



# *This Week in Olympia*

## Washington Association of School Administrators

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## Week 2 January 23, 2009

**This is the 12th day of the  
2009 Regular Session  
(93 to go).**

*January 12 through April 26*

### In this Issue

- This Week in Review
- Selected Hearing Schedules
- Hearing Schedule Week of Jan 26-30
- Bill Watch
- Retirement/Health Benefits
- AEA
- WASA's Legislative Session Guide
- Selected Hearing Schedules
- Keeping up with the Legislative Session

### THIS WEEK IN REVIEW

With the legislature in full swing this week, committees met daily—on two days late into the evening—setting the tone for an intense, extremely busy session. The week began Monday night, on the eve of the inauguration of President Barack Obama, with an inspiring tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. prepared by House Education staff.

As predicted, the budget is the primary focus in virtually every committee. The revenue outlook is worsening. Some budget analysts and writers predict that the deficit is now closer to \$8 billion—and it may continue to climb.

### SENATE WAYS and MEANS

The Senate Ways and Means committee held two meetings to take public comment on the Governor's budget. In the two minutes allotted to each speaker, WASA told the budget committee that school superintendents and administrators can identify with their current dilemma because they face the same problems at the local level balancing the needs of their students and districts with the mandates the state has imposed and the limited resources they've been given to meet those needs and mandates.

Since about 85% of a school district's budget is invested in personnel, significant cuts to a school district's budget mean the loss of jobs. Our schools are the paramount duty of the state. The proposed cuts, particularly to I-728 and LEA, in the Governor's budget will result in a loss of services and programs for kids and a loss of jobs which will negatively impact both local and state economic stimulus efforts. In addition, the proposed cuts to levy equalization disproportionately affect property-poor districts. We asked the legislators to continue talking to their districts as they write their 2009-2011 budget.

### 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.

## THIS WEEK IN REVIEW

(Cont'd)

### HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

Superintendent Tim Garchow, Southside SD, Chief Financial Officer Sally McLean, Federal Way SD, and Superintendent Steve Webb, Vancouver SD were invited to provide information to the House Education Appropriations committee on Thursday relating to the cuts proposed in the Governor's budget. Each of the presentations provided facts and figures and impacts concisely and thoroughly. What was absolutely clear was that, regardless of a district's size or geographic location, the cuts would have devastating effects on our kids and school districts. While legislators are very sympathetic, they also appear to be somewhat overwhelmed by the budget dilemma they are facing. On the same note, Superintendent Ray Tolcacher, Prosser SD, Superintendent Kevin Chase, Grandview SD, Superintendent Rom Castilleja, Kiona-Benton, SD and Superintendent Gregg Taylor, North Franklin SD spent Wednesday providing similar information about the proposed cuts in their region to eleven legislators.

### WASL and ASSESSMENT CHANGES

Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn held a press conference this week to "keep his campaign promise" to eliminate the WASL and dramatically revise Washington's assessment system.

The new state assessment system will be called the Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program (WCAP). Dorn has six goals related to state testing:

- Shorten the tests
- Reduce the amount of time students spend on written responses
- Return scores more quickly
- Increase the use of technology (statewide computer testing)
- Provide more diagnostic information (strengths and weaknesses) to teachers/families
- Minimize costs

More information can be found at [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us).

WASA will be gathering information on the impact these changes will have on school districts.

### SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEM

On Thursday, the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee held a work session on the recommendations of the Basic Education Finance Task Force. <http://www.leg.wa.gov/documents/joint/bef/FinalReport.pdf>

Superintendent Kowalkowski, Davenport SD who served on the Task Force was invited to speak to the Minority Report for the Full Funding Coalition which he sponsored. He pointed out the reasons why he believes the Full Funding Coalition's proposal should be considered as the changes to the K-12 finance system are debated in the legislature. He began with a letter of transmittal which he introduced and which was added to the Task Force's final report.

#### Letter of Transmittal

"We are aware of the state's financial circumstances and the difficult choices facing state leaders. However, the Task Force believes that all current K-12 funding should be retained. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the state's K-12 system is underfunded. To make cuts to the education of the state's children would be contrary to the paramount duty that is so clearly stated in our Washington State Constitution."

The Minority Report, which the Full Funding Coalition's proposal can be found at: [\(Click here for "Attaining a World-Class K-12 System"\)](#).

## THIS WEEK IN REVIEW

(Cont'd)

While there are certain similarities between the two reports basically, the coalition does not agree with a number of provisions within the final report.

The Task Force report has been drafted into bill language, SB 5444 and HB 1410. They will be heard this coming week in both education committees. The Full Funding Coalition's proposal has also been drafted into bill language as well. We will provide you with the bill numbers when they become available. The Full Funding Coalition organizations (WASA, WSSDA, AWSP, WEA and PSEW) will be analyzing the Task Force bills in light of both our coalition's proposal and each organization's legislative priorities.

WASA's Legislation & Finance Committee will be reviewing these bills on our regular Monday morning conference call. ([Legislation & Finance Committee Contact Info.](#))

### BILLS OF INTEREST

The Interstate Compact for Military Children bills (SB 5248 and HB 1075) are on a fast track this session—having already been heard in the Senate committee and slated for a hearing in House Ed next week. A number of our superintendents served on an interim task force and worked out a number of amendments to last year's bill. WASA has not taken a position on this bill, but we did raise three questions during the public hearing this week which Senator Hobbs, the bill's sponsor, asked us to send to him in writing.

([Click here to read letter to Sen. Hobbs](#))

## HEARING SCHEDULE Week of Jan 26 - 30

### Monday, 1/26/09

#### **SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION**

JAC ROOM 1

1:30 - 3:30 p.m

#### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. SB 5410 - Regarding the digital learning commons.
2. SB 5444 - Creating a comprehensive system of public education programs, finance, and accountability.
3. SB 5378 - Regarding accreditation of digital learning programs.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** SB 5248 - Enacting the interstate compact educational opportunity for military children.

#### **HOUSE WAYS & MEANS**

JLOB ROOM A

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

#### **WORK SESSION:**

1. Report and recommendations of the Basic Education Finance Task Force.
2. Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC) review of boards and commissions.

#### **SENATE WAYS & MEANS**

JAC ROOM 4

3:30 - 5:30 p.m

**WORK SESSION:** Overview on pensions.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. SB 5303 - Transferring public employees' retirement system plan 2 members to the school employees' retirement system plan 2.
2. SB 5305 - Repealing certain obsolete state retirement system statutes.
3. SB 5312 - Increasing the duty-related death benefit for public employees.
4. SB 5315 - Extending the survivor annuity option for preretirement death in plan 1 of the public employees' retirement system to members who die after leaving active service.

**HEARING SCHEDULE  
Week of Jan 26 - 30**

**(Cont'd)**

**Tuesday, 1/27/09**

***HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS***

**JLOB ROOM A** 8:00 - 10:00 a.m

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

***HOUSE EDUCATION***

**JLOB ROOM A** 10:00 a.m - Noon

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. HB 1075 - Enacting the interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children.
2. HB 1110 - Prohibiting advertising and marketing to students receiving home-based instruction.
3. HB 1292 - Authorizing waivers from the one hundred eighty-day school year requirement in order to allow four-day school weeks.
4. HB 1347 - Regarding financial education.

**WORK SESSION:** Superintendent of Public Instruction Action Plan for the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

***SENATE JUDICIARY***

**JAC ROOM 1** 10:00 a.m - Noon

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. SB 5273 - Prohibiting devices in schools that are designed to administer to a person or an animal an electric shock, charge, or impulse.

***HOUSE HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS***

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

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. HB 1322 - Repealing scoliosis screening in schools.

**Wednesday, 1/28/09**

***SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION***

**JAC ROOM 1** 8:00 - 10:00 a.m

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Continuation from Monday's Hearing:

SB 5444 - Creating a comprehensive system of public education programs, finance, and accountability.

***HOUSE EDUCATION***

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

**WORK SESSION:**

1. Running Start for the Trades.
2. Update in implementation of 2SSB 6377 (secondary career and technical education).

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. HB 1355 - Establishing the opportunity internship program for high school students.
2. HB 1356 - Providing career and technical education opportunities for middle school students.

**HEARING SCHEDULE  
Week of Jan 26 - 30**

(Cont'd)

***HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS***

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

**WORK SESSION:** Basic Education Finance Task Force report.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** HB 1410 - Creating a comprehensive system of public education programs, finance, and accountability.

**Thursday, 1/29/09**

***SENATE EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION***

JAC ROOM 1 10:00 a.m - Noon

**WORK SESSION:** Early Learning:

1. Department of Early Learning Interim Director, Karen Tvedt.
2. University of Washington Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences (I-LABS), Co-Directors Patricia Kuhl, Ph.D. and Andrew Meltzoff, Ph.D.
3. Thrive by Five President and CEO, Nina Auerbach.
4. Wahington's K-3 Demonstration Project.
5. Author of "The Call to Brilliance," Resa Steindel Brown and Matt Brown of Fredric Press.

***HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS***

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

**WORK SESSION:**

1. Briefing on state funding for early learning programs.
2. Discussion of selected early learning programs.

***HOUSE EDUCATION***

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

**WORK SESSION:** Joint w. Ed. Approps

1. Education Data: current status and future plans
2. Dual Enrollment Programs: Running Start, College in the High School, and other programs.

***HOUSE EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS***

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

**WORK SESSION:** Joint w. House Ed

1. Education Data: current status and future plans
2. Dual Enrollment Programs: Running Start, College in the High School, and other programs.

**Friday, 1/30/09**

***HOUSE STATE GOVT. & TRIBAL AFFAIRS***

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

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. HB 1288 - Exempting the annual parental declaration of intent to home school from the public disclosure act.

## BILL WATCH

The Bill Watch tracks education related bills. 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. A table of links to bills - including sponsors, amendments, actions, and history can be found by clicking on the link below. February 25 is the last day to hear bills in the house of origin policy committees.

Click on [Bill Watch](#) to look at education bills.

## RETIREMENT/HEALTH BENEFITS

We have been busy this second week with many appointments with both Senators and Representatives that serve on their respective house's fiscal committees. We have also gathered signatures on seven pension or health benefit bills that did not receive recommendation from the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP). Some of these bills were: Plan 2/3 Postretirement Employment, Plan 2 Access to the PEBB, Plan 3 Vesting, and Health Savings Account/Health Reimbursement Arrangements. Most of these bills were dropped into the "Hopper" this week and some were on Friday's Introduction Sheets.

Almost all the SCPP recommended bills now have bill numbers and sponsors and are included in this week's [Retirement/Health Benefits Bill Watch](#) which is on our association web page.

We continue to have dialogue with legislators regarding our dislike for the Governor's proposed change in how the State Actuary determines actuarial needs of the pension system. Many of the legislators dislike the proposed method change but yet feel that pension dollars are going to be cut.

Senators Brandland and Zarelli have introduced a bill to move all K-12 and ESDs into the Health Care Authority health plans, SB 5491. A number of key legislators from the Democratic Party have also expressed interest in such a move. It appears that this session may be the time to begin some serious consideration of such action.

## AEA

AEA testified last Monday in House Capital Budget in favor of HB 1113, financing the school construction assistance grant program. This bill authorizes the issuance of \$133M in state general obligation bonds and appropriates \$130M in bonds from the second 2007-09 supplemental capital budget. OSPI testified that funds are needed to reimburse districts for approved state match due to an increased number of district requests. WAMOA has been a strong support of this grant program.

WSNA is supporting HB 1416 and SB 5361, the feed hungry kids bill, sponsored by Rep. Pat Sullivan and Sen. Joe McDermott. This measure puts into policy the elimination of the breakfast and lunch reduced price co-pay and extends the funding of the summer food program, should funds become available.

WASBO is studying both basic education finance bills, HB 1410 and SB 5444, in preparation for testimony next week in Senate Early Learning & K-12 and House Education Appropriations Committees.

## WASA'S 2009 SESSION GUIDE

WASA's 2009 Legislative Session Guide, which includes legislators' phone numbers and email addresses, will be mailed next week. A copy has been posted online. Click on [Session Guide](#) to view.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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/>

TVW

<http://www.tvw.org/index.cfm?bhcp=1>

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