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Legislature Urged to Provide Limits on Use of Levy Dollars for Teacher Compensation

Districts say guidelines needed to clarify collective bargaining related to levy funds, teacher pay

OLYMPIA — Leaders representing district administrators and school directors from both the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) and the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA) today affirmed their support of legislation clarifying guidelines for collective bargaining rules as they relate to specific teacher assignments that fall outside of the basic professional responsibilities for all teachers. The two school groups outlined their concerns in an [April 11 letter](#) to lawmakers.

Joel Aune, executive director of WASA, says school district administrators support legislation that would provide a clear definition for teacher compensation and the funding for it.

“We wholeheartedly acknowledge that collective bargaining is fundamental to the relationship between school districts and their employees. We have also been patently supportive of increased state funding for employee salaries and wages to ensure the staff in schools and districts receive fair and competitive compensation,” said Aune.

“We believe the state should fully fund teacher compensation, and those dollars should continue to be subject to established collective bargaining processes. However, if a levy is increased for

a specific educational purpose, there needs to be clear guidelines that provide necessary limits. This is essential for protecting levy dollars that have been generated for those educational programs and services,” said Aune.

Tim Garchow, executive director of WSSDA, agreed. “The state is clearly responsible for funding basic education,” said Garchow. “With their response to the *McCleary* decision, the Legislature has attempted to establish salary fence posts for districts. However, greater structure is needed.”

“Washington state’s 1,477 school board directors have a fiduciary duty to ensure not only compliance with fiscal regulations, but also the continued solvency of their districts. School board directors are supportive of the development of clear guidelines and limitations to compensation beyond what the state provides for basic education,” he said. “Clarity on the definition of teacher compensation and the funding for it is extremely important as districts move forward in this post-*McCleary* setting.”

Garchow added, “Any additional compensation above and beyond base salary should be tied precisely to duties and responsibilities associated with a specific assignment. Levy dollars used to supplement state funding for teacher salaries must be for extra work that is above and beyond the program of basic education as defined by the state.”