

**Week 2:
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“A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.” ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

Week two of the 60-day session flew by. The week was full of celebrations on [enactment of the long-awaited capital budget](#) and review of the now-public [McCleary / EHB 2242 “fix” proposals](#) that will receive hearings next week. New bills continue to be introduced, joining the hundreds of “carry forward” bills from 2017 that were not enacted into law. With 46 days remaining in the session, the Legislature is demonstrating commitment to bipartisan collaboration and making progress on many fronts.

2018 SESSION INSIGHTS

On the political front, [last week’s update](#) featured reflections by Democratic leaders Senate Majority Leader Sharon Nelson and House Majority Leader Pat Sullivan in interviews on TVW’s [Inside Olympia](#). This week [the program](#) featured interviews with Republican leaders, Senate Minority Leader Mark Schoesler and House Minority Leader Dan Kristiansen. Though their party is in the minority, it is just by one vote in each chamber. [Rep. Kristiansen](#) reflected on the role of Republicans as the minority party in the legislature and what can be achieved in the short session, and [Sen. Schoesler](#) reflected on the importance of holding true to the state’s commitment to the four-year balanced budget and maintaining strong fiscal responsibility. Both shared their [perspective on the recent Supreme Court order](#) to accelerate funding to basic education compensation and [discussed the property tax and levy swap policy](#) enacted in EHB 2242. Finally, [Rep. Kristiansen reflected](#) on rural and urban differences in our state and the important role that school boards, as locally elected officials, serve in governing school districts. He also emphasized his belief that when the balance of power is close in the Legislature, there are better outcomes; legislators have to talk to and rely on each other to get things done.

On Tuesday, Democratic leaders from the Senate (Senators Sharon Nelson and Andy Billig) and House (Representatives Frank Chopp and Pat Sullivan) discussed the Governor’s revenue proposal for meeting the Supreme Court’s [McCleary](#) order. Leadership [discussed the feasibility and timeline](#) related to adopting the carbon tax proposal to fund the Governor’s additional revenue request associated with meeting the directive of the court on [McCleary](#). They also [discussed the “real number”](#) needed to fund [McCleary](#) this session.

Through many of these discussions, there agrees to be a growing sense of agreement across the aisles and chambers in the importance of allowing time for school districts to transition carefully to the new funding models for basic education and that a large influx of revenue in the 2018-19 school year to meet the order of the court may not be in the best interest of our schools.

ISSUE UPDATES S & WEEK 2 RECAP

We have a Capital Budget!

There was [a lot of action Thursday evening](#) on the floors of the House and Senate to adopt the capital budget ([SB 6090](#)) and associated bond bill following passage of the [Hirst](#) water rights compromise bill ([SB 6091](#)). To hear legislator reflections on the longest journey getting to an adopted capital budget, check out floor speeches in the [House](#) and [Senate](#) and [Governor Inslee’s statement](#) during the bill signing on Friday afternoon.

The budget represents the compromise bill that was agreed upon, but not adopted, at the close of the 2017 session. It provides \$1.03 billion to K-12 education, including funding for grants to small rural schools for school construction. For an overview of the projects funded for K-12, check out pages 10 and 21 in [this overview](#).

One of the important pieces of the capital budget is a joint legislative task force for improving state funding of school construction. Because of the delay in passing the budget, the task force will be on a compressed timeline. Their report is due October 1 of this year. More to follow on this important opportunity.



Continued:
Issue Areas &
Week 2 Recap**Week 1 Recap**

This week the Senate and House hosted public hearings on a plethora of bills. For a full list of the bills discussed each day, check out [WSSDA's Week 2 Committee Hearing Schedule](#). In the meantime, here's a quick summary of a few highlights:

- ⇒ On Monday both Education Committees hosted public hearing on bills that would eliminate the requirement to pass state tests in order to graduate ([SB 6144](#) and [HB 2621](#)). Here is a [link to Senate staff presentation](#) that provides an overview of the bill and public testimony, including [testimony from Sandy Hayes](#) from the Northshore School Board, representing WSSDA; and a [link to the House staff presentation](#) and introduction of the bill and public testimony, including testimony from Rob Perkins from the Evergreen (Clark Co.) School Board, representing WSSDA.

In addition, the Senate hosted a work session from OSPI that provided an update on the statewide student assessment system presented by Deputy Superintendent Michaela Miller and Assistant Superintendent Deb Came from OSPI. Here is a link to the [recording](#).

- ⇒ Tuesday's public hearings in the [House Education Committee](#) focused on bills pertaining to school safety issues. In the [Senate Early Learning & K12 Education Committee](#), bills were heard to clean-up statutes pertaining to student pathways and supports. The [Senate Ways & Means Committee](#) heard bills associated with retire/rehire policies that would allow retired teachers to return to work in various roles.

Check out WSSDA's
Legislative Positions,
Priorities, & Resources!**THE WEEK AHEAD**

[Click here](#) to check out the daily committee schedule with bills and committees WSSDA is tracking. Full details on the Committee Meeting agendas, visit the [House Committee](#) or [Senate Committee](#) Web sites and click on the committee you are interested in. Here are a few highlights of the week ahead:

Monday, 1/22:

- ⇒ **McCleary "fix" bills to be heard:** At 1:30pm the [Senate Early Learning and K12 Education Committee](#) will host public hearings on the Senate version of the bills mentioned in the [Deeper Dive 1 section](#) of this report.
- ⇒ **State Board of Education and OSPI duties:** The [House Education Committee](#) will hear a new bill ([HB 2824](#)) that amends several statutes to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the SBE and OSPI with relation to waivers, state learning standards, course equivalencies, and ESD boundaries. WSSDA had a chance to provide input on the draft bill and is supportive of the duty clarifications the bill contains.
- ⇒ **Implementing the 24-credit graduation requirement:** The [House Education Committee](#) will host a work session with four districts to learn about district experiences and progress in implementing the 24 credits required for graduation. School directors from Battle Ground, Federal Way, Eatonville, and Quincy will present.

Wednesday and Thursday, 1/24-25:

- ⇒ **55% School Bond Approval Bill:** At 8:00am the [Senate State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee](#) will host public hearing on SB 6246 and Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 8213 that would put the proposal to voters to amend the state Constitution and authorize local school bond passage at 55%.
- ⇒ **School Employee Benefits Board:** Wednesday the [Senate Ways & Means Committee](#) will host public hearings on the SEBB bills and on Thursday (1/25) the [House Appropriations Committee](#) will host a work session on the SEBB and public hearing on the slew of bills on the topic (see [last week's report](#) and Deeper

**DEEPER DIVE 1: TRANSITIONS IN BASIC EDUCATION
FUNDING & SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE**

A variety of bills have been introduced intended to address many of the issues districts are experiencing as implementation of EHB 2242 proceeds including:

- Levy and Local Effort Assistance (LEA) policy
- Hold Harmless funding clarification
- Special Education funding gaps
- Regionalization approach
- Greater flexibility in Learning Assistance Program (LAP) policy and funding
- "Bumpers" on collective bargaining
- Technical "fixes" needed in the bill

The bills include:

- ⇒ [SB 6362 / HB 2721](#) – OSPI request legislation ([click here for a summary](#) and check out [OSPI's 2242 web page](#) for state/district impact spreadsheet)
- ⇒ [SB 6397 / HB 2717](#) – Sponsored by Rep. Dolan and Sen. Hunt ([click here for a summary](#))
- ⇒ Here is a [high level COMPARISON](#) of the bills

Continued...

Cont'd: Deeper Dive 1

In addition, bills related to making adjustments and providing greater flexibility in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funding formula and policy will be discussed in the coming weeks:

- ⇒ [HB 2763](#) / [SB 6394](#) – Focus on LAP “high poverty” funding formula (sponsored by Rep. Jenkin and Sen. Walsh)
- ⇒ [HB 2748](#) (2018) – Focus on LAP policy and requirements

Since school districts had very little input on the final policy language included in EHB 2242, now is the time to review these proposals that seek to make improvements. WSSDA will continue to advocate for policies this session that addresses provisions and funding related to special education, hold harmless, levies and LEA, and support for districts in bargaining and negotiations. In addition, as a member of the statewide Local Funding Work Group [more specific priorities](#) focus on making much-needed adjustments to EHB 2242, specifically related to special education, levies, and the statewide salary schedule.

For a bit of additional insight, four of the eight legislators involved in crafting EHB 2242 participated in an [Education Funding Panel](#) (51 minutes) on January 4th. During the panel discussion, Representatives Sullivan and Taylor and Senators Braun and Rolfe responded to press questions regarding key issues that need to be dealt with in a *McCleary* “fix” bill including local levy rates and the gap in special education funding. If you don’t have the full time, [skip to the end](#) to hear their comments regarding compensation, salary schedules, and more.

Transitioning to a new school employee healthcare system: As was shared in [last week’s report](#), the new [School Employee Benefits Board](#) (SEBB) is tasked with moving health insurance for school employees to a single state designed and purchase plan over the next two years. Last week’s update summarized the first six bills that modify provisions of the new SEBB ([HB 2438](#) / [SB 6241](#); [HB 2655](#) / [SB 6286](#); [HB 2657](#) / [SB 6288](#)). This week two new bills ([SB 6461](#) / [HB 2755](#)) were introduced. The new bills make participation in SEBB optional for districts if they have local coverage that is equivalent in price and coverage offered by SEBB and do not require SEBB participation unless funding is provided equal to the amounts provided for state employees. Stay tuned!

DEEPER DIVE 2: DELINKING TESTS FROM HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Although [HB 2224 from 2017](#) delayed required passage of the high school science test for graduation until the class of 2021, passage of the ELA and Math tests or approved alternative is still required to graduate. The hearings on Monday regarding [SB 6144](#) and [HB 2621](#) continued the discussion. WSSDA has two legislative positions that speak to this issue. First, school directors believe that **state-mandated tests of any kind should not be required for students to graduate**. This position has been prioritized highly for the past four years. Second, a new position in 2016 advocates the **need to streamline summative assessments** by creating a state-level work group to review the summative assessment process and make suggestions to improve the process so that it is more focused, more balanced on the skills necessary for success, more supportive of effective educational environments and less time intensive.



WSSDA Legislative Committee Member, Director Sandy Hayes (Northshore) testifies on delink bill

The foundation of WSSDA’s position for delinking state-mandated tests from graduation is to allow for greater:

- **Student opportunities** – By delinking, districts will be better able to focus the necessary resources toward supporting more connected and relevant pathways and support structures to assure every student has the necessary skills and knowledge to prepare them for their next steps beyond high school.
- **Fairness** – State-mandated high school assessments were never intended to be used as an individual student exit exam. It is not fair to hold students accountable to a test that is not designed to determine individual student proficiency. Test developers have been clear that scores from one test given on a single occasion should never be used to make important decisions about students’ placement, the type of instruction they receive, or retention in a given grade level in school. In fact, very few states use the Smarter Balanced tests as graduation requirements, opting to use the system as it was intended to support school and districts in being more responsive in their teaching and learning.

Given the hearings this week and anticipated House debate on the delink bill from 2017 (HB 1046), the 2018 Legislature has an opportunity to put this issue to rest.

DEEPER DIVE 3: 2018 WASHINGTON VOTING RIGHTS ACT

This week discussion in the Senate continued on one of the proposed WVRA bills: [ESSB 6002](#). [Final discussion on the bill](#) was held Friday and it passed by a vote of 29 (yea) – 19 (nay) – 0 (absent) – 1 (excused). The adopted bill included an amendment that removed the provisions related to alternative proportional voting, now contained in [HB 2746](#).



WSSDA’s position regarding voting rights is to support legislation that **“maintains local school board authority to determine the structure of the school district’s voting subdivisions.”** Background on the position affirms the desire of school directors to retain flexibility in establishing the boundaries and positions represented on the board, based on community needs. In addition, when school district boundaries are changed WSSDA’s position background maintains that the process must be completed through an open process that provides opportunities for public comment and input. Finally, the position emphasizes the ability of school boards to retain the option of a district-wide election process that allows all individual school board members to be accountable to all voters and community members.

During Senate deliberations, several amendments were proposed related to concerns and questions about the connection with the federal VRA and the evolution of the current iteration of Washington’s bill. Listen to some of the [Senate discussion](#) regarding concerns related to the proposal involving complexity and [potential litigation costs](#). During the bill’s final passage and over the course discussion on the amendments, the bill’s sponsor (Senator Saldana) [provided clarification](#) regarding how ESSB 6002 addresses some of the concerns. To learn more about the evolution of this issue and the uniqueness of SB 6002, check out this [presentation](#) from Loyola Law School voting rights professor Justin Levitt.

ESSB 6002 will now go to the House for deliberation. WSSDA staff will continue to monitor this bill and HB 2746 for any additional provisions that may conflict with the association’s position. Stay tuned!

STAY CONNECTED

WSSDA and other education partners in the state are committed to developing and sharing resources to help our members learn about these issues and to communicate about them effectively.

WSSDA Resources:

- [WSSDA Legislative Updates & Bill Watch](#)
- [School Board Legislative Representatives](#)—Resources for Leg. Reps to help navigate the legislative process, including weekly webinars during the legislative session.
- WSSDA's [2017 Legislative Committee](#) is eager to support school board Legislative Representatives in their regions.

WA State Legislature

- ⇒ [2018 Legislative Contact Roster](#) (updated 1/4/18)
- ⇒ [Legislative Information Center](#)
- ⇒ [Weekly Committee Schedules](#)
- ⇒ [Bill Information and Tracking](#) - From these pages you can follow the bills you are most interested in and also provide [comments on bills](#).

Education Association Partner Legislative Priorities

- [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction \(OSPI\)](#)
- [State Board of Education \(SBE\)](#)
- [Washington Association of School Administrators \(WASA\)](#)
- [Association of Washington School Principals \(AWSP\)](#)
- [Association of Educational Service Districts \(AESD\)](#)
- [Washington State Parent Teacher Association \(WSPTA\)](#)
- [Washington Education Association \(WEA\)](#)

TVW - TVW's weekly programming is a great way to stay connected with broad legislative issues. In addition to *Inside Olympia* and *The Impact*, TVW offers a daily and weekly [Legislative Review](#), and live and archived recordings of committee hearings and work sessions.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

LEGISLATIVE:

- January 8**—First day of 60-Day Session
- February 2** —Policy committee cutoff
- February 6** — Fiscal committee cutoff
- February 14** — House of Origin cutoff (5 pm)
- February 23** — Policy committee cutoff (opposite house)
- February 26**—Fiscal committee cutoff (opposite house)
- March 2** — Last day to consider opposite house bills (except budgets and matters necessary to implement the budget, and differences between the houses)
- March 8** — Last day of regular session

WSSDA-Related:

- Every Friday through March 9**—Weekly Legislative Update webinars for school board Leg. Reps.
- January 28 & 29**—WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill
- February–March**—WSSDA position streamlining process (Legislative and Resolutions Committees)
- March 15–April 30**—WSSDA legislative position solicitation process (new and continuing positions)
- March–May**—WSSDA Spring Regional Meetings



SEE YOU NEXT WEEKEND!

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2018 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE AND DAY ON THE HILL

SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AND CAPITOL CAMPUS | JANUARY 28–29

The annual WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill is an important partnership among school board directors, school administrators, and district business managers. On Sunday participants receive updates on shared legislative priorities and the current education policy landscape. WSSDA's Legislative Committee has set up meetings for regional district teams to visit with their legislators during Monday's Day on the Hill. **The schedule is now available online, [click here](#) for more information!**