



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate Budget Falls Short for Schools

*Budget plan not “what the people want, what school districts need,
what the court ordered”*

OLYMPIA — Officials with the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) said Friday the Senate Republican operating budget approved overnight does not do enough for schools and students in Washington, despite additional investments and a heightened focus on K-12 education.

Dan Steele, WASA assistant executive director for government relations, said that more can and must be done fiscally for schools and students in Washington state. The operating budget was unveiled Tuesday and approved after midnight Friday in Olympia by a vote of 25-24.

In remarks before the Senate Ways & Means Committee on Tuesday, Steele commended the caucus’ focus on K-12 education and praised the additional investments, but advised WASA would not support the proposal because it still falls short of what’s needed under the court provisions of McCleary.

“We applaud the focus on K-12 in this budget and appreciate the additional investments. But we’ve come here to oppose the overall budget for two reasons, Steele said. “First, even given the additional dollars, we don’t think that this budget does what the people want, what school districts need, what the court has ordered, or what the paramount duty requires in the Constitution and that’s amply funded public schools,” he said.

Schools are also impacted by cuts to other state government services, Steele explained, including many social and health and human service programs, further compounding efforts to educate students.

“The second reason we oppose the budget is that schools don’t operate in a vacuum. They operate as a part of a full state system. We have a symbiotic relationship with other state services and schools are negatively impacted by other large cuts in other government services,” he added.

“President Reagan used to talk about his vision of a city on the hill that we could look up to and, I think we could have the same vision of looking up to schools on a hill, but even if we did that, if our communities behind it were crumbling, it doesn’t make much sense,” he said.

“We are looking forward to continuing to work with legislators on an education funding plan and also a budget that does what we need, that the Legislature can actually adopt, the court will accept and actually works for schools and kids.”

Watch Steele’s testimony [here on TVW](#).

About the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA):

WASA (www.wasa-oly.org) is a non-profit organization committed to the development of quality education through professional leadership. Members benefit from a supportive community of professional leaders working to provide insightful, valuable training support, and resources. WASA also strives to sustain a positive impact on legislative and community leaders. Membership is open to education administrators in Washington state.

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