

School Apportionment Hot Topics

WASBO Annual Conference
May 13–15, 2026



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Presenters (Part 1)



T.J. Kelly – CFO
thomas.kelly@k12.wa.us

Shawn Lewis – Director of SAFS
shawn.lewis@k12.wa.us

NOTE: OSPI staff hecklers will be included on an ad hoc basis.



High Level Overview

Legislative Overview of K–12 Funding - 2026 Session

Supplemental Budget (2025–26)

Transitional Kindergarten

Levy Equalization Funding

Transportation Vehicle Changes

Running Start

OTHER (Sales Tax, Funding Equity Workgroup, Future Funding)

K–12 Funding Legislative Overview

- Over 250 fiscal notes were provided on K–12 Funding.
- Bills introduced in the session varied widely and most were crafted to limit state costs.
 - Most expensive (state cost) K–12 bill considered: Free School Meals
 - Most savings (local cost) K–12 bills considered: Sales Tax Exemptions
- Several bills focused on school district financial stability.
- No bills seriously considered that would address underlying funding needs of districts.
- State budget needs and tax on millionaires dominated the conversation while K–12 education receives policy level reductions.

Supplemental Budget Impacts

- Levy Equalization Reduced by \$26.8 million (state fiscal year).
- Depreciation Reduced by \$25.8 million starting 2025–26.
- Transition to Kindergarten reduced to \$65.5 million for 2026–27.
- Running Start limit reduced to 1.3 FTE for 2025–26 and 2026–27.

Transition to Kindergarten

Transition to Kindergarten (TK) - Update



Funding reduced to total appropriation of \$65.5 million. This moves from 7,266 AAFTE funded to an estimated 5,000. Funding is flatlined at \$65.5 million in future fiscal years of the four-year outlook.

Allocations will be made to districts who have programs this year and will also be based on other factors including free and reduced-price lunch eligibility.

Districts received their allocation of state funded TTK slots on April 8.

OSPI will review allocations in Summer 2026 and Winter 2026 to determine if allocations can be increased. Allocations may increase in Summer based on survey results (if districts choose to return unused "slots").

Implementation of 25% Funding Reduction

OSPI's planned approach included:

- Ensuring no district loses all TTK Funding.
- Ensuring that no program falls below the average classroom size for TTK.
- Prioritizing districts that serve high percentages of students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals.
- Reviewing gaps in access to other state-funded learning opportunities.
- Considering districts serving high populations of students with disabilities and multilingual learners.



Enrollment Eligibility Reminder

- [WAC 392–425–040](#) says TTK students must be 4 years old by August 31 to be enrolled. There is a provision that allows students who are 5 years old by August 31 to enroll in TTK if parents and the district decide they are not ready for kindergarten.
- [WAC 392-121-10601](#) defines kindergarten as an instructional program conducted as defined in RCW 28A.150.220 for students who are age 5 on September 1 for the current school year.
- Students may not be moved from TTK to Kindergarten on their fifth birthday in the middle of the school year.

Levy Equalization Funding



Levy Equalization Funding Impacts

- Reduced the maximum LEA by \$100 per student for the 2027 calendar year.
 - This is a \$47.4 million reduction for the 2027 calendar year.
 - State fiscal year impact is \$26 million due to apportionment schedule.
- The total dollar amounts for LEA each year change based on assessed valuation actual values in each district.
- OSPI and the legislature use DOR projections which may vary significantly from actuals. These had an impact on districts in 2026 – many districts receive more, some receive less.

Levy Equalization 2024–25 – Short Pay

- F-780 forms have been posted. Significant increase in LEA payable overall – but over 50 districts reduced.
- LEA funding appropriation authority short this year by \$18.5 million.
 - Full payment in April.
 - Partial Payment in May.
 - No payment in June.
 - “Makeup” payment in July.
- Schedule posted prior to April apportionment.

School Bus Depreciation

School Bus Depreciation



Legislation requires OSPI to implement a depreciation schedule of 10 years or 15 years depending on the type of bus.



Historically, OSPI has used a five-year average bus cost for depreciation until the final year payment.



To comply with legislative intent and the budget, OSPI plans to use the base price plus tax for the next three school years for buses that would have received a final depreciation payment this year.



The impact will be a reduction of funding in what would have been the final year payment – but not as dramatic as using the current WAC formula.



OSPI will adopt emergency rules to implement this change.



A new estimate spreadsheet was provided to districts at the end of April.



D84D Final Depreciation Example

	2025-26 final 13 year	2027 thru 2028 15 year
8/31/2026	\$65,403.05	\$44,868.55
8/31/2027		\$10,913.78
8/31/2028		\$6,305.12

Zero Emission School Bus Depreciation

- Zero emission school bus depreciation will be calculated using 33% of the low bid price for the corresponding bus category instead of using the five-year average, in addition to the change in lifetimes.

Results of New Zero Emission Formula

- Due to the changes, EV buses will receive \$0 for depreciation for this year unless purchased last year or this year.
 - Lower calculation price
 - Increase the lifecycle = reduced percent used
 - Results in negative payment, however OSPI will not deduct money from TVF account.

Running Start



Running Start Changes

- Legislation reduces the overall FTE for running start from 1.4 AAFTE total combined to a 1.3 AAFTE for the 2026–27 and 2027–28 school year.
- This is not a reduction in the running start rate; it is limiting access to state funded dual credit through this program.
- OSPI and higher education partners will offer specific guidance on implementation for the next school year.

Capital Budget

Capital Project Grants

Small District and State Tribal Education Compact Grant Program \$71.11 Million

- Small School Planning Grants: \$0.27 million
 - Kittitas
 - Mabton
 - Napavine
 - Liberty
 - Washtucna
 - Mansfield
 - Goldendale
- Small District Construction Grants: \$70.83 million
 - Thorp
 - Green Mountain
 - Skykomish
 - Loon Lake
 - Easton
 - Evaline
 - Glenwood
 - Chimacum
 - North Beach
 - Goldendale
 - Palouse
 - Stevenson Carson

2026 School Seismic Safety \$13.9 Million

- North Beach School District – Junior/Senior High Phase 3 Design - \$5.0 Million
- Hoquiam School District – K–6 Consolidation Phase 3 Design - \$8.9 Million

Healthy Kids/Healthy Schools – Lead In Water Remediation Program \$2.5 Million

Distressed Schools

- Seattle Public Schools - Whitworth Orca K–8 School Roof Replacement \$3.6 million
- Finley School District – HVAC Project \$1.5 Million
- Eatonville School District – Eatonville High School South and West Retaining Walls \$310,000

SCAP Enhancement Project

- Pilot program to provide school facilities planning support to develop a capital replacement plan for the following schools.
- Garfield School District – Garfield Elementary/Middle School \$1.43 Million
- Wellpinit School District – Wellpinit Elementary School \$1.51 Million
- Wahkiakum School District – Julius Wendt Elementary School \$850,000

Current Open Grants

FP 251 – Indoor Air Quality Assessment for Districts Under 3,000 Students

- This grant will pay for an indoor air quality assessment funded at 40 cents a square foot of assessed space. Grant contact Morgan Powell

FP 295 – Indoor Air Quality Assessment for Districts Over 3,000 Students

- This grant will pay for an indoor air quality assessment funded at 40 cents a square foot of assessed space. Grant contact Morgan Powell

FP 286 – Small District Energy Assessment (Districts Under 1,000 Students)

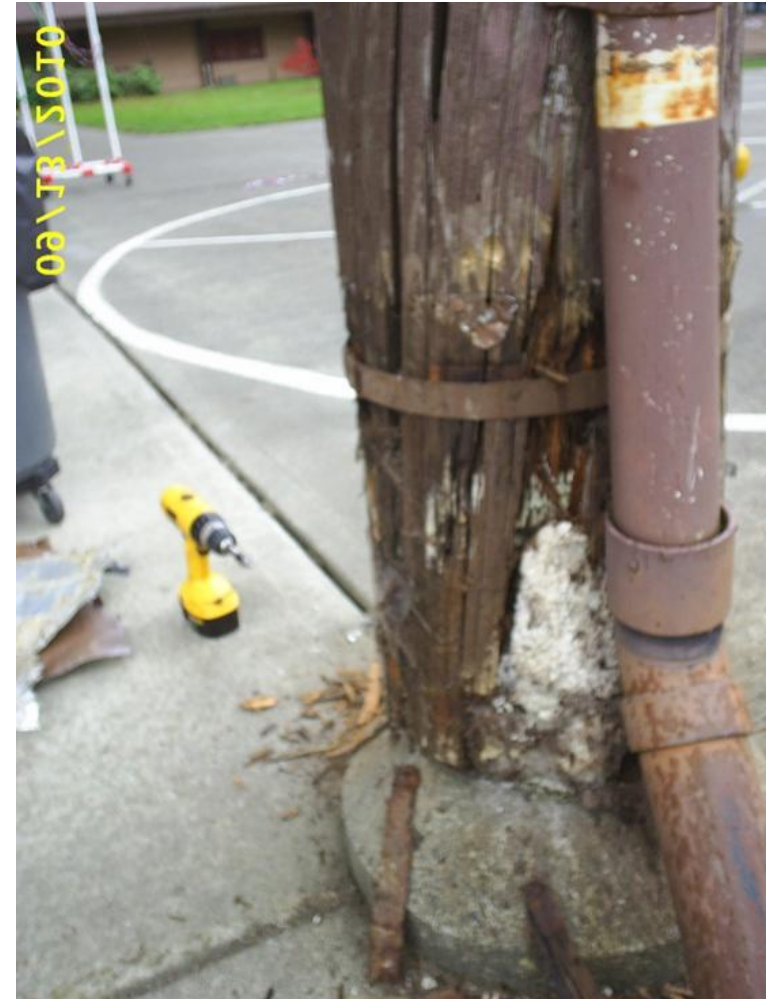
- This grant will pay for an ASHRAE Level 2 audit at 35 cents a square foot in preparation for Clean Buildings Performance Standard requirements. Grant contact Morgan Powell

FP 504 – Lead in Water Remediation (Open to All Districts)

- This grant will pay for drinking water fixture replacement for any district that tests above 5 parts per billion for lead contamination. This grant can also pay for pipe replacement if testing shows the source of the lead is the pipes. Grant contact Morgan Powell

FP 509 – 2027–29 Small District Modernization (<1,000 Students) Planning Grant Request

- This form package is open to small districts with 1,000 or less students to apply for funding in the 2027–29 biennium to receive a **NEW** planning grant to assist the district in developing a construction project to improve or replace aging building systems. The planning grant is limited to \$50,000 and the resulting construction project is limited to \$6.0 million. Please be aware there are some required documentation that will need to be submitted and read the instructions closely. Grant contact Scott Black.



Monroe – Emergency Repair Pool – Beam Replacement..

Other Topics, Implementation, and 2027–29 Biennium



National Board Certificated Bonus

- The elimination of the cost-of-living adjustment to NBCT stipends beginning in 2026–27.

New Sales Taxes from 2026 SB 5814

- Department of Revenue is actively working on implementation guidance and will post information to their website as soon as it is available.
- No new guidance has been provided on current issues and DOR advises to rely on existing interim guidance until new information is provided.
- DOR has committed to releasing new guidance well before implementation dates in the new legislation, and OSPI will provide information to districts as soon as we are made aware that it is available.

Legislative Funding Study – No New Money Again But Work Continues

- K–12 Funding Equity Work Group
 - Analyze funding formulas and revenue sources.
 - Options for revising funding formulas that address system and resource inequities.
 - Options that address state, local, and regional needs.
 - Consider weighted student funding formula.
 - Options for state and local tax authority.
 - Metrics for monitoring and accountability.
- Membership: Educators, school and district administrators, labor unions, families, students, community partners, the Department of Revenue, and legislators.
- Final Report due October 2027.

2027–29 Biennium Questions

- Where is basic education underfunded based on current expenditure patterns?
- What is the actual cost of basic education (existing structure, but not limited to available resources)?
- What will it take to fund the basic education system we need?

EGMS Upgrade

Education Grants Management System (EGMS) Upgrade

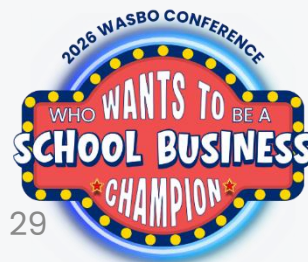
- Why?
 - Some of the benefits include easier navigation, faster response time, and AI capabilities.
- When?
 - Go live will happen on May 1, 2027.
- What this means for me?
 - Look for training to be scheduled in April 2027.
- Questions?
 - Email Amy Harris at amy.harris@k12.wa.us

Free & Reduced-Price Eligibility: Risks, Impacts and Actions

- Multiple factors impacting the number of students applying or automatically qualifying
- Potential funding impacts as F/R rate decreases
 - Temporary 'hold harmless' for Meals for WA Students (HB1238) expires at end of SY2025–26 for:
 - Learning Assistance Program (LAP)
 - National Board-Certified Teaching Bonus
- Maintain accurate F/R data and ensure students get benefits by:
 - Conducting Direct Certification monthly
 - Robust promotion and collection of the CNEEB (Child Nutrition Eligibility and Education Benefits)



**'It's More Than a Meal
Application' Toolkit**



Pending Rule Changes

- Emergency rules will be issued to address transportation depreciation.
- Permanent rules will be proposed for TVF fund loans and transfers. These proposed rules will set a very high bar to qualify.
- Rules will need to be created for non-bus TVF purchases and reimbursement. These rules will be temporary and contingent on legislative funding in the 2027 Session.
- Updated rules for federal forest deductions to comply with existing statutes and previous court cases.

2027–29 Biennial Legislative Budget Considerations

- The 2027 legislature will consider rebasing salary regionalization and experience mix factors based on new data.
- Final decisions may not be made public until budget releases in late March or late April next year.
- We believe there is a shared interest of moving away from a regionalization factor that is district based to one that is based on a region.
- The future of Local Effort Assistance.....cliff approaching.

School District Financial Health

- Seven districts currently on some level of state financial oversight.
- Rules require districts to request binding conditions when they submit to OSPI an annual budget, financial statement, or budget extension that reflects a negative balance.
- No differentiation between restricted and unrestricted fund balance when calculating negative fund balance.
- OSPI is continuously reviewing the rules and approach to helping districts with financial difficulties.

Medicaid as a Fiscal Health Tool

This isn't just compliance work. It's a budget strategy.

- You're already delivering these services.
- You're already funding the staff.
- Medicaid allows you to draw down federal dollars to support what you're already doing.

Why it matters:

- Stabilizes staffing in a constrained budget environment.
- Sustains critical student supports without relying solely on local funds.
- Creates flexibility to reinvest local dollars where they're needed most.

 **It's not about doing more. It's about funding what you already do.**



Start Small + What's Ahead

There's a manageable way to start or grow and a better system coming

- Start with administrative work already happening
- Lower lift → real return
- Build over time

What's ahead:

- Simpler processes
- Better reimbursement
- More services and staff eligible

 **Start now so you're ready for what's next**



THE STRONG SCHOOL-BASED MEDICAID SYSTEM

Strong Foundations. Seamless Systems. Maximum Reimbursement.



SCHOOL & DISTRICT LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

Visible commitment • Aligned priorities • Smart resource allocation • Sustainability

1 IDENTIFY STUDENTS



- Identify all eligible students
- Obtain and manage consent
- Keep information current

OUTCOME:
Billable population unlocked

2 DELIVER SERVICES



- Provide IEP/health services
- Deliver consistently
- Document everything

OUTCOME:
Billable units generated

3 CLAIM REVENUE



- Submit clean, accurate claims
- Follow up on denials
- Leverage MAC participation

OUTCOME:
Reimbursement captured

4 SUSTAIN & OPTIMIZE



- Track key metrics
- Monitor revenue & impact
- Use data to improve

OUTCOME:
Stable, maximized revenue over time

FOUNDATION: TEAM-DRIVEN SYSTEM



Shared Leadership
District + School



Clear Roles
SPED, Health,
Fiscal, Admin



Accountability
Data-driven goals
and support



Training & Capacity
Ongoing staff
development and
resource support



ACROSS ALL STEPS: COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY

Everyone knows their role. Data is visible, shared, and acted on.



WHERE DISTRICTS LOSE MONEY



Missed eligible students



Services not consistently delivered or documented



Claims not submitted or followed up



Not leveraging School Medicaid



Gaps anywhere = less reimbursement.



ONE TEAM. ONE MISSION. EVERY STUDENT. EVERY OPPORTUNITY.



OSPI & HCA are Here to Help

You don't have to figure this out alone.

- PLCs → learn with other districts.
- Guided support & Technical assistance → real-time help.

Final thought:

- Start where you are.
- Strengthen what you have.
- Don't miss a tool that can stabilize your system.



Come find us at our table

We've got resources and want to talk through your starting point or maximizing your current Medicaid pathways





STUDENT SUCCESS

Resources by Subject Area ▶

Instructional

CTE) ▶

tion ▶

Services ▶

2022 COVID-19 Student Survey Results ▶

Healthy Youth Survey

Traffic Safety Education ▶

School-Based Medicaid (Washington Apple Health)

School Health Profiles

Learning Alternatives ▶

Awards & Recognition ▶

Washington Apple Health (Medicaid): School-Based Services

Schools are essential access points for both physical and behavioral health. Decades of evidence show that when students receive needed services in school—where they spend the majority of their day—both academic and health outcomes improve.

Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), administered by the Washington Health Care Authority (HCA), provide health coverage to nearly 2 million Washingtonians, 800,000 of whom are children.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) can use Medicaid to support and expand student services through several reimbursement pathways.

Top 5 Things to Know About School-Based Medicaid



How School Districts Can Access Medicaid Funding

Washington's Local Education Agencies (LEAs)—which include school districts, charter schools, Tribal compact schools, and some Educational Service District programs—can access Medicaid reimbursement in three ways:

Contact Info

Bridget Underwood
School Health Strategy

Professional Learning Community

[Register for School Based Medicaid Professional Learning Community](#)

- March 9: 1-2:30p PT | Staffing, Readiness, Compliance Frameworks, and MTSS Alignment
- April 22: 9-10:30a PT | Real-Work Models of Medicaid Integration
- June 1: 1-2:30p PT | Sustainability & Forecasting: Building Fiscal Transparency and Reinvestment Plans

[View Medicaid 101 & Participation Models](#) | [PowerPoint \(PDF\)](#)



SCAN ME

Past PLC slides and webinar recording available on OSPI webpage!

MSOC Compliance – **New for 2026–27**

MSOC Expenditures will need to be reported (not budgeted) annually by school districts in the following new disaggregated categories:

- Technology devices
- Software licenses
- Technology or Software Maintenance/Repair
- Election Fees – Board
- Election Fees – Bonds and Levies
- Contracted Professional Development
- Safety and Security
- Dues and Fees
- Contracted Technology Staff
- Library Materials
- Utilities
- Insurance
- Curriculum and Textbooks
- Facilities Maintenance, not funded by CPF
- Property and Equipment, not funded by CPF

Final Thoughts – Things to look forward to?

- Looking at LEA after 2026–27, eligibility is expected to be reduced significantly.
- As costs and expectations continue to increase and funding is decreased or remains stagnant – the Superintendent continues to direct us to think about how the system could be improved to provide ample, equitable, and stable funding for all districts.
- New apportionment system will begin development in 2026–27. This means that over the next few years, a new system will replace all data collection systems, and the calculation and reporting from SAFS.

Program Webpages and Resources

Program Webpages:

- [School Apportionment & Financial Resources \(SAFS\)](#)
- [Child Nutrition Services](#)
- [Student Transportation](#)
- [School Facilities & Organization](#)
- [Federal Fiscal Policy](#)

Presentation:

- This presentation will be posted on the [SAFS Trainings and Presentation webpage](#).

Thank You!



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Connect with us!



k12.wa.us



facebook.com/waospi



twitter.com/waospi



youtube.com/waospi



medium.com/waospi



linkedin.com/company/waospi

WASBO Annual Conference

From Session to Strategy

May 13, 2026

A Proud Product of Public Education





Public Education is Totally RAD!

- **90% of Washington kids go to public school.**
 - The majority of eligible students enroll in public school.
- Washington families rely on public education.
- We can be loud and proud to be a part of public education.

Caseload Forecast Council: <https://cfc.wa.gov/education/k-12-education/forecast-tracking>

Principles for Effective & Sustainable Advocacy

- Build real **relationships** and trust with policymakers
- Keep advocacy grounded in what **students** actually need
- Bring education voices together so we're stronger and more **aligned**
- Be **proactive** and strategic instead of just reacting to issues
- Lead with experience, expertise, and practical guidance people can **trust**
- Keep elevating the **value** of public education and school leadership

Presentation Overview

- Part I:** 2026 Legislative Session Bills Recap
- Part II:** Looking Ahead to 2027
- Part III:** Advocacy & Action for School Business Leaders

Part I

2026 Legislative Session Recap

Count the Wins First



Sales Tax Exemption for K-12



Many bills stopped or changed



Small district modernization

2026 Session Context

Forecast

- Falling revenue forecasts, shortfall
- Unsustainable budget decisions
- Rising maintenance costs
- All sectors on defense

Governor

- Governor proposes no new revenue, cuts only budget
- Major education funding cuts

Time & Legislators

- Short, abbreviated timeframe (60 days)
- All House & 1/2 Senate up
- Tax votes no longer a barrier in election

Bills of the 2026 Legislative Session

1795 | Rep Lisa Callan

Student Restraint and Isolation Limits

- Prohibits mechanical & chemical restraint and life-threatening physical restraint or escort.
- Bars isolation as a planned intervention in IEPs/504 plans and prohibits creating new isolation rooms.
- Applies to all public educational service providers (with limited exceptions).



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



District Requirement

YES



District Action Required

Revise policies, staff training, and update crisis-response practices.

1295 | Rep Gerry Pollet

Evidence-based K-4 literacy requirements

- Requires updated or newly adopted literacy curricula for K-4 grade to meet specified criteria
- Revises literacy-related teacher endorsement standards
- Directs teacher preparation programs to incorporate revised standards within two years
- Requires OSPI to develop and update educator literacy training.



Effective Date

Upon curriculum adoption starting in 2027.



District Requirement

Yes. Early literacy curriculum begins in 2027. No adoption on specific timeline.



State Requirement

PESB endorsement standards revised; teacher-prep programs incorporate within two years.

5272 | Senator John Lovick

School interference/intimidation penalties

- Expands the school-related crimes of interference by force or violence and intimidation by threat of force or violence
- Increases penalties for interference by force or violence



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



District Requirement

Yes. Action required for policies/protocols.



District Action Required

Update safety notices, handbooks, and law enforcement protocols.

2534 | Rep Clyde Shavers

Military family enrollment and records

- Makes changes to district requirements for enrolling children of military families, transferring their education records, and providing services and accommodations.



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



District Requirement

Yes



District Action Required

Update enrollment, record transfer, and training.

2594 | Rep Kristine Reeves

McKinney-Vento alignment in state law

- Codifies federal homeless assistance provisions into state law.
- Ensures actions satisfying federal law also meet state requirements for OSPI, districts, and charter schools.



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



District Requirement

Yes. Action required.



District Action Required

Update homeless education procedures and staff training.

6134 | Senator Curtis King

Notice to striking workers applying for UI benefits

- ESD must provide notice to a striking worker applying for UI benefits of a potential overpayment assessment upon receipt of retroactive wages.
- Notice methods include an online acknowledgement box, letter, or other reasonable determination.



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



District Requirement

No



State-Level Requirement

Yes. ESD must provide notice of potential overpayment.

1796 | Rep Lisa Callan

No-vote school construction debt authority

- Authorizes eligible school districts to contract indebtedness and issue bonds without a vote of the people, within the existing 0.375 percent debt limit.
- Available for districts that passed a capital levy and were not in binding conditions in the prior three years.



Effective Date
June 10, 2026



District Requirement
Action required.



District Action
Evaluate no-vote debt authority for capital project financing.

5922 | Senator Lisa Wellman

Authorizing transportation vehicle fund transfers

- Allows a district, with OSPI approval, to transfer vehicle depreciation payments and earned interest from its transportation vehicle fund to another fund when the district is reducing its vehicle fleet.
- Available when a district is reducing its fleet and obtains OSPI approval.



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



OSPI Approval

Required



District Action

Document fleet-reduction rationale and intended fund use before request.

6065 | Senator Perry Dozier

Transportation fund loans/transfers under oversight

- Allows a district on binding conditions or under enhanced financial oversight to take a temporary, interest-free interfund loan from its transportation vehicle fund.
- Enables petitioning OSPI for money transfers to another school fund, including permanent transfers with no repayment requirement.



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



Eligibility

Binding conditions or enhanced oversight.



District Action

Prepare financial documentation before OSPI request.

5963 | Senator T'wina Nobles

Passport to Careers / WCG alignment

- Qualifies students eligible for Passport to Careers as automatically income-eligible for the Washington College Grant
- Aligns Passport financial-need calculations with the federal formula
- Requires Passport funds to be deposited into the State Financial Aid Account



Effective Date

June 10, 2026



Award Cycle

Applies after enactment to upcoming cycles.



Action Required

WSAC & institutions align processes; update advising materials.

5994 | Senator Adrian Cortes

Timber tax distributions

- This bill extends timber tax distributions to school districts without qualifying levies in a given calendar year if they had qualifying levies in effect in either of the previous two calendar years.
- The highest levy rate in effect during the two previous calendar years must be used to calculate timber tax distributions.



Effective Date
Immediately



Emergency Clause
Contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

2026 Legislative Report

Document Profile: Key Bills & Requirements

Education-Related Bill Summary

WASA 2026 Legislative Session

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Description	Implementation	Resources
NEW REQUIREMENTS					
5272	Sen John Lovick	School interference/intimidation penalties	Expands the school-related crimes of interference by force or violence and intimidation by threat of force or violence, and increases penalties for interference by force or violence.	Effective Date: June 10, 2026 District requirement: Yes. Update safety notices, family/student handbooks, event-management procedures, and coordination protocols with local law enforcement and extracurricular activity administrators.	Final Bill Report OSPI School Safety Center: https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/health-safety/school-safety-center
1295	Rep Gerry Pollet	Evidence-based K-4 literacy requirements	Beginning in 2027. requires updated or newly adopted literacy curricula for K-4 grade to meet specified criteria, revises literacy-related teacher endorsement	Effective Date: Upon curriculum adoption starting in 2027. District requirement: Yes. Early/reading/writing literacy curriculum requirements begin in 2027 for newly adopted or updated K-4 materials. Does not require adoption on any specific timatins. State requirement: Yes.	OSPI Learning Standards & Instructional Materials: https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/learning-standards-instructional-materials

[2026 Legislative Report](#)

Bills That Didn't Pass — YET

- **MSOC** (Wellman, 5918 & Gregerson, 2147)
- **Transportation Safety Net** (Wellman, 5858)
- **Levy Equalization** (Bergquist, 2116)
- **SEBB for part-time employees** (Bergquist, 2160)
- **District financial solvency** (Rude, 2593 & Dozier, 6247)
- **Tort reform** (Dhingra, 6239)
- **Full cell phone ban** (Lias, 5346)
- **Apportionment shift** (Stonier, 2691)

Part II

Looking Ahead to
2027

Session Outlook



**Long session,
105 days**



**Forecasts
anticipate
shortfall**



**New
legislators &
leadership**



“Democrats know they made no major new investments in basic education, the state’s paramount duty. They did vow to increase funding for this purpose with money from the income tax, but haven’t said how much or when.”

*(Senator Jamie) Pedersen acknowledged the obvious to reporters Thursday night: **“We’re going to have to do some more work on education funding.”***

Bill Lucia and Jerry Cornfield

Washington State Standard, March 14, 2026

2027 Session Context

Forecast

- Unsustainable budget decisions
- Rising maintenance costs
- Falling revenue forecasts (Nov, Jan/Feb)
- All sectors on defense

Governor

- Proposed budget out in December
- Unsure of commitments to K-12 beyond school meals, cell phones, and FAFSA

Time and Legislators

- Long session to set tone for biennium
- New legislators
- Big tax vote in 2026 still impacting discussion

What Legislators & Gov are Talking About

General

- **Elections & Campaigns**
- Budget shortfall
- Housing Affordability
- Public Safety
- Cost of living
- Healthcare
- Early Learning
- Taxes

IF K-12 Education:

- Cell phones
- FAFSA & WASFA
- Accountability & Financial Training
- SBE Future Ready
- Reading Literacy
- LEA
- Public Records
- Unfunded Mandates
- SEBB for Part-Time Employees

What K-12 Is Talking About

Funding

- Basic Education Funding (MSOC, SPED)
- Local Effort Assistance (LEA)
- Regionalization / Rebase
- Substitute costs
- Staffing needs
- Learning Assistance Program

Issues

- Transition to Kindergarten
- **Math and Reading**
- **Unfunded Mandates**
- Tort Reform and Liability Costs
- Public Records

What's Missing

Seems pretty important



Part III

Advocacy & Action for School Business Leaders



Center students in message

Make every advocacy effort clearly about the benefit to the children you serve.



Bring real world data and stories

Combine hard numbers with compelling narratives for maximum impact.



Start now

Don't wait for the perfect moment. Consistent action is key to successful advocacy.

Interim Advocacy Plan

Key actions to take in the next 243 days

Establish Priorities

Define core focus areas for the upcoming sessions.

Invite Legislators

Host visits to your schools to show impact firsthand.

Meet Locally

Correct narratives and share district numbers.

Fill the room

Ensure presence at Legislator Town Halls.

Engage PTA/PTOs

Educate them on the reality of funding cuts.

Local Media

Share stories and data with local news outlets.

Reframe Costs

Discuss funding as an investment, not for spending..

Campaign for K-12

Engage in campaigns where appropriate.

Be Yourself

Authenticity is your greatest advocacy tool.

Questions for Legislators & Challengers

Constitutional Duty

Washington's Constitution makes public education the state's paramount duty. How will you uphold that responsibility?

Funding Gaps

How will you address the gap between rising district costs and state funding (MSOC, SPED, Staffing & Subs)?

Policy Priorities

What are your top three K-12 priorities for the next legislative session?

K-12 Investment

What actions will you take to increase state investment in K-12 public education?

Staffing & Programs

What immediate steps will you support to help districts avoid staff cuts and program reductions?

Student Needs

How will you ensure districts have the resources needed to support academic, behavioral, and mental health needs?

Questions for Legislators and Challengers

1. Legislative Priorities

What are your top three K–12 priorities for the next legislative session?

2. School Leader Engagement

How will you engage school leaders and business officers in policy and budget decisions?

3. Vouchers & Privatization

What is your position on vouchers and privatization and their impact on public schools?

4. Ongoing Communication

How will you maintain communication with local school districts and communities?

What do you want policy makers to know?



In numbers....



In dollars...



In difficult
decisions...



In student
terms...



In what is
working....

Your unique expertise is vital.

SEBB for Subs Legislative Proposal

Eligibility Criteria

Cover the cost of benefits for part-time employees who:

- Worked 630+ hours in previous school year within the same district
- Are anticipated to meet the 100-hour minimum by November 15-ish

Proposed Addendum

Individuals with over two consecutive years must show adequate progress by November to maintain benefits past December.

Key Baselines

The November 15th deadline for 100 hours is the established baseline, though subject to minor adjustments.

Strategic Goal: Understanding normal impact is key—tracking subs who transition to full-time roles or exit the district to manage long-term costs effectively.

WASBO members are best equipped to provide legislators with



Real numbers



Impact on districts and students



Identifying where problems and opportunities exist

You bring a perspective no other school leader can.

“It’s not that I’m so smart, I just stay with problems longer.”

- Albert Einstein

Thank you!

Marissa Rathbone

Asst ED of Gov't Relations & Advocacy,
WASA

mrathbone@wasa-oly.org

360.481.5842

