

## **“Fix the Bill” and Fully Fund Education Resolution**

Whereas, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled (11/15/17) that the Washington State Legislature satisfied the court’s mandate to fully fund basic education with the passing EHB 2242<sup>1</sup> (10/2017) pursuant to accelerating the funding before the 2018/2019 school year. There remain several areas that require legislative action to ensure that all districts and all students benefit from this landmark funding legislative.

Whereas, the Legislature is required to pass a Supplemental Operations budget that adds \$958 million to education funding in 2018, there is no stipulation on the funding source. WSPTA<sup>2,3</sup> members support progressive funding sources that are sufficient, sustainable and equitable, and do not cut services that support the whole child or rely on redistributing existing education funds.

Whereas, EHB 2242 did increase the cap on Special Education funding (from 12.7% to 13.5% of enrollment) the multiplier (funds) per student were not increased and therefore, State funding is not sufficient to meet Federal guideline nor the actual district costs to serve the needs of Special Ed students.

Whereas, the funding allocations in EHB 2242 are based on the Prototypical School Model<sup>4</sup> outlined in ESHB 2261 and detailed SHB 2776, are not meeting the needs of students and districts across all positions. For example, an elementary school with 400 students is only allocated 0.076 FTE for a nurse<sup>5</sup> - that’s only 2-3 hours/week and not sufficient. While districts can adjust allocated funds as needed, the current Prototypical School Model does not allocate sufficient funds for re-distribution. A new task force is warranted to review the Quality Education Council (QEC) recommendations in light of current and realistic needs. Previously these allocation shortfalls were mitigated with local levy dollars, however, with the new levy restrictions, redistribution is not possible, leaving districts without “ample” state or local funding.

Whereas, the arbitrary amounts and levy structure in EHB 2242, not only replaces “Maintenance & Operations” levy with an “Enrichment Levy” but it caps the new levy at lower levels by selecting the lesser of two options, \$1.50/\$1000 assessed value or \$2500/student. Plus it put low-property value districts further behind as it caps them at only \$1500/student (Local Effort Assistance). Combined with the under-allocations in the Prototypical School Model, districts are forced to use “Enrichment” levies for “Basic Ed” which is against statute.

Whereas, the McCleary decision and EHB 2242 is intended to increase overall school funding, across State and local levies, there needs to be “Hold-Harmless” provision to insure total funding/student is increased year-over-year and that total funding should not decrease once EHB 2242 is fully implemented. The “hold-harmless” provision for teacher salaries created by EHB 2242 should be extended across all line items as many districts are projecting significant funding gaps with the new formulas<sup>3</sup>.

Whereas, the legislature in the 2017 session did not pass a Capital Budget, over \$1 billion in school construction was not acted upon and must be passed without delay including the State’s K-3 Grant program to meet the new smaller K-3 class size requirement. In addition, WA State’s construction formulas are outdated -- they do not meet FEMA standards, the Construction Cost Allowance and Student Space Allocations, and they do not meet the needs or costs for current and future construction<sup>6</sup>. Simple majority for school construction bonds is critical for districts across the state, especially given Supreme Court’s decision that capital funding is a local district responsibility.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Seattle Council PTSA Board requests that the WA State Legislature and State Officials remedy EHB 2242 funding issues with the following:**

1. Pass a Supplemental Operations Budget to satisfy the WA State Supreme Court's timing provision which utilizes funding sources that are progressive, sustainable and equitable for all K-12 funding. The planned regressive property tax disproportionately affects low/fixed-income families/individuals, and families of color.
2. Increase the multiplier (dollar allocation) per student for Special Education funding to meet Federal guidelines and actual district costs.
3. Re-evaluate the Prototypical School Model with allocations that realistically address actual needs for District staffing. A model that includes more for schools that serve communities of color, students living in poverty and homelessness, and includes staffing sufficient to meet the health needs (including mental health) of all students, thereby eliminating the need to supplement basic staff costs with local levy dollars.
4. Revise the arbitrary levy allocation and remove the "lower of two options" requirement. In addition, remove the Local Effort Assistance (LEA) penalty on districts with lower- property values which exacerbates current inequalities between property rich districts and neighboring property poor districts.
5. Include a true "Hold-Harmless" clause for total K-12 funding to ensure that districts do not receive fewer dollars (accounting for inflation) under the newer EHB 2242 funding model compared to the status quo without the levy cliff.
6. Pass the 2017 Capital Budget and adjust formulas in the Construction Cost Allowance and Student Space Allocations, to extend the K-3 Grant program and pass "simply majority for bonds" to aid districts on passing capital budgets which the Supreme Court delegated to the local districts.

ADOPTED by **Seattle Council PTSA Board** at a regular open public meeting thereof, held January 8, 2018.

- PTA President: Sebrena Burr
- PTA Legislative Chair – State Issues: Heidi B. Bennett

Footnotes:

1. HB 2242 (2017). <http://app.leg.wa.gov/bills/summary?BillNumber=2242&Year=2017>
2. WSPTA Resolution 18.26 Levies and Local Effort Assistance;  
WSPTA Legislative Principle on Budget, Revenue and Funding – "The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy affecting tax policies that are fair, equitable, and provide stable, adequate revenues for public education and for programs that benefit children and youth. The association shall: Support equitable levy and local effort assistance (LEA) funding per student"
3. WSPTA Ample Fund Basic Education handout: <https://www.wastatepta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Ample-Fund-Basic-Education-Rev1.pdf>
4. Prototypical School Model includes the following positions: Principals, Teacher Librarian, Guidance Counselors, School Nurses, Social Workers, Psychologists, Teaching Assistants, Office Support, Custodians, Student and Staff Safety and Parent Involvement Coordinators
5. Prototypical school model schedule, SHB 2776, page 5 & 6, <http://lawfilesextra.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2009-10/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/2776-S.SL.pdf>
6. WSPTA School Construction & Class Size Reduction handout, <https://www.wastatepta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/School-Construction-and-Class-Size-Reduction-FINAL.pdf>

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