Successful News Conferences

Use news conferences sparingly, if at all. In most communities, meeting one-on-one with your local reporter is a much more effective way to get your message out.

Tips for organizing your news conference

- Pick a date when there is a “news hook” and articles already are likely to be written about your subject. Also, avoid times when a competing event will attract the news media away from your event.
- News conferences should be held at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., or 2 p.m. in order to assure TV news coverage that day and newspaper coverage the following morning.

- Notify the news media a few days before the news conference by sending a simple News Advisory indicating date, time and location of the event and briefly explain its importance.
- Provide a visual backdrop and hold the press conference in a place that reinforces the message you want to convey for television cameras—for instance, a school building in need of repair would be a good place for a news conference on the need for capital improvement funds.
- Choose a room of appropriate size with just enough chairs for those who said they would attend. Make sure there are enough electrical outlets for cameras and microphones.
- Identify a person to be in charge and let each speaker know when to speak.
- Keep all comments brief, a few minutes at most. You should have no more than three or four speakers, preferably each with an important point of view and different perspective.
- Develop a kit of materials for the event. This should include the news releases you have prepared, the day's agenda, the text of any speeches to be given, background on the issue, and facts about your district and other sponsors of the event.

Writing A News Release

A news release is the basic means of official communication with the media.

It can state your board's position, announce a newsworthy event such as the creation of a coalition or the launching of a campaign. Reporters may use information from news releases to supplement stories they are already writing, or they may be inspired to write stories. A news release should tell the facts—who, what, when, where, why and how.

Tips for writing a news release

- Write a headline that is attention-grabbing (use active verbs, not passive voice).
- Write the release so it reads like a news story with the more important details first. Present your viewpoint in the most positive way.
- Make your board, school district or coalition the active player in the first sentence, e.g., "The Anytown School Board commended State Representative Smith for agreeing to support legislation to update buildings of Anytown School District."

- Quote a spokesperson from your coalition. Reporters can use these quotes in their stories. Keep quotes brief and conversational—remember, people are quoted to lend color and opinion. Quotes are not meant to impart facts that can be found in your release.
- Include a release date, contact name, and contact phone number/e-mail address at the top of the release.

Distributing your news release

Make two lists—a mailing list (including e-mails) and a telephone list—of all your local media outlets. Learn the times for local TV news programs and the deadlines for newspapers. When calling daily newspaper reporters, try to call in the morning or early afternoon since most deadlines are in the late afternoon. Keep lists handy so you can deliver your message fast when news breaks.

- Your news media list should include the education reporters and columnists from local and state media. Include print, radio, TV and “wire services.” Only send one release to each place.
- If you don’t know which reporters cover the issue, send the news release to the assignment editor of TV and radio stations and the news editor at newspapers. Keep updating your list—reporters change often.
- Keep a clipping file of stories about schools, education and local government so you will get to know which reporters cover which topics.
- Many local groups, parent associations, teacher unions, colleges, churches, business and civic organizations have newsletters that might be interested in your issue. Send releases to them—which also shows your leadership on an issue and can generate new allies.

Sample News Release

School District Letterhead

For Immediate Release

Date: March 15, 20--
Contact: Jean Doe, President
Anytown School District Board of Directors
Telephone: (xxx) 456-1234

Anytown School Board Forms Coalition to Request Adequate and Stable Long-Term School Funding

Anytown, W. — The Anytown School Board today announced the formation of a regional coalition of local school boards, school administrators, teachers, business leaders and parents to promote legislative approval of adequate and stable long-term K-12 school funding.

Coalition leaders say they will present a strong, united front to urge local legislators to support a comprehensive restructuring of the state's outdated K-12 finance system.

"It's time for the Legislature to make educating our children a priority," said Anytown School Board President Jean Doe. "We need to foster a real state and local partnership to support the resources needed to fund our children's education."

The coalition includes the Anytown School Board, the Anytown Education Association, the Anytown Chamber of Commerce, school personnel, parents and local business leaders.

Last year, the Anytown School Board cut its budget by eight percent because of the lack of state funding. In the last five years, the district's budget has dropped by 12 percent.

"Clearly, the money received from Olympia is woefully inadequate to provide the quality education our students deserve," Doe said.

Pat Smith, a business leader in the community, stated that "a strong state investment in the education of our children is a real investment in the economic development of our area."

The coalition will work with the entire Anytown area legislative delegation to secure adequate and stable long-term school funding.

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Top 10 Tips for Good Media Relations

Tip 1 Stay local. One strong article in your hometown newspaper may be worth 10 in a large metropolitan daily.

Tip 2 Keep it focused. You may have many issues, but stick to one at a time to make sure your most important point is covered.

Tip 3 Clip and send positive stories. A good article can have a long life. Send newspaper clippings to your legislators, coalition partners and other decision-makers.

Tip 4 Don't forget your own news outlets. Take advantage of school district, ESD and community college newsletters, publications, radio, and cable programs to educate and get others involved in your advocacy campaigns.

Tip 5 Just the facts. Stick to what you know and never exaggerate. You can always get back to reporters after finding the right answer.

Tip 6 Don't just say it—show it. A demonstration or real-life testimonial goes a long way to illustrate your point and make it more meaningful.

Tip 7 Build news media relationships. Get to know the education reporters and take the time to meet with editorial boards.

Tip 8 Put news media relations in your legislative advocacy policy. Media relations should be a year-round function—part of the “official” function of your district or education agency in its legislative advocacy role.

Tip 9 Appoint a spokesperson for your board. This contact person must be fully informed about your legislative advocacy agenda to know what to discuss and what not to discuss.

Tip 10 Take advantage of all the news media outlets. Legislative offices may read newspapers most often, but radio and television have a powerful impact on public opinion and shouldn't be overlooked.

Tips For Approaching Television And Radio Programs

Once you have identified a TV or radio program that might be interested in your issue, contact the producer of the show to suggest that you or someone from your coalition be featured on the program.

Prepare a follow-up letter and have a packet of materials ready to provide background information.

If it is a show where guests debate, make sure you know the format, who you are debating and how much time you have. If you don't like the format, ask if they can restructure. Otherwise, you need to decide whether to do the show.

Stay focused on one issue. Prepare “talking points” to help you deliver your main point(s).

Anticipate the tough questions before you go on the air and prepare some solid responses.

Use repetition. On radio talk shows in particular, your message could get lost in a lengthy discussion. Since listeners end up with a few key impressions of the show, repetition will help deliver your main message.



Glossary of Legislative Terms and Acronyms

Administrative Rule – Any agency directive, standard, regulation or statement of general applicability that implements, interprets or prescribes law or policy, or describes the procedure or practice requirements of any agency. In Washington, state administrative rules are contained in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

Agenda – The proposed order of business for a meeting.

Act – A bill which has been made law by passing both houses of the Legislature, and which either has been signed by the governor, filed without the governor’s signature, or passed by both houses of the Legislature over the governor’s veto.

Adopt – To approve formally.

Agency Request – Measures introduced at the request of a statewide elected official or an agency of the executive branch of government, such as the governor or the Department of Health, are called Agency Request bills.

Amendment – An alteration made or proposed to be made to a measure. Measures may be amended more than once. (See also “Striking Amendment.”)

Appropriation – A sum of money designated for a particular purpose by an Act. For example, an appropriations bill funds a state agency over the upcoming biennium.

Bar of the House/Senate – The station of the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate and assistants at the front of the House or Senate chamber. This term also refers to where bills and amendments sit awaiting action.

Bicameral – A body made up of or having two houses, branches or chambers. Washington, for example, has a bicameral Legislature comprised of a House of Representatives and a Senate.

Biennium, Biennial – A two-year period. In Washington, the state budget is approved for a biennium. (See “The State Budget” under Understanding the Legislative Process.)

Bill – A measure that creates new law, amends or repeals existing law, appropriates money, prescribes fees, transfers functions from one agency to another, provides penalties or takes other action.

Bill Digest – A section-by-section summary of a bill, prepared by the Code Reviser’s office.

Bill Drafting Guide – The manual that explains the official, uniform system for preparation of all legislative measures. Both chambers of the Washington Legislature follow this uniform system set out in the manual, which is prepared by the Code Reviser.

Bill Report (or Bill Analysis) – A brief, impartial description of a measure prepared by committee staff that must accompany the bill when it is reported out of committee.

Call of the House or Senate – A Call of the House or Senate is a means of compelling all members (unless they are excused) of that chamber to present themselves for a vote on a particular matter. If it comes time for a vote, and it appears to members that other members are not present in the chamber, a motion from the floor directs the presiding officer to issue a call of the House or Senate. The Call empowers the Sergeant at Arms to lock the chamber, preventing those present from leaving, and requires the Sergeant at Arms to bring in absent members — under arrest, if necessary, for the vote.

Call to Order – Notice given indicating the Legislature is officially in session. Also used to restore order during floor action.

Capital – Refers to the capital city of the state. Olympia is the capital of Washington.

Capital Budget – Makes appropriations for construction, remodeling and renovation of public facilities, including K-12 schools. (See “The State Budget” under Understanding the Legislative Process.)

Capitol – Refers to a building. Washington is unique in that it has a “Capitol Group” of buildings (called the Capitol Campus), of which the Legislative Building is the domed capitol.

Caucus – Used as both a noun and a verb. A caucus (n.) is a group of people who share something in common. For example, they are members of the same political party, such as the Senate Republican Caucus or the House Democratic Caucus, or come from the same area of the state, such as the Coastal Caucus or the Eastern Washington Caucus, or share something else in common, such as the Freshman Caucus or the Women’s Caucus. When these people caucus (v.) they meet to address their group’s policy questions and to select political candidates for office or political party leaders. Both major party caucuses of the House and Senate have meeting rooms in the Legislative Building.

Chair – The legislator appointed by leadership in the House or Senate to preside over an individual committee; for example, the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee.

Chamber – The official hall for the meeting of a legislative body.

Chapter Number – A chapter number, in numerical order, is given to each bill enacted. The chapter number is the number of the law. When codified the chapter is inserted in the appropriate section of the statutes known as the Revised Code of Washington.

Chief Clerk of the House – The chief administrative officer of the House of Representatives. The Chief Clerk is elected by all the members of the House, and is responsible for keeping records of the proceedings of the House, supervising House employees, acting as parliamentarian of the House and advising members on parliamentary procedures, and preparing all House publications for printing.

“Christmas Tree” Bill – A bill generally passed late in a legislative session that contains funding for particular projects. It gains its name from the “ornaments” that are attached to attract votes.

Code Reviser – The Office of the Code Reviser publishes the Revised Code of Washington. This office is also the official bill drafting arm of the Legislature and provides a central bill drafting service for legislators, legislators-elect, legislative committees, joint committees, the governor, state elected officials, and agencies. The Statute Law Committee provides oversight of the Office of the Code Reviser.

Committee Counsel – Attorneys assigned to committees to provide advice and assistance.

Committee Report – A report made to the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate by a standing, special, or conference committee, which recommends further action on a measure, or reports the measure without recommendation.

Companion Bill – A bill introduced in the same form in both the House and Senate.

Concurrence Calendar – A list of own-house bills amended by the opposite house and returned for possible agreement.

Concurrent Resolution – A measure relating to the internal operation of the Legislature, in which one house concurs in the action of the other; it may originate in either house.

Conference Committee – A committee consisting of three members (two majority party members and one minority party member) of each chamber, appointed by their respective presiding officers. A conference committee is appointed when one chamber refuses to concur with amendments to a measure adopted by the other chamber. Its goal is to prepare a version of the measure acceptable to both houses. A conference committee does not actually have to meet other than to adopt a Conference Report, which must be done in public.

Consent Calendar – Bills with little or no known opposition are placed on a special calendar, called the Consent Calendar, by the Rules Committee.

Constituent – A citizen residing within the district of a legislator (or other elected official).

Constitutional Majority – A majority of those members elected to either the Senate or the House. In the Senate a constitutional majority is 25; in the House it is 50.

Cut-off Dates – Deadlines set by the Legislature for specified action, such as bill introduction, committee action or passage of bills by either house.

Daily Status Report – A document, also known as the “Bill Status Sheet,” published daily during a Legislative Session listing the measures introduced to date, the action taken on each measure, the dates of hearings and work sessions, and other legislative information. After adjournment, a compilation of every measure introduced during the session is published in a Final Status Report.

Dispute Calendar – A list of bills amended by one body where the second body refuses to concur and asks the first body to recede.

District – A geographical area designated for representation by a Senator and/or Representative. Legislative districts are drawn to ensure that a nearly equal number of constituents reside in each legislator’s district, and are re-drawn by a specially-appointed Redistricting Commission every 10 years to accurately reflect changes in population.

Do Pass – The recommendation by a committee for passage, abbreviated “DP.” (Note: sometimes incorrectly written as “due pass.”) “DPA” means “do pass with amendments.”

Drop – Slang term for the introduction of a legislative measure. A measure must be physically “dropped” in the hopper to start the process. (See also “Hopper.”)

Effective Date – The normal effective date of an Act that is not referred to the people (see “Referendum Clause”) is the 91st day after adjournment sine die, unless the Act contains special provisions, such as an emergency clause or a special (delayed) effective date.

Emergency Clause – A statement added to the end of a measure which causes the Act to become effective before the accustomed date (the 91st day after final adjournment). An emergency clause makes a bill effective immediately upon the signature of the governor. Bills containing emergency clauses are generally exempt from citizen referendum provisions. (See “Referendum Measure.”)

Engrossed Bill – A measure that has been amended on the floor of the bill’s house of origin (that is, the house in which the bill was introduced).

Enrolled Bill – A final copy of a bill which has passed both houses of the Legislature and has been specially reprinted in preparation for the signatures of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. After these confirmatory signatures, the enrolled bill goes to the governor for action.

Executive Session – A meeting for committee members to discuss and vote on bills they wish to report out of committee. These meetings are open to the public but no testimony is taken. Note that in other contexts executive sessions are closed to the public.

First Reading – The recitation on the chamber floor of the measure number, title and sponsor by the Reading Clerk upon introduction of a measure in either chamber. After the first reading, the measure is referred to committee by the Speaker or President.

Fiscal Note – An analysis that estimates future costs resulting from the passage of a bill. Fiscal notes are prepared by the state agency that deals with the subject matter of a particular bill. For example, the fiscal note on a bill regarding school bus purchases would be prepared by OSPI. All fiscal notes prepared by state agencies must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Financial Management before the fiscal note is released to the Legislature.

Floor of the House or Senate – The actual floor space, committed primarily to legislators' desks, on which business of the Legislature is conducted.

Floor Calendar – A list or schedule of pending business on the House or Senate floor.

Floor Resolution – Floor resolutions, which may be offered from the floor of either house, usually honor or commemorate an individual, organization or event. It may also call for some type of action.

Gallery – Areas of both chambers where public visitors may observe the Legislature in session.

General Election – An election involving most or all constituencies in a state (or nation) in choosing candidates for office and voting on ballot measures. In Washington, the general election is held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November of even-numbered years.

Germane-ness – "Germane" means "appropriate, relevant, pertinent." As the term is used in the Washington Legislature, "germane-ness" refers to whether a concept or idea fits into a bill. It is a different way of talking about Washington's "one-subject" rule, which states that bills may only address one subject. (See "Scope and Object.")

Hearing – A public meeting of a legislative committee held for the purpose of taking testimony concerning proposed legislation.

Hopper – Box located in the bill drafting area in which legislative measures are deposited (or “dropped”) for introduction.

House of Representatives – The legislative body consisting of 98 members (two each from the state’s 49 legislative districts), called Representatives.

“Indefinitely Postponed” – A motion from the floor to postpone further consideration of a bill, without identifying a time certain for further consideration. In the majority of cases, bills that are indefinitely postponed are not heard again.

Initiative – A system of direct legislation by the people. Approved in 1912, it allows Washington citizens to propose new laws or change existing laws through a general election ballot measure (initiatives may not be used to amend the state’s constitution). To place an initiative on the ballot, supporters must obtain a specified number of signatures from registered voters. The number required is determined by a fixed percentage of the votes cast for all candidates for governor at the general election preceding the filing of the petition. Initiative petitions require eight percent of the gubernatorial vote, currently 241,153 valid signatures. (See “Referendum Measure.”)

Interim – The period of time between sessions of the Legislature.

Interim Committee – A legislative committee authorized by the Legislature to study a particular subject or subjects between sessions. Interim committees are appointed by leadership, normally after the end of session.

Joint Committee – A legislative committee composed of members of both houses. NOTE: Committees may also meet jointly. Two committees may meet simultaneously, for example, to hear testimony on matters of interest to both committees. Such a meeting does not constitute a joint committee.

Joint Memorial – A measure adopted by both houses and used to make a request of or to express an opinion to Congress, the President of the United States, or both. Proposed amendments to the US Constitution are also in the form of joint memorials.

Joint Resolution – A measure used for proposing constitutional amendments. Proposed constitutional amendments require a two-thirds vote of both houses and must go to a statewide vote of the people, where a simple majority vote is required for approval.

Journal – The edited record of all the proceedings on the floors of both houses, published after each legislative session.

Leadership – The officers elected by their respective caucuses. The Senate normally elects the following officers: President Pro Tempore; Majority/Minority Leader; Majority/Minority Caucus Chair; Majority/Minority Caucus Vice Chair; Majority/Minority Floor Leader; and Majority/Minority Whip. Other officers may

also be elected in each caucus. The House normally elects the following officers: Speaker (who is elected by the full House); Speaker Pro Tempore; Majority/Minority Leader; Majority/Minority Caucus Chair; Majority/Minority Caucus Vice Chair; Majority/Minority Whip; and Majority/Minority Floor Leader. Other officers may also be elected in each caucus.

Legislative Information Center (LIC) – Informally known as the Bill Room, the LIC is located on the first floor of the Legislative Building. The LIC provides copies of all bills and other legislative documents and staff are available to answer questions about the Legislature and the legislative process.

Lobbyist – A person who is employed by or volunteers for an organization to represent its interests before the Legislature.

Maintenance Level – A budgetary term that refers to any budget proposal which requests future funding for service provision “at the current level.” The current service level will reflect changes due to inflation, labor contract changes, case-load changes and any other changes required to continue providing the same level of service.

Majority Leader – A legislator elected by his or her peers to lead the party having the majority in his or her chamber. The majority leader is responsible for developing and implementing the caucus agenda.

Measure – A written document used by the Legislature to propose a law or to express itself as a body. A measure may be a bill, a memorial or a resolution.

Minority Leader – A legislator elected by his or her peers to lead the party in the minority in his or her chamber. The minority leader is responsible for developing and implementing the caucus agenda.

Minority Report – A minority report is a committee report (see “Committee Report”) written by committee members who are in the minority on the issue in question on a particular bill (NOT necessarily in the political minority party) for the purposes of officially stating their position on the issue.

Motion – The formal way of directing debate on the floor or in committee. It is the way, for example, that a member introduces a measure for debate on the floor.

Necessary to Implement the Budget (NTIB) – Bills that are budget-related and considered “Necessary to Implement the Budget” are generally exempt from the Legislature’s self-imposed cut-off dates.

Null and Void Clause – Language often added to fiscal bills which specifies that a measure is invalid unless funding is provided in the budget by a specific date.

Office of Financial Management (OFM) – The chief executive agency for evaluating the budget, preparing fiscal notes and providing fiscal policy analysis to the governor.

Office of Program Research (OPR) – A nonpartisan, legislative staff office that provides research, legal, and administrative services to House committees.

Operating Budget – The two-year plan for funding ongoing activities of state government, except transportation activities.

Page – A high school student who works on the chamber floors, and occasionally in committees, to distribute materials, open doors, pass notes, and generally facilitate the legislative work flow. Each page is appointed by legislators for a week. Honorary pages are guests of members who serve as pages for a day.

Parliamentary Inquiry – An inquiry of the committee chair, in committee, or of the presiding officer on the floor, concerning parliamentary process.

Passage – Favorable action on a measure before either chamber.

Per diem – “For the day” – An allowance made to legislators for expenses when on legislative business.

Point of Inquiry – A motion from the floor or from a committee member in order to ask a question. Typically, such questions are about such issues as parliamentary procedures or agenda items under consideration.

Point of Order – A motion from the floor or from a committee member calling attention to a breach of order or a breach of rules.

Point of Personal Privilege – A way in which a legislator can get the attention of the presiding officer on the floor of either chamber. It is used, for example, when a legislator wants to introduce a guest or acknowledge someone.

President of the Senate – The presiding officer of the Senate. In Washington, the Lieutenant Governor, a statewide elected official, is the President of the Senate.

President Pro Tempore – President “for a time” – a Senator elected to serve as the temporary President in the absence of the President of the Senate.

Prime Sponsor – See “Sponsor.”

Primary – A preliminary election in which voters narrow the field of candidates for offices appearing on the general election ballot. Washington’s primary is held the third Tuesday in August.

Proviso – A clause in a bill that sets out specific exceptions to the general law.

Quorum – The number of members required to be present before business can be transacted in the House, Senate or a committee. In the House, 50 members

must be present; in the Senate, 25 members; and in committees a constitutional majority constitutes a quorum.

Reconsideration – Taking a second vote on a measure after a motion to do so. In order to move for reconsideration, a legislator must have voted on the “prevailing side” of the first vote.

Reed’s Rules – The source document for legislative parliamentary procedures. It is used in Washington only in instances which are not provided for in the state constitution or the rules of either house.

Refer – To direct a bill to a committee: HB 2000 was referred to the Ways and Means Committee. Bill referrals are made by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

Referendum Bill (by the Legislature) – A proposed law referred to the electorate by the Legislature. In Washington, both houses of the Legislature must vote to refer a bill to the ballot. Such referrals cannot be vetoed by the governor.

Referendum Measure (by Petition) – A law recently passed by the Legislature that is placed on the ballot through petitions signed by voters. The number required is determined by a fixed percentage of the votes cast for all candidates for governor at the general election preceding the filing of the petition. Referendum petitions require four percent, currently 120,577 signatures. (See also “Initiative.”)

Referendum Clause – A clause added to the end of a measure which causes the Act to be referred to the people for their approval or rejection before it takes effect. The Act then goes on the ballot for a vote at the next general election, unless the Legislature calls a special election for it. (See “Referendum Bill.”)

Report Out – Action by a committee on a measure which moves the measure out of the committee. A measure may be reported out with a do pass, do not pass, do pass as amended, do pass substitute, refer to another committee or no recommendation.

Revised Code of Washington (RCWs) – The codified laws of the State of Washington. The RCWs are published by the Code Reviser every two years to incorporate each session’s new laws. The most recent version of the RCWs will have the date of the most recent Legislative session.

Roll Call – The record of how members voted on a particular issue or question. In the House of Representatives, all votes on bills on final passage are taken and recorded electronically. In the Senate, all votes on bills on final passage are taken orally.

Rules – The guidelines by which the Senate, the House of Representatives, or a committee governs its meetings. Rules are formally adopted at the first con-

vening of the Legislature or of a committee, and require a vote (with at least a quorum of members present) for official adoption.

Rules Committee – The committee responsible for setting the daily calendar of the Senate and House. The President of the Senate and Speaker of the House, respectively serve as chair of these committees.

Scope and Object – A parliamentary ruling by the presiding officer as to whether a proposed amendment fits within the subject matter of the bill under consideration. Senate and House rules prohibit amendments which change or expand the scope and object of a bill. Washington also has a “one subject” rule, which states that bills may only address one subject.

Second Reading – Second Reading occurs after the measure has been referred to committee, worked on, and reported back to the floor. Second reading provides an opportunity for the full chamber to consider amendments to a measure.

Secretary of the Senate – The chief administrative officer of the Senate. The Secretary of the Senate is elected by all the members of the Senate, and is responsible for keeping records of the proceedings of the Senate, supervising Senate employees, acting as parliamentarian of the Senate and advising members on parliamentary procedures, and preparing all Senate publications for printing.

Senate – The legislative body consisting of 49 members (one each from the state’s 49 legislative districts), called Senators.

Senate Committee Services – A nonpartisan, legislative staff office that provides research, legal, and administrative services to Senate committees.

Sergeant at Arms – A non-legislator elected by each chamber to maintain order.

Session – The period of time in which the Legislature officially convenes. The regular session begins on the second Monday in January of every year (regular sessions are limited to 105 days in odd-numbered years and 60 days in even-numbered years). Special sessions – limited to 30 days – may be convened at the call of the governor or by a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate. Typically, special sessions are called for the purpose of addressing a specific issue.

Session Laws – The collected laws and selected memorials and resolutions adopted during a legislative session. Session laws include any vetoes. (NOTE: The Session Laws are not the same as the Revised Code of Washington. The RCWs are the codified set of all current Washington laws.)

Sine Die – “Without fixing a day for a future meeting” – the last day of a legislative session.

Speaker of the House – The presiding officer of the House of Representatives, elected by all members of the House.

Speaker Pro Tempore – Speaker “for a time” – a Representative elected to serve as the temporary Speaker in the absence of the Speaker of the House.

Special (or Select) Committee – A committee authorized by Senate or House Rules to study a limited subject.

Sponsor – The legislator who introduces a measure. If there is more than one sponsor, the legislator whose name appears first on the list is called the “prime” sponsor.

Standing Committee – A permanent committee during a session authorized and named by Senate or House Rules.

Statute – A codified law. “Codify” means “to arrange laws systematically.” A codified law is one that has been incorporated into that section of the RCW that it amends, modifies or accompanies. (See “Revised Code of Washington.”)

Striking Amendment – An amendment that removes the text of a measure and inserts entirely new language. The new language must still fit within the subject matter of the title. Senate and House rules prohibit amendments which change or expand the purpose of the bill. (See “Scope and Object.”)

Subcommittee – A subordinate committee composed of members appointed by the Chair (or by House or Senate leadership) from the full committee. A subcommittee will consider a narrower range of topics than the full committee, and generally is authorized only to make recommendations to the full committee.

Substitute Measure – A measure submitted by a standing committee as a substitute for a measure referred to it. It is treated in the same manner as is an amendment if it is germane to the title and subject of the original measure.

Sunset Clause – A statement added to the end of a measure which causes the act to “sunset,” or become ineffective, after a certain date.

Supplemental Budget – a budget approved to make adjustments in the state biennial budget. (See “The State Budget” under Understanding the Legislative Process.)

Task Force – A legislative committee authorized by legislative leadership to study a specific subject for a specified period of time. A task force may contain lay members, and is different from a committee in that it typically considers a narrow subject within a broader topic area.

Third House – The term loosely referring to the collective members of the lobbying community. In Washington, the Third House is also a membership association which includes most of the professional lobbyists in the state. The association provides various services to its members, including a message service.

Third Reading – Third Reading is where a measure is put before the full chamber for debate on its merits and a roll call vote on final passage. The bill may not be amended at this stage.

Time Certain – A means of designating a definite time for a certain activity, for example, to hear a particular bill.

Title of Bill – The part of a bill which identifies the subject of the legislation and how it affects the Revised Code of Washington. Because Washington has a “one subject” rule, which states that bills may only address one subject, a bill’s title can be important. The title may be broad or very narrow and specific.

Title-only Bill – A bill which contains nothing more than a title and a number. It is introduced in order to ensure there is a vehicle on which to amend substance at a later time.

Ulcer Gulch – A slang term for the area in the Legislative Building used by lobbyists and general public for telephone calls and messages.

Veto – An action of the governor in disapproval of a measure that has passed both houses. After a veto, the bill is returned to its chamber of origin with written objections. A governor’s veto may be reconsidered by both houses, and if it is again passed by two-thirds of the members present, it is considered overridden and becomes law. It is reconsidered upon a motion from the floor, and must be reconsidered at the very next Legislative session following the veto.

Vice-Chair – A committee member chosen by leadership in the House or Senate to serve as the committee chair in the chair’s absence.

Washington Administrative Code (WACs) – A compilation of the administrative rules of Washington state agencies, compiled, indexed and published by the Office of the Code Reviser.

Whip – A caucus leadership position. The term derives from the British fox-hunting term “whipper-in,” which described the person responsible for keeping the foxhounds from leaving the pack. Each caucus in the Washington Legislature has at least one “whip” position who is responsible for counting votes, checking attendance and maintaining caucus discipline on partisan issues and procedural questions.

Work Session – A committee meeting held for the purpose of informally discussing a measure or topic. A work session is different from a public hearing. In a work session, no testimony is taken from the public, although the public may attend. Additionally, no executive action or amendments are permitted.

X-file – The list in which the House and Senate Rules Committees place bills that will go no further in the legislative process. Bills that fail to meet cut-off dates are often placed on the X-file.



It takes a village to raise a child.

~ African proverb

About WSSDA

Established by state law, the Washington State School Directors' Association is comprised of all 1,477 school board members from the state's 295 public school districts. WSSDA is authorized by the Washington State Legislature to be self-governed through officers elected from school boards around the state.

Under this structure, WSSDA is the school directors' own organization. Its services, programs and policies are determined by the members themselves.

WSSDA's core mission is focused on promoting student learning by ensuring that school board members have the knowledge, tools and services they need to effectively govern their districts and champion public education. To that end, WSSDA is:

- A leader in promoting effective governance by school directors through professional development and leadership programs, policy development, strategic planning services, and legal research;
- A respected, trusted advocate for public education and student achievement at the local, state and federal levels; and
- A comprehensive network through which school board members learn from each other, keep abreast of policy and legal developments in education, and share successful practices and innovative ideas.

Membership involvement in the association is one of the keys to its success. School board members have numerous opportunities to help set direction for WSSDA and to influence efforts to improve education statewide. Official positions of WSSDA, as well as the annual legislative program, are the result of grass-roots membership input.

Through the medium of an effective association, the school boards of Washington state have helped influence important school legislation. Board members prepare for their responsibilities through WSSDA conferences, seminars, workshops and materials. Directors are kept abreast of new developments and, together with their colleagues, help chart the future course of the schools.

Many local districts utilize the association's specialized services, particularly in the areas of board training and professional development, strategic planning, policy development, and public relations. Boards find that it is more feasible and economical to utilize the expertise of professionals under part-time contracts with WSSDA than it would be to employ administrators with comparable knowledge and ability.

This publication is but one example of the many ways in which WSSDA serves the interests of its members and of the public school students throughout the state.



Sample Policy

School Director Legislative Program

WSSDA School Director Policy 1225

School Director Legislative Program

The Board will represent the district's interests in legislative action to promote the welfare of public education in the state of Washington or will direct those interests to be represented through its executive officer, the superintendent or designee.

As a public entity, the Board must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. To effectively meet these responsibilities to the public and students of the district, the board will work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of effective schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause. The board also supports a legislative program that fosters the maintenance of local control in decision making and governance within the district.

To achieve these goals, the Board will periodically study, discuss and weigh the merits of pending legislation for the purpose of establishing its official position through board action. When established, these official positions will be the position of the district in the legislative process.

Board Legislative Activities

1. The Board will develop an annual legislative program through conferences with the Washington State School Directors' Association and the National School Board Association.
2. Support and work for legislation that promotes the quality of education within the _____ school district, the region and the state of Washington.
3. Commit to sending a team to the WSSDA/WASA legislative conference held each February.
4. Stay informed of pending legislation and actively communicate concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level by regular contact with their legislators in-district, in Olympia and in Washington DC.
5. Seek adequate funding for schools and full funding for state and federally mandated programs.

6. Set aside Board meeting time to discuss legislative issues, using resources such as WSSDA's Daily Legislative Updates and WSSDA's IMPACT newsletter.
7. Respond appropriately to request for legislative proposals, comments on legislative proposals, and development of priority positions.
8. Ensure that local media representatives and legislators are invited to Board meetings and school activities.
9. Work for the achievement of common legislative objectives with WSSDA and with other concerned groups.
10. Inform the public of its legislative priorities and outcomes of its legislative efforts.
11. Designate one of its members to serve as legislative representative with the Washington State School Directors' Association.

Board members, individually or as members of professional organizations will not represent positions conflicting with the District's on legislative matters unless it is made clear that such representation is not the official position of the district.

WSSDA Legislative Representative

The Board's Washington State School Directors' Legislative Representative serves as the contact person and acts as the coordinator of the board's state legislative activities. The legislative representative also serves as the board's liaison with the Washington State School Directors' Association Legislative Assembly. The legislative representative shall assume office July 1 in an even year for a two-year period. The legislative representative shall:

1. Attend Washington State School Directors' Association Assemblies conveying local views and concerns to that body and participating in the formulation of state legislative programs;
2. Monitor proposed education legislation;
3. Inform the board of pending legislative issues and existing or proposed WSSDA legislative positions; and
4. Participate in WSSDA's activities related to legislative representatives.

Adoption Date:

School District Name:

Revised:

Classification:



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