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About TWIO

***This Week in Olympia* is emailed to active WASA and AEA members each Friday during the Legislative Session and is posted on WASA's website at <https://wasa-oly.org/WASA/TWIO>.**

Join us at the 2017 WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference, February 12–13. Register at <http://wasa-oly.org/wasa/leg17>

Week 1 – January 9–13, 2017

This Week in Review

On Monday, January 9, the 65th Washington State Legislature convened its 2017 Legislative Session. This first year of a two-year biennial session is known as the “long” session and is limited to 105 days (although most Olympia observers are expecting this Legislature will require extra innings to wrap up their required business). The main focus for legislators will be to adopt a 2017–19 Operating Budget, along with a 2017–19 Capital Construction Budget and a 2017–19 Transportation Budget. The major cloud hanging over the looming Operating Budget debate is the required *McCleary* solution, how much that will cost, and how to pay for it.

The Supreme Court’s most recent [Order in the *McCleary* case](#) specifically clarified that the Legislature has until September 1, 2018, to comply with the constitution and “fully implement its program of basic education.” The Court also clarified, however, the remaining details of the program “must be in place by the final adjournment of the 2017 Legislative Session.” This includes “funding sources and the necessary appropriations for the 2017–19 biennium.” In simple terms, this means the 2017 session is the Legislature’s last opportunity to solve the *McCleary* problem.

Because the Legislature continues to have split control (with Democrats in the Majority in the House and with a Republican-led Coalition Caucus in the Majority in the Senate), all legislation (including the budgets) must be agreed upon by both parties. Many of those bills will require compromises to be successfully adopted and in some cases, such as a *McCleary* solution, major compromises will be necessary. WASA believes the ultimate *McCleary* solution will require increased state revenues and changes to local school district collective bargaining (among other things). Successfully advancing those issues through this Legislature will require major—and difficult—political compromises. Republicans have taken a hard-and-fast opposition to raising revenue and Democrats have taken an equally hardened position against any limitation of collective bargaining rights. (For a more detailed review of the current dynamic in Olympia, check out Bill Keim’s most recent column on [Bill’s Blog](#).) Unlike compromises often necessary to end a budget impasse, a successful *McCleary* solution is not about which side blinks first, but about how much both sides are willing to move.

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The centerpiece of Governor Jay Inslee's 2017–19 Operating Budget request was [K–12 education](#), including a package of *McCleary*-related proposals (for details, please see WASA's [December 13, 2016, Special Edition of TWIO](#)). Included was a restructuring of the current Salary Allocation Model and significant increases in educator compensation. He also outlined a [levy reform](#) proposal. Absent, however, was any discussion of changes or limitations to current TRII (Time, Responsibilities, Incentives & Innovation) contracts or any “sideboards” or limitations to collective bargaining. Gov. Inslee falls in line with his House and Senate Democratic colleagues and will not engage in a conversation about altering educator collective bargaining.

To fund his budget proposal (including \$3.85 billion in K–12 enhancements), the governor proposed a [significant tax package](#), expected to raise almost \$4.4 billion. Upon release, Republicans immediately panned the proposal, saying additional revenue was unnecessary. Part of their rationale for opposing additional revenue is the most recent revenue forecast from the state's [Economic & Revenue Forecast Council](#), which projects there will be over \$2.5 billion in available spending capacity above the current 2015–17 budget. That is great news. However, hardline Republican opponents to revenue enhancements fail to mention that, while state revenues continue to increase, state expenditures continue to increase at a faster rate. The Forecast Council's most recent four-year [Budget Outlook](#) projects a *negative* \$1.49 billion Ending Fund Balance in 2017–19—even with an anticipated additional \$2.5 billion in available revenue. The projected revenue shortfall is exponentially worse in the 2019–21 biennium. Remember, the Legislature is required not only to adopt a “balanced budget,” but a balanced budget over four years. At this point, the Forecast Council projects the Ending Fund Balance in 2019–21 to be *negative* \$7.4 billion.

While Gov. Inslee issued a bold budget request—which certainly establishes the “high watermark” this session—there was a concern that the governor would move onto other priorities and not fight for his proposal. On Wednesday, Gov. Inslee presented his second [Inaugural Address](#) to legislators assembled for a Joint Session. Unlike his previous Inaugural Address or State of the State presentations, the governor focused much of his speech on K–12 education. In his remarks, Inslee talked about the need to work on issues such as mental health, homelessness, opioid addiction and investments for early learning and higher education, but he firmly stated that “none of those issues is as important as fully funding the K–12 education our kids deserve.” He noted that elected officials swear an oath to uphold the constitution—a constitution that clearly declares K–12 education to be the paramount duty—and it is time to fulfill this obligation. Unfortunately, Inslee did fall into the trap of boasting about “adding \$4.6 billion for our schools” in the last four years. While this is technically true, legislators and the governor never mention that a significant portion of that increase is due to required Maintenance Level spending and not due to policy decisions made by the Legislature. Spending on *McCleary*-related basic education requirements accounts for about \$2.3 billion. That is positive, but still nowhere near the level the K–12 investment is required to be.

Education Funding Task Force

Since the Supreme Court issued its landmark *McCleary* decision in January 2012, Justices have explicitly ordered the Legislature to submit “a complete plan for fully implementing its program of basic education for each school year between now [2012] and the 2017–18 school year.” This demand was reiterated in a January 2014 Order. Failing to comply, Justices held the Legislature in Contempt of Court (2014) and issued sanctions of \$100,000 per day (2015) until a plan is submitted. Last session, legislators adopted [E2SSB 6195](#) and notified the Court a bill had been signed into law which comprises the “plan that complies with the Court's orders.” Of course, the “plan,” rather than laying out specific details of how the Legislature would fully implement the program of basic

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education (as required), simply established a new [Education Funding Task Force](#), charged with providing a series of recommendations to the full Legislature by January 9, 2017—the first day of the new session.

The Task Force met monthly since last April. While there was a fair amount of activity, there did not seem to be much real “action” or progress. As the deadline for recommendations approached, it was unclear where the Task Force would land. Signs of trouble were brewing near the end. A December meeting was scheduled to discuss preliminary recommendations, but days before the meeting, the agenda was changed. The heart of the meeting—reviewing preliminary recommendations—was stripped from the agenda and replaced with a discussion of Governor Inslee’s budget proposal, which was released earlier that week.

The discussion of preliminary recommendations was added back to the agenda in a January 4 meeting and there were (minor) rumblings of optimism. When the Task Force convened, however, it was clear the education community would be disappointed. Rather than any discussion of a bi-partisan plan, Democrats and Republicans introduced independent, partisan proposals and it quickly became apparent there would be little—if any—effort to merge those independent proposals together. Earlier in the day, there was a glimmer of hope that the two parties would come together. Members of the Task Force had scheduled a private meeting to discuss their respective recommendations and consider next steps. Democrat members of the Task Force arrived with their recommendations in hand...but the Republican members never showed.

At the formal Task Force meeting that afternoon, the Democrats introduced their [recommendations](#) along with a [preliminary cost estimate](#) (approximately \$1.7 billion for the biennium and increasing in the following biennium). There were some concerns with the recommendations, including the discussion of collective bargaining. Under the section “Recommendations for Local School District Collective Bargaining” there was a one sentence recommendation: “Local control over school district collective bargaining is maintained.” Similarly, there was a one-sentence recommendation about school employee health benefits. The Democrats stated: “Health benefits continue to be bargained locally and no additional changes are recommended as part of this proposal.” Even with these concerns, we at least had an opportunity to review some concrete suggestions.

Reviewing the Republican recommendations was a bit more difficult, in part because they submitted NO recommendations. Instead, they presented to the full Task Force a set of “[Guiding Principles](#).”

The trouble did not end there. The Task Force had one final meeting scheduled for January 9, the ultimate deadline for submitting recommendations and the first day of the 2017 Session. A [draft report](#) was introduced by the Republicans for discussion and action. The proposed report, however, simply consisted of a short description of the Task Force’s authorizing legislation, including the Task Force’s charge, a list of Task Force members, and a list of the Task Force meetings. Following this five-page introduction was 577 pages consisting of all the materials presented during the Task Force’s meetings. This draft report contained NO recommendations—neither the Republican Guiding Principles, nor the Democrats previously introduced recommendations. Democrats offered an amendment to attach an appendix with the Democratic Caucus recommendations, explicitly noting that the Task Force did not adopt the recommendations. That amendment was rejected with a partisan 4-4 tie. The motion to adopt the draft report also failed, again with a partisan 4-4 tie.

The Democrats also introduced a [draft report](#) for consideration. It included the same introductory pages as the Republican draft (both were prepared by legislative staff) and

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the same set of materials from previous Task Force meetings. Of course, their draft report also included an additional appendix with the Democratic proposed recommendations and the Republican proposed guiding principles. As you probably already guessed, the motion to accept this draft report was rejected with a partisan 4-4 tie.

So, after eight months of work, the Education Funding Task Force failed to introduce ANY recommendations as required by E2SSB 6195. And, remember, the Legislature used adoption of this bill as evidence they had crafted a “plan” ordered by the Court and would be prepared to act on those recommendations during this session, fully complying with the *McCleary* decision and the constitution. Now, lacking any direction from a panel established to provide the Legislature with some guidance, the effort to reach a final *McCleary* solution—already a huge uphill climb—just became more difficult. The final, dreadful Task Force meeting, occurring just three hours before the 2017 Session convened, is likely a foreshadowing of the next 100 days (or more) of this session.

Levy Cliff

Continuing the discussion of a horribly partisan legislative session, let’s talk about the levy cliff. If legislators fail to address the compensation/levy reform conundrum this session (and re-read the discussion of the EFTF if you think a solution is imminent), local school district budgets will be in the crosshairs. School districts are scheduled to collectively lose almost a [half billion dollars](#) in local levy capacity and Local Effort Assistance (LEA or “levy equalization”) funding.

Just a reminder why: Legislation adopted in 2010 increased local school district levy lids by four percent and increased state funding for LEA by two percent. Those increases, however, are set to expire. Because education finance reform (ESHB 2261) had been adopted in 2009, which called for full funding and implementation by 2018, legislators (and educators) assumed the additional local funding would be unnecessary after 2018, so the legislation included a sunset date of January 1, 2018.

If local levy capacity and LEA funding is decreased without a corresponding increase in state funding, many school districts will go over the “levy cliff” and will have difficulty meeting financial obligations, forcing deep budget cuts and/or substantial employee layoffs.

Since last session, administrators have been pleading with legislators to address this problem. In 2016, legislators had little urgency and many believed—even if this was an important issue to address—they could wait until this year. With that in mind, as a part of E2SSB 6195, the Legislature committed to taking action by the end of the 2017 session to finally eliminate school district dependency on local levies for implementation of the state’s program of basic education. Additionally, budget language in the 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget commits the Legislature to address the overreliance on levies. The budget requires the Education Funding Task Force (that productive group discussed above) by April 1, 2017 to either: (a) Determine that the Legislature will meet its obligation to provide for compensation reform and eliminate school districts’ overreliance on local levies by April 30, 2017; or (b) Introduce legislation to address the levy cliff by extending current state levy policy for at least one calendar year, with the objective of enacting such legislation by April 30, 2017.

For now, let’s avoid the pessimism about whether the Legislature will be able to follow through on this commitment (a commitment adopted in statute and budget language, but also expressed to the Court). Even if there is an iron-clad guarantee the Legislature will keep its word (please don’t snicker...), waiting to address this issue at the end of April is simply too late for many districts. First, school districts cannot assume the Legislature will solve this problem, so they must budget accordingly. Many districts are (or soon will be) in the process of drafting two budgets—with best-case and worst-case scenarios.

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This ambiguity provides school districts with no level of clarity or stability. Additionally, legislators are keeping an eye on the May 15 “non-renewal” deadline, which is why the April 30 action deadline was adopted. Unfortunately, having an answer to budget questions two weeks before a looming RIF deadline is not enough to plan, prepare and issue required notices. On top of that, many districts’ collective bargaining agreements require non-renewal notice to arrive earlier than the statutory May 15 deadline.

Because of this troubling situation, we were pleased that legislation to positively address the levy cliff was introduced early. [HB 1059/SB 5023](#), filed before the start of session, would delay the automatic reduction of levy lids and LEA funding (along with the coming reduction of “ghost” revenues in the levy base) by one year, allowing additional time for a smooth transition to new funding and providing districts with a bit more budget certainty.

Leadership in the House understand the urgency of prompt action and took the unusual step of holding a public hearing on this important policy bill during the first week of session. The House Appropriations Committee held a hearing on the HB 1059 on Wednesday afternoon. Numerous educators and education advocates spoke out strongly in favor of the bill. There were only two dissenters on hand. The first was Liv Finne, Education Director for the Washington Policy Center, argued against the bill saying that legislators will break their promise about not raising taxes if they pass HB 1059. She also derided school administrators for not preparing for the coming levy cliff—a situation they knew was coming seven years ago (more on that [here](#)). What Ms. Finne failed to note was that the Legislature made a commitment to fully fund and fully implement a new system of education finance by September 1, 2018 (HB 2261) EIGHT years ago—and we have yet to see them come close to fulfilling that commitment. If the Legislature complied with Court orders (and their own legislation adopted in 2009), the levy cliff would not be an issue.

The second detractor was a bit of a surprise. A representative of the WEA testified as “Other”—that is, neither support or opposition. The rationale was that WEA did not want this issue to be dealt with as a singular issue, but as part of a larger, comprehensive fix to education funding. Well, I think we can support that; however, the reason we need HB 1059 is because it is extremely unclear if the Legislature will ultimately solve *McCleary* or not. And even if they do, we don’t know WHEN it will happen.

Now the troubling politics of this issue. When the bill was scheduled for a hearing on Wednesday, we were told it would be on a fast-track and be moved to executive session and be adopted by the Committee on Thursday. Presumably it will also be on a fast-track out of the full House so we can have sufficient time to work with a Senate that has been resistant to addressing this issue. At the same time we heard the bill would be quickly adopted, we began hearing that many House Republicans on the Committee were reluctant to vote for the bill. We feared if the bill passed out of the Committee—and then later the full House—with a straight party-line vote, it would give the Republican majority in the Senate a reason to ignore the issue. WASA and other education organizations quickly activated members and calls and emails started going out to legislators. Almost immediately we got messages back from members in both caucuses that they would support the bill. And it should not have been a surprise. After all, most of the returning legislators had already supported and voted for a similar bill last session, which was adopted by the full House with a vote of 91-7.

We breathed a sigh of relief and tried to chuckle over our paranoia—until we started receiving messages from Republicans that they had changed their minds and could no longer support the bill. One legislator originally told his superintendents that he intended to vote for the bill, then later informed them that he could not support the bill in Committee, but would “eventually support the bill.” This was a pretty clear indication that the House Republican Leadership was locking down their Caucus on HB 1059. Ultimately, when the vote was taken Thursday afternoon, all 17 Democratic members

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of the panel voted “Yes” on the bill and all 15 Republican members (one member was excused) voted “No.”

As the bill moves to the House floor, administrators need to continue connecting with your legislators, especially those on the Republican side of the aisle, encouraging them to support HB 1059 (and the Senate companion SB 5023). Remember to tell your story—let legislators know what the impacts of the levy cliff will mean to your schools, your staff, and your community. And do not be shy about asking why your legislator won’t support the bill (or for 15 Appropriations Committee members who already opposed the bill, why they rejected it), if they are opponents. Do it respectfully, but you deserve an answer.

2017 Session Guide Released

WASA’s Legislative Session Guide, updated for the 2017 Session, has been completed and is available for your use on the [WASA website](#).

The Guide includes all the tools your need to be engaged this session: WASA’s 2017 Legislative Platform; rosters of all House and Senate members, with office, phone, and e-mail contact information; key dates in the Session; and a list of other handy resources.

Please also remember that the WASA website has a set of advocacy tools. Visit our [Legislative Advocacy Center](#) to get caught up on *TWIO*, check our Bill Watch or review Legislative Committee schedules. We will also continue to compile a library of [Sample Legislative Communications](#) including WASA talking points and sample letters from your colleagues. Keep coming back to hone your message—and consider providing us with your communications to help us build our library.

AEA

By Mitch Denning

The first week of the 2017 session has been eventful for WAMOA and WSNA. Needless to say, would you expect anything different?

On Monday, we attended the final meeting of the Education Funding Task Force, which had been commissioned by the 2016 Legislature in SB 6195 to come up with recommendations on how to solve the *McCleary* compensation issue as well as necessary levy reform. Unfortunately for all parties involved and the entire K–12 community, the Task Force could not agree on a set of recommendations, so the Democratic caucus specific plans for solving these two major K–12 issues, and the Republic caucus guiding principles now sit on the task force website for all to see. Hopefully, both parties will make better progress to fully funding basic education by 2018 during the 2017 session than the task force did in seven months of meetings.

On Wednesday, prior to House Appropriations hearing the Governor’s 2017–19 Operating Budget, they held a public hearing on [HB 1059](#), delaying the changes in levy authority and LEA from CY 2018 to CY 2019. We’re watching this bill, and the issue very carefully. Those school districts and associations testifying, all supported the bill.

On Thursday, House Environment heard [HB 1017](#), siting of schools and school facilities. Again, AEA is watching this bill, and those testifying were supportive of the bill. In summary, the bill would allow schools to be sited outside the Growth Management Act’s urban growth areas, if the school districts met certain criteria. Last year there were about 17 districts that needed to add new schools due to enrollment growth, but this law restricted them. Last year’s efforts in the legislature did not solve the issue, so the bill is back and heard during the first week of the session. Hopefully, it will fare better than it did last year.

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Also on Thursday, Senate Ways & Means held a public hearing on Governor Inslee's 2017–19 Capital Budget, of which K–12 is allocated a healthy “slice of the pie,” about \$1.03 billion of the \$2.4 billion bond request. We testified in support of the proposed budget, thanking the governor for funding the (1) urgent school repair program (\$3M), (2) Healthy Kids/Healthy Schools Grant (\$3M), and (3) K–3 class size reduction grants (\$270M).

Today, we testified similarly on the governor's budget in House Capital Budget. We also stated that we support the governor's proposed increase in per student square footage at the elementary level from 90 SF to 110 SF.

Pensions/Health Benefits

By Fred Yancey – The Nexus Group

As the 65th Legislative Session begins, pension, health, and other benefit proposals are slow to emerge, or in some cases, re-emerge.

Of first importance is the fact that traditionally, any pension changes in current offerings will not affect currently enrolled members. All past attempts to change pension offerings would have only affected new hires/enrollees. An exception was the move by the Legislature in 2011 to eliminate any annual cost of living increase (COLA) for retirees in TRS/PERS1 Plans. The Supreme Court held this action as legal since the Legislature specifically reserved the right to revoke the COLA. Note that in the future, similar language reserving such rights may well be included in legislation affecting retirement and other benefits.

Re: Pensions, in general: Republican Senators want to fundamentally change the state's current pension system into a defined contribution model (DC) analogous to 401-K plans. Senator Braun, the new Chair of the Senate Ways & Means Committee, (WM) is now the leading advocate of making these changes. Senators Bailey and Schoesler are also key supporters. As of yet, no proposals have been introduced to continue these efforts.

It is important to note that any change in the present pension plan offerings do not create immediate dollars for use in balancing the budget. Those changes, if any, would generate savings only in the long-term.

It is early in the Session, and so this is a look at some potential issues that may come forth through reviewing the history of past Sessions.

Legislative intent: Making changes in the current retirement/pension system.

Past bills:

HB 2646: Addressing plan membership default provisions in the public employees' retirement system, the teachers' retirement system, and the school employees' retirement system.

This bill was introduced and heard during the 2016 Session. It would have changed the present retirement default provision. Currently, if a new employee does not select a pension plan, then he/she is automatically placed into Plan 3 (a hybrid defined benefit (DB)/ DC plan). This bill would have changed the default to Plan 2 (a sole DB plan).

Various stakeholder groups are continuing to advance this proposal. During the Interim, the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP) heard presentations on this issue but did not vote to approve it and recommend this change to the legislature. Be that as it may, such a change would actually be a cost savings to the state and to school districts.

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SB 6077: Authorizing the forfeiture of the pension of a public employee convicted of a felony for misconduct associated with such person's service as a public employee. This issue is dear to Senator Bailey and other Republican members of the Senate, so is likely to re-emerge.

Legislative intent: Restore the PERS and TRS Plan1 COLAS.

Past bills:

HB 2138/SB 6017: Providing cost-of-living adjustments for Plan 1 retirees of the teachers' retirement system and public employees' retirement system.

This bill was introduced in the 2015 Session and carried over into the 2016 Session but saw no action/hearings during either.

Again, various stakeholder groups are working to re-introduced legislation in some form to address the need to help retirees whose pensions are being stretched as their living costs increase and their pensions remain static. Numerous ideas ranging from giving a one-time 3% increase to members to incrementally granting a COLA over a period of time are being discussed. No one proposal yet has emerged.

Legislative intent: Merging of the LEOFF 1 and TRS 1 pension funds.

Past bills:

SB 6668: Merging the assets, liabilities, and membership of the law enforcement officers' and firefighters' retirement system plan 1 with the teachers' retirement system plan 1 and establishing a funding policy for the merged plan.

This bill was introduced in the 2016 Session, passed the Senate Ways & Means Committee but made no further progress. However, there was a budget proviso mentioned earlier that mandated a study be done by the SCPP on this issue. The SCPP did a [study](#), and although the SCPP did not move to recommend this to the Legislature, Senator Schoesler is particularly desirous of such a change.

The lengthy report covers a wide range of issues, and any bill to make such a merger will need to be modified to meet any challenges under Federal or State Law. There were over 1,500 written responses to the SCPP on this issue, with 87% being opposed. Only 1.5% were in favor with the rest withholding judgment depending on the provisions of the merger.

A key unknown is that the short-term savings could be outweighed by the increased risk of the long-term costs.

The recent state investment returns have been substantially lower than the minimal 7.5% rate of return that the actuary uses to calculate risks and costs.

More to follow as the Session continues.

Legislative intent: Lowering the health care insurance benefit for school Medicare retirees.

Past bills:

The Senate proposed a significant cut from the present \$150 retiree health care benefit in their initial 2015–2017 budget (\$110). This follows an earlier reduction from \$183 paid in previous years. This cut was dropped in the final adopted budget. However, this benefit continues to be at risk of being eliminated, if not reduced. Any reduction or elimination affects real dollars that can and will be used to fund other areas of the budget.

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Various stakeholder groups are working to restore this cut to the original \$183 or to at least seek an increase given the increasing costs of insurance.

Legislative intent: Moving to a state-wide collective bargaining contract for all K–12 employees.

Past bill:

SB 6130: Concerning the state’s constitutional basic education obligation, including reducing overreliance on local levies.

This bill was introduced in the 2015 Session and had a hearing in the Senate but made no further progress in that or the 2016 Session. This bill could be considered the first draft of a comprehensive solution to meeting the Supreme Court’s *McCleary* mandate. It is a very complex bill that attempts to outline moves to a statewide collective bargaining model as a means to manage the financing of K–12 basic education.

It is extremely likely that a variation of this bill will emerge during the 2017 session particularly given that the Republican members of the Education Taskforce on School Funding (ETSF) spoke to this need as one of their principles.

Legislative intent: Adopting a state-wide consolidated health care insurance model for K–12 employees.

Past bills:

SSB 5940: Concerning public school employees’ insurance benefits.

This bill passed, (House 53/45; Senate 25/20) and was signed into law 7/11/12. It mandated a study and required recommendations on the advantages and disadvantages of consolidating health benefits. The report was delivered June 1, 2015 and promptly put aside (forgotten?). There was proposed legislation in the 2015 Session (See below) but there was no further action in the 2016 Session(s).

SB 5976: Establishing a consolidated purchasing system for public school employees. This bill was introduced during the 2015 Session. It never advanced beyond the Senate Rules Committee. However, this bill is an outgrowth of SSB 5940 and sought to establish a School Employees’ Benefit Board (SEEB). Beginning January 1, 2017, all school districts would have been required to participate in the SEEB program and all health benefits would have been merged into a single, community-rated risk pool separate from the risk pool for PEEB health benefits.

The legislature will likely revisit this issue in 2017 as part of a solution to full funding of school districts. Again, the Republican principles presented to the ETSF specifically suggested the establishment of a SEEB signaling their intent.

Legislative intent: Implementing a family and medical leave insurance program.

Present bills:

HB 1116 (Representative Robinson) and a companion/identical bill, SB 5032 (Senator Keiser) Implementing Family and Medical Leave Insurance, have been introduced at the start of this Session. This bill would allow workers to care for family members with a serious health condition or to recover from their own serious health condition and deal with exigencies arising out of the military service of a family member. It would require the employment security department to establish and administer a family and medical leave insurance program funded by a charge paid by both employers and employees in order to pay family and medical leave insurance benefits.

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SB 5149 (Senators Fain, Hobbs, Braun) Addressing Paid Family Leave is a variation on the theme above. The major difference is that the employee is the only one who is assessed a payroll fee to fund this type of leave.

The effect of these bills on school districts, if any, is still unclear. The designs focus on employers who do not have collective bargaining agreements. However, the language is yet very vague. The bills have yet to be analyzed and fully explained by legislative staff.

Other: It is important to know the Department of Retirement Systems (DOR) offers an outstanding website for members to learn about their benefits, their retirement status, and to calculate their anticipated benefit.

The [Department of Retirement Systems](#) (DOR) home site.

Specifics relating to [retirement planning/status](#).

As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions.



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Legislative Resources

Committee Meeting Schedule

Legislative Committees Meetings are scheduled to be held at the following times but are subject to change.

Up-to-date meeting schedules and agendas are available on the [State Legislature website](#).

Mondays

1:30–3:25 p.m.

Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education
Senate Hearing Room 1

House Education
House Hearing Room A

3:30–5:30 p.m.

Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

Tuesdays

1:30–3:25 p.m.

Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education
Senate Hearing Room 1

House Education
House Hearing Room A

3:30–5:30 p.m.

Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

Wednesdays

3:30–5:30 p.m.

Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

Thursdays

8–9:55 a.m.

House Education
House Hearing Room A

1:30–3:25 p.m.

Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education
Senate Hearing Room 1

3:30–5:30 p.m.

Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

Useful Links

Washington State Government
<http://www.access.wa.gov>

State Legislature
<http://www.leg.wa.gov>

Senate
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate>

House of Representatives
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House>

Legislative Committees
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/pages/committeelisting.aspx>

Legislative Schedules
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/pages/calendar.aspx>

Office of the Governor
<http://www.governor.wa.gov>

OSPI
<http://www.k12.wa.us>

TVW
<http://www.tvw.org>

Session Cutoff Calendar

January 9, 2017

First Day of Session.

February 17, 2017

Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

February 24, 2017

Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees in house of origin.

March 8, 2017

Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).

March 29, 2017

Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

April 4, 2017

Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

April 12, 2017*

Last day to consider opposite house bills (5 p.m.) (except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session).

April 23, 2017

Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

*After the 94th day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session may be considered.

Bill Watch

TWIO tracks critical education bills each week as they are introduced. Detailed bill information can be accessed by clicking on the bill number. The following is a list of the bills of highest interest to school administrators. A more comprehensive bill watch list is located on the [WASA website](#).

Bill #	Title	Status	Sponsor
HB 1005	Agency rule-making authority	H State Government	Taylor
HB 1006	The right to work	H Labor & Workplace	Shea
HB 1007	Religious objectors	H Labor & Workplace	Shea
HB 1011	Gender-segregated facilities	H Judiciary	Taylor
HB 1012	H.S. graduation/science test	H Education	Taylor
HB 1015	Carrying concealed pistols	H Judiciary	Shea
HB 1017	School siting	H Environment	McCaslin
HB 1021	Funding education first	H Appropriations	MacEwen
HB 1023	Military students/activities	H Education	MacEwen
HB 1025	Appropriations. legis. priorities	H Appropriations	Taylor
HB 1033	Private colleges/need grant	H Hi Ed	Manweller
HB 1034	State officials/legal action	H Judiciary	Manweller
HB 1035	Prevailing wage survey data	H Labor & Workplace	Manweller
HB 1042	School district/ESD reports	H Appropriations	Springer
HB 1046	Certificates of achievement	H Education	MacEwen
HB 1051	Infrastructure financing	H Cap Budget	DeBolt
HB 1059	School levy lid revisions/delay	H Appropriations	Lytton
HB 1060	Medical marijuana/students	H HC/Wellness	Blake
HB 1067	Operating Budget 2017–2019	H Appropriations	Ormsby
HB 1068	Operating Sup Budget 2017	H Appropriations	Ormsby
HB 1072	Constitutionality of acts	H Judiciary	Koster
HB 1075	Capital Budget 2017–2019	H Cap Budget	Tharinger
HB 1080	State gen. obligation bonds	H Cap Budget	Tharinger
HB 1115	Paraeducators	H Education	Bergquist
HB 1158	I-200 repeal	H Tech & Econ D	Santos
HB 1159	Employment after govt service	H State Government	Pellicciotti

HB 1169	Student loan assistance	H Hi Ed	Orwall
HB 1174	Firearms/hunting education	H Education	Muri
HB 1203	School construction taxes	H Finance	Young
HB 1208	Charter schools/athletics	H Education	Johnson
HB 1235	Physical education. assessments	H Education	Riccelli
HB 1236	Truancy/school assignments	H Judiciary	Klippert
HJM 4001	Occupational portability	H Bus & Fin Services	Sawyer
HJR 4200	Debt guarantee/infrastructure.	H Cap Budget	DeBolt
SB 5013	Tenant property, disposition	S Fin Inst/Ins	Roach
SB 5017	Student loan information	S Higher Ed	Bailey
SB 5019	Ballots, prepaid postage	S State Government	Hasegawa
SB 5022	Education loan information	S Higher Ed	Bailey
SB 5023	School levy lid revisions/delay	S EL/K-12	Wellman
SB 5028	Native American curriculum	S Higher Ed	McCoy
SB 5031	Uniform money services act	S Fin Inst/Ins	Angel
SB 5047	Operating Sup Budget 2017	S Ways & Means	Braun
SB 5048	Operating Budget 2017-2019	S Ways & Means	Braun
SB 5054	Safety belts in school buses	S Transportation	Dansel
SB 5064	Student freedom of express.	S EL/K-12	Fain
SB 5066	Zero-based budget reviews	S State Government	Miloscia
SB 5067	Voting rights	S State Government	Miloscia
SB 5068	District-based elections	S State Government	Miloscia
SB 5070	Paraeducators	S EL/K-12	Rivers
SB 5076	School district bonds	S Ways & Means	Mullet
SB 5107	Early learning opportunities	S EL/K-12	Billig
SB 5115	School director compensation	S EL/K-12	Carlyle
SB 5120	Employment after govt service	S State Government	Carlyle
SB 5129	Charter schools/athletics	S EL/K-12	Hunt
SB 5149	Paid family leave	S Com/Labor/Sport	Fain
SJM 8000	Free and fair elections	S State Government	Takko

SJM 8001	Elections, money spent on	S State Government	Hasegawa
SJR 8200	Publicly funded schools	S EL/K-12	Baumgartner
SJR 8202	School district bonds	S Ways & Means	Mullet