



This Week in Olympia

Washington Association of School Administrators

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About TWIO

This Week in Olympia is emailed to all WASA and AEA members each Friday and is posted on WASA's website www.wasa-oly.org. TWIO provides schedules for committee hearings, a Bill Watch (which tracks bills as they move through the legislature) and information on legislative issues important to school administrators.

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THIS WEEK IN REVIEW

The dire economic situation and its impact on the budget was the focus for the first week of the 61st Washington State Legislature. The latest forecast reports a decline of \$100 million more in revenues than what was expected in December. Budget writers now face a possible \$7 billion deficit. The budget will no doubt overshadow everything that goes on this session.

The Governor's budget was released on December 18. Every segment of state government was cut back. K-12 received a \$5M cut from its maintenance level. I-732 COLA's are not funded. I-728 is reduced by 24%. Levy equalization is reduced by 33% for calendar years 2010 and 2011. In addition, pension changes and elimination of other programs "save" the state another \$145 million. "No new taxes" was one criteria the Governor applied to her budget. The real battle begins now—as legislators grapple with the budget. It is clear that no area of government will emerge unscathed—what will and won't be in the 2009-2011 Biennial Budget will be decided as legislators debate how they can address the problem fairly and equitably. There has already been talk of resorting to some sort of a tax increase. It certainly won't solve the problem, but it might save some programs.

When WASA surveyed school districts in December, 95% of those responding (two-thirds of the districts) favored no COLA's over cuts to other essential funding sources like I-728 and levy equalization. Saving jobs is a high priority. In the hearings this week, the phrase "I've heard from my school districts..." began many legislators' comments. We encourage you to continue communicating with your legislators throughout the session.

WASA/WSSDA 2009 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The WASA/WSSDA 2009 Legislative Conference is scheduled for February 8-9 at the Red Lion Hotel in Olympia. Registration materials can be downloaded at <http://www.wasa-oly.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PROFESSIONALDEVELOPMENT/ConferencesSeminars/default.htm>

Invite your legislators to join you at the reception Sunday evening from 6:00-7:30 in the Forest Ballroom.

LINKS TO REPORTS

Last year's legislature created numerous interim committees to study and report back on various issues. You can access some of these reports below:

School Construction Funding

- Final Report
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Joint/Committees/K12SCF/meetings.htm>
- Phase 1 Final Recommendations
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/documents/joint/k12scf/FinalReport.pdf>

Pupil Transportation

- Final Report
<http://www.ofm.wa.gov/k12transpo/>

Joint Task Force on Basic Education Finance

- Final Report
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/documents/joint/bef/FinalReport.pdf>

Governor Gregoire's Budget Priorities

<http://www.governor.wa.gov/priorities/budget/default.asp>

OSPI's Pivot Tables for Governor's Budget

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SAFS/09budprp.asp>

Levy Equalization Impacts

http://www.wasa-oly.org/Content/NavigationMenu/GOVERNMENTRELATIONS/PublicationsandPapersCurrent/LEA_State_Impacts_of_Governor_s_Proposal/LEAImpact1.13.09.ppt

SELECTED HEARING SCHEDULES

Monday

1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Senate Early Learning & K–12 Ed.
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Senate Ways & Means
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	House Ways & Means

Tuesday

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Education Appropriations
10:00 – 12:00 Noon	House Education
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Senate Ways & Means
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	House Ways & Means

Wednesday

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Senate Early Learning & K–12 Ed
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	House Education
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Senate Ways & Means
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	House Ways & Means
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Education Appropriations

Thursday

10:00 – 12:00 Noon	Senate Early Learning & K–12 Ed.
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Senate Ways & Means
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Education Appropriations
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	House Ways & Means

Friday

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	House Education
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2009 Cut-off Calendar

January 12	First Day of Session
February 25	Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal committee and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
March 2	Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees in house of origin.
March 12	Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
March 30	Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
April 6	Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
April 17	Last day to consider opposite house bills (5 p.m.) (except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session).*
April 26	Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

* After the 96th day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session

HEARING SCHEDULE Week of Jan 19 - 23

Monday, 1/19/09

SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12

JAC ROOM 1

1:30 - 3:30 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. The recommendations of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) Work Group.
2. Introduction and priorities of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Randy Dorn.
3. Recommendations of the Achievement Gap studies.

HEARING SCHEDULE
Week of Jan 19 - 23

HOUSE CAPITAL BUDGET

JLOB ROOM C

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) capital program overview.
2. School Construction Assistance Grant Program funding/spending formula.
3. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2009-11 and 2009 supplemental capital budget requests.
 - a. School Construction Assistance Grant Program
 - b. Other Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction requests.
 - c. Skills centers.

PUBLIC HEARING: HB 1113 - Financing the school construction assistance grant program.

POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE SESSION: HB 1113 - Financing the school construction assistance grant program.

SENATE WAYS & MEANS

JAC ROOM 4

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

PUBLIC HEARING: Public testimony on the Governor's budget proposal.

HOUSE EDUCATION

JLOB ROOM A

6:30 - 8:30 p.m

WORK SESSION: Achievement Gap Studies.

1. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Tribute.
2. Background of Achievement Gap Studies.
3. African American Students: Center for the Improvement of Student Learning.
4. Asian American Students: Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs.
5. Pacific Islander American Students: Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs.
6. Native American Students: Governor's Office on Indian Affairs.
7. Hispanic American Students: Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

Tuesday, 1/20/09

HOUSE EDUCATION

JLOB ROOM A

10:00 a.m - Noon

WORK SESSION: Washington Assessment of Student Learning

1. Legislative Assessment Workgroup Report & Recommendations
 - a. Overview of Assessment System and Summary of Workgroup Meetings.
 - b. Discussion by Workgroup members.
 - c. Public comment: Recommendations for the Assessment System.

PUBLIC HEARING: HB 1162 - Providing for social emotional learning in public schools.

HEARING SCHEDULE
Week of Jan 19 - 23

HOUSE CAPITAL BUDGET

JLOB ROOM C

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. Joint Legislative Task Force on School Construction Funding briefing.
2. Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee report on Inventory Pilot.
3. Board of Health School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Revisions.
4. K-12 federal stimulus briefing.

HOUSE WAYS & MEANS

JLOB ROOM A

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. Briefing on state-funded health benefits for state and K-12 employees.
2. Briefing on fiscal notes.

SENATE WAYS & MEANS

JAC ROOM 4

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

PUBLIC HEARING: Continuation of public testimony on the Governor's budget proposal.

Wednesday, 1/21/09

SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

JAC ROOM 1

8:00 - 10:00 a.m

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Professional Educator Standards Board gubernatorial appointments:
2. Enacting the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children HB 1075.

WORK SESSION:

1. 2009 update on bullying in Washington schools.
2. Overview of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction safety center.

HOUSE EDUCATION

JLOB ROOM A

1:30 - 3:30 p.m

WORK SESSION: Washington Assessment of Student Learning

1. Overview of Legislation and Grants.
2. Selected Grant Recipient Presentations:
 - a. First Place School.
 - b. Educational Service District #113.
 - c. Pasco School District.
 - d. Federal Way School District.
3. State-Level Workgroup Report and Recommendations.

HEARING SCHEDULE
Week of Jan 19 - 23

HOUSE WAYS & MEANS

JLOB ROOM A 3:30 - 5:30 p.m

WORK SESSION: Briefing on state funding for K-12 public schools.

HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

JLOB ROOM A 6:00 - 8:00 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Workforce education programs.
2. Report and recommendations of the Basic Education Finance Task Force.

Thursday, 1/22/09

SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

JAC ROOM 1 10:00 a.m - Noon

WORK SESSION:

1. The recommendations of the Basic Education Finance Task Force.
2. Response to the recommendations:
 - a. League of Education Voters.
 - b. The Full Funding Coalition.
3. Minority Reports.

HOUSE COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TRADE

JLOB ROOM C 10:00 a.m - Noon

WORK SESSION:

- The Governor's 2009 Economic Stimulus Strategy.

HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

JLOB ROOM A 1:30 - 3:30 p.m

WORK SESSION:

1. Levy equalization funding.
2. Programs funded by I-278.

SENATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

JAC ROOM 2 3:30 - 5:30 p.m

PUBLIC HEARING:

3. SB 5016 - Modifying when a special election may be held.
4. SB 5098 - Concerning ballot title information.
5. SJR 8202 - Relating to the constitutional provisions regarding initiatives and referendums.

BILL WATCH

This week in TWIO we start to track bills that have been introduced. A bill's "status" changes as it is heard in committee and then either dies or moves to the floor of the House or Senate. It then crosses over to the other side and goes through the same process. Bills, including sponsors, amendments, actions and history can be found by clicking on the bill number. February 25 is the last day to hear bills in the house of origin policy committees.

HOUSE	TITLE	STATUS	SPONSOR
HB 1017	Records and meetings board	H SGTribalAff	Kessler
HB 1018	Special election dates	H SGTribalAff	Appleton
HB 1098	Former school empl vac leave	H SGTribalAff	Hunt
HB 1197	Alternative public works	H SGTribalAff	Haigh
HB 1198	Public works bid limits	H SGTribalAff	Haigh
HB 1216	Capital budget 2009-2011	H Cap Budget	Dunshee
HB 1222	Electr shock devices/schools	H Judiciary	Appleton
HB 1240	School employee dismissal	H Education	Dammeier
HB 1243	Operating sup budget 2009	H Ways & Means	Linville
HB 1244	Operating budget 2009-2011	H Ways & Means	Linville
HB 1245	Collective bargaining	H Commerce/Lab	Ericks
SENATE	TITLE	STATUS	SPONSOR
SB 5168	First-class school districts	S GovtOp & Elect	Regala
SB 5175	Promise scholarship program	S HighEd&WorkDev	Shin
SB 5176	Teachers of visually impaired	S HighEd&WorkDev	Shin
SB 5187	Voting procedures	S GovtOp & Elect	Stevens
SB 5188	Remedial postsecondary edu	S EL/K-12	Stevens
SB 5189	School employees dismissal	S EL/K-12	Kohl-Welles
SCR 8402	2009 legislature business	S GovtOp & Elect	Stevens

RETIREMENT/HEALTH BENEFITS

The Select Committee on Pension Policy's (SCPP) action during the 2008 legislative interim moved very slowly on specific issues that stakeholders were interested in seeing action upon. The SCPP did make recommendation on fourteen issues, however, each bill's fiscal impact, if any, almost always was small enough to not cause an increase to contribution rates.

In September 2008 the Pension Funding Council adopted recommendations that pension rates for TRS and SERS be raised and PERS be slightly lowered. The Governor's proposed budget, however, lowers rates significantly in all three pension plans by shifting from the present actuarial aggregate method to a projected unit credit (PUC) method which pushes costs further into the future. It also delays the implementation of a new mortality table proposed by the State Actuary. These changes from the Pension Funding Council adopted recommendations save the General Fund Budget \$400 million. The Governor's budget contribution rates do include continue funding on the Plan 1 unfunded liability.

The Governor's health benefit allocation increase for active members goes from the present \$732.00 a month to \$774.00 in 2009-10 and then to \$831.00 in 2010-11. Part of this increase is eaten by an increase in the retiree "carve-out" remittance going from \$60.40 to \$63.72 starting September 1, 2009 and then to \$72.57 starting September 1, 2010. Hopefully the overall increase will cover ever increasing health care premium costs.

Of the 2008 interim stakeholder top three priorities, (1) disabilities, (2) Plan 1 COLA improvement, and (3) Plan 2/3 post-retirement employment, only one issue, disability, received some action by the SCPP. The issue of disabilities was reviewed and the stakeholder's recommendation to increase disability payments was converted into a study bill. The issue of Plan 1 COLA received discussion; however, the state's deficit situation made action prohibitive. The Chair of the 2008 SCPP interim committee pushed for an Attorney General (AG) opinion as to whether the issue of Plan 2/3 post-retirement employment was connected with the "Gain Sharing Repeal" lawsuit. The AG ruling has been kept confidential with committee members; however, no action by the group gives indication of the direction of the ruling.

During this first week of the legislature, appointments were set with about twenty members on fiscal committees. About a half dozen were seen this week. A full listing of anticipated bills including an overview of the Governor's budget that impacts retirement and health benefits can be found on our association's website under 'Retirement/Health Benefit Bill Watch.' <http://www.wasa-oly.org/Content/NavigationMenu/GOVERNMENTRELATIONS/RetirementHealthIssues/default.htm>

AEA

The 61st Legislature is in full swing, and AEA is busy already. On Monday, we testified before the House Capital Budget in support of the Governor's 2009-11 Capital Budget which maintains the \$4M appropriation for the School Repair Program. In the past two biennia 76 districts have received \$100,000 grants for much needed health and safety repairs. WAMOA is actively involved in this program.

On Tuesday, we testified before the Education Appropriations Committee regarding the Governor's 2009-11 Operating Budget on behalf of WSNA, urging the committee to maintain the current state funding of child nutrition. Fortunately, the Governor does maintain these programs. Also, on behalf of WASBO, we urged the committee to find a more equitable way to reduce K-12 rather than the 33% reduction in levy equalization. The Governor's proposed reduction really hurts "property poor" districts. WASBO will be working with the finance committees to develop viable alternatives to reducing levy equalization.

WASA'S 2009 SESSION GUIDE

WASA's 2009 Legislative Session Guide, which includes legislators' phone numbers and email addresses, will be mailed next week and will be posted online next week. Look in WASA's website on the Government Relations page.

You can contact legislators using the Legislative Hotline:
1-800-562-6000

COMMITTEE MEMBERS/ KEEPING UP WITH THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Washington State Government
<http://www.access.wa.gov>

State Legislature
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature>

Senate
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate>

House of Representatives
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House>

Office of the Governor
<http://www.governor.wa.gov/>

OSPI
<http://www.k12.wa.us/>

Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/>

House Education
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/ED/>

Senate Ways and Means
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/WM/>

House Ways and Means
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/WAYS/>

House Education Appropriations
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/APPE/>

House Capital Budget
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/CB/>

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