

2024 Legislative Session Guide



A publication of the Washington Association of School Administrators

The 2024 Session began on January 8 and is scheduled to end on March 7.

The 2024 Legislative Session is the second year of the 68th Biennial Legislature, referred to as the “short” session, limited to 60 days. During this session, the Legislature’s first priority is to make necessary changes to the two-year Budgets (Operating, Capital, and Transportation) adopted last session. During Supplemental Sessions, however, there is a larger focus on policy legislation, many of which could have major impacts (positive or negative) on K–12 education.

WASA continues to encourage an increased involvement of our members in advocacy—specifically, our non-superintendent members. Superintendents generally are in the lead for most, if not all, of your district’s advocacy efforts—and they should continue to be the lead in terms of direction, voice, and priorities. We strongly encourage non-superintendents, however, to join with their superintendents to enhance your district’s voice—and WASA’s impact—by getting more involved in telling your district’s “story.”

In the last few years, you have stepped up and we have seen increased efforts in engaging with the Legislature. Now is not the time to take your foot off the gas; rather, now is the time to ramp up your efforts.

Legislative advocacy is sometimes compared to a New Year’s resolution. In the beginning, you are engaged and motivated. You are determined to meet with your local legislators, and regularly contact them in writing, by e-mail or by phone; track important legislation; provide public testimony; and otherwise engage in the process. But too often, other pressing issues compete for your attention. Your resolve begins to fade, and your determination turns to resignation. Most New Year’s resolutions are abandoned well—before the flowers begin to bloom in the spring.

Before you let your determination wane in regard to legislative advocacy, remember all of the crucial decisions legislators regularly make that impact K–12 education. Remember, most of our 147 lawmakers have no background in education. When we let legislators—that do not understand our schools; how they are funded; or how they operate—make decisions in a vacuum, school administrators must pick up the broken pieces.

Your advocacy can impact legislators’ thinking. YOU are the education experts, and you should exert your influence. Contact your legislators now (and often) and continue to build good relationships with them. Establish trust and credibility so they will come to you for information and advice. If legislators make the wrong decision because they do not agree with you, that’s on them. But if legislators make the wrong decision because we sat on our hands, that’s on us. We have to be honest and acknowledge we will not always be successful, but if we don’t engage, we are guaranteed to lose. Hockey legend Wayne Gretzky said it best: “You miss 100 percent of the shots you don’t take.”

We know school administrators are incredibly busy and we know some of you do not feel comfortable being an advocate in Olympia. WASA will make your engagement as simple and non-threatening as we can. We will continue to provide you with resources to support your advocacy efforts, including this Session Guide. This is your go-to Guide to quickly find contact information for your legislators, a copy of WASA’s 2024 Legislative Platform, advocacy “tips and tricks,” and session calendars. WASA will also continue to publish our weekly legislative newsletter, [This Week in Olympia](#) (*TWIO*), and our weekly [legislative podcast](#) to keep you up-to-date on education policy and budget issues being dealt with this session. We also encourage you, especially if you are new to the process, to review our “Finding Your Voice” Lunch & Learn webinar. This webinar provides a comprehensive review of WASA’s 2024 Legislative Platform, along with rationale behind positions, and background on issues, so you can effectively inform your legislators of administrators’ collective priorities. (The webinar [presentation slides](#) and [recording](#) are available on the WASA website.)

Remember, advocacy does not have to be hard, intimidating, or time-consuming. You simply must commit to it. With the pandemic behind us, the Legislature is meeting in-person; however, legislative committees will continue to operate in a hybrid (in-person and remote) mode making it easy to testify or note your position for the record. Many legislators are also continuing to meet remotely. Even if you are far from Olympia, there are multiple opportunities for engagement (See the Legislature’s “[Participating in the Process](#)” site for additional information).

We hope that you will join with WASA—and our education association colleagues—as we raise our collective voices in unison to fight for our public schools. YOU are WASA—and we can’t do it without you.

2024 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

School administrators are committed to ensuring each and every student is provided with equitable learning environments where they can learn and achieve their educational goals and aspirations. In pursuit of this commitment, WASA urges the 2024 Legislature to positively act upon the following priorities:

Advance Equity

WASA urges the Legislature to provide school districts with the necessary resources, tools, and flexibility to ensure fair treatment and opportunity for each student to achieve successful outcomes. Students of color and economically disadvantaged students were disproportionately impacted during the pandemic. However, all students need access to learning recovery options, including tutoring and extended learning, as well as equitable access to attend Skills Centers. Similarly, additional resources and flexibility are necessary to recruit, support, and retain effective district and building staff who reflect the diversity of our student populations.

Fully Fund Special Education

The 2024 Legislature must fully fund the cost of special education services. Administrators acknowledge the special education funding enhancements the Legislature has made in the last five years. Even with these increases, however, school district expenditures for special education and related services substantially exceed special education funding. This gap requires districts to continue to use local funding sources, including local levies, to cover the excess costs.

Fix Pupil Transportation

The 2024 Legislature must promptly fulfill its obligation to comprehensively fix the pupil transportation formula to ensure it is more transparent, predictable, and adequately funded. In 2022 and 2023, the Legislature provided additional funding for excess costs to transport special passengers. Even so, under the current pupil transportation funding model (STARS), most school districts do not receive sufficient funding for student transportation, forcing districts to use local levy funds to supplant the underfunding.

Provide Consistent and Equitable Education Resources

WASA urges the 2024 Legislature to immediately revamp the methodology of regionalization and experience factors to ensure school districts receive more consistent and equitable resources. The current regionalization methodology of using housing costs is flawed and the implementation of experience factors is unfair. The current calculation of these factors has exacerbated inequities between districts and must be updated swiftly.

Update Staffing Allocations

WASA urges the Legislature to continue to provide for more realistic staffing ratios in the Prototypical School Funding Model (PSFM). The first priority must be the implementation of Phase I of the recommendations from the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup (2019): improving staffing allocations for critically needed school principals; providing additional professional development to close achievement gaps; and adding continuous improvement coaches as an enhancement to the PSFM.

Support Capital Facilities

WASA urges the Legislature to provide robust and reliable funding for school facilities, including funding for school districts that have difficulty passing local bonds or have limited debt capacity to support necessary new construction or modernization. The Legislature must enhance the state's investment in K–12 construction by updating the antiquated, pre-1980 funding formulas to ensure funding more closely reflects actual construction costs and educational space needs. Additionally, the Legislature must finally give Washington's citizens the opportunity to decide whether school district bond issues should be approved with a simple majority vote.

ADVOCACY DO'S AND DON'TS

We appreciate your engagement. Remembering a few “rules” of the game will help you maneuver in the legislative arena; following are some of the things you are encouraged to DO—and some things we recommend you DON'T do.

DO commit to advocacy. Effective advocacy does not have to be hard, intimidating or time-consuming; however, it does take a commitment.

DO get to know your legislators. Take the time to build relationships with your legislators. Meet with them during the interim and maintain contact with them throughout the session. Establish trust and credibility with legislators—so they will go to you for information and advice.

DO know your legislators' staff. Legislative assistants are one of the keys to communicating with legislators. Treat these people with respect, as they are the gatekeepers to their bosses. Establishing a good relationship with them may or may not help you gain access, but being rude to them will likely limit your access.

DO be prepared. Whether you are meeting with a legislator or providing public testimony it is important you are prepared. Make sure you understand your arguments, you've collected impactful stories, and you know what important points to make.

DO have a specific “ask.” One of the cardinal sins of advocacy is taking time and energy to meet with legislators, but never specifically asking for what you want or need. Whether it is support or opposition to a bill or a request for funding or a budget proviso, be sure to ask your legislator to act. And request a response.

DO give examples. Compile data, graphs and charts to build your case, but frame your “ask” with a local story. Personalize issues with names of students, teachers, school buildings and tell stories about the real impacts. Stories stick!

DO say “thank you.” There is no such thing as being too polite. You may disagree with your legislator, but you can also find a reason to say “thank you”: for their time; for their consideration; for their support; or just for their service. In addition to being polite, after engaging with legislators, a follow-up “thank you” note can be used as an excuse to restate your position (and your “ask”), as well as to provide additional information and to answer any questions that were raised.

DO stay informed. Use the WASA website, the *Hotline* newsletter, and WASA News to stay on top of important education issues. To stay on top of education issues in the Legislature, follow WASA's legislative newsletter, *This Week in Olympia (TWIO)*, and WASA's legislative podcast.

DO advocate as a Team. While the superintendent should probably take the lead, other administrators should be on the “Advocacy Team.” You should also consider involving

principals, teachers, parents—and even students. You are also encouraged to involve your school directors; as elected officials, they have a direct connection to the community and their perspective can be unique and valuable.

DON'T believe that advocacy is a one-time thing. Advocacy is a year-round effort. The best time to establish and build relationships is well-before the Legislative Session begins. That said, it is never too late to start.

DON'T overwhelm legislators with information. “Information overload” is counterproductive to your messaging. Legislators meet with hundreds of people in a given week, and they receive thousands of letters, phone calls, and e-mails. Clarity and brevity will be more impactful.

DON'T use jargon or acronyms. K–12 education is notorious for the huge number of acronyms we use. If you use education jargon or acronyms, many legislators will not understand what you are talking about—and often they won't bother to ask. This just dilutes your message.

DON'T assume legislators know more than they do. Legislators have to deal with hundreds of issues—and thousands of bills—during a session. Even the most seasoned legislator will have trouble being on top of every issue.

DON'T give up. Some of the most simple, noncontroversial issues take several years to get through the Legislature. Being persistent, with continued engagement is essential for long-term success in the Legislature.

DON'T exaggerate. An exaggeration is akin to a lie. Get caught lying to a legislator and you will lose respect, credibility—and probably access.

DON'T be too informal. There are certain written and many unwritten protocols in Olympia. One is addressing legislators with their title, “Senator Jones” or “Representative Smith.” Using a legislator's first name is generally considered a breach. Even when given permission to be more casual, you won't go wrong by being more formal.

DON'T argue. It is OK to respectfully disagree, but arguing is unproductive and certainly will not get you any points.

DON'T guess. Don't answer a question if you don't know the answer. Say “I'll get back to you”—and then follow through.

DON'T send form letters (or duplicate e-mails). It is important for the education community to speak with one voice, but that does not mean using form letters. Using common language and similar messaging is fine—and appropriate—but it is lazy (and horribly ineffective) to essentially duplicate one message.

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Deputy Majority Leader.....	Rep. My-Linh Thai.....	786-7926
Majority Floor Leader	Rep. Monica Stonier.....	786-7872
Deputy Majority Floor Leader	Rep. Dave Paul.....	786-7914
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Assistant Majority Whip	Rep. Bill Ramas	786-7852

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Minority Floor Leader.....	Rep. Jacquelin Maycumber	786-7908
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Minority Assistant Floor Leader	Rep. Peter Abbarno	786-7896
Minority Caucus Chair	Rep. Paul Harris	786-7976
Minority Caucus Vice Chair.....	Rep. Kelly Chambers	786-7948
Minority Caucus Vice Chair.....	Rep. Eric Robertson	786-7866
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Room Key

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THIS WEEK IN OLYMPIA (TWIO) KEEPS WASA MEMBERS INFORMED

TWIO is published weekly by the Washington Association of School Administrators to keep you informed during the legislative session.

<https://wasa-oly.org/wasa/TWIO>

LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE (800.562.6000)

8 a.m.–8 p.m., Monday–Friday; 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Saturday

This quick and effective service allows you to communicate your views and to obtain information about bills. You will be asked for your name, address, telephone number, the bill number about which you are calling, your legislative district, and a brief message.

ONLINE BILL INFORMATION..... apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo

- Specific bill title and number
- Bill status
- Committee considering bill
- Name/phone of committee staff
- Mailing (upon request)

2024 LEGISLATION AND FINANCE

Region 101

Kim Headrick, Medical Lake
Travis Hanson, Mead

Region 105

Curt Guailianone, Mt. Adams
Robert Bowman, Naches Valley

Region 108

James Everett, Meridian

Region 109

Karin Manns, Granite Falls
Patty Dowd, Mukilteo

Region 110

Alah Spicciati, Auburn

Region 111

Tom Seigel, Bethel

Region 112

Mary Templeton, Washougal

Region 113

Deb Clemens, North Thurston

Region 114

Dana Rosenbach, North Mason
Jason Rhoads, OESD 114

Region 123

Traci Pierce, Kennewick

Region 171

Tim Payne, Ephrata

BPAC

Sarah Thornton, Pasco

ESDs

Michelle Price, NCESD 171

IPAC

Linda McKay, NCESD 171

Principals

Matt Yarkosky, Bethel

Small Schools

Tabatha Mires, Mason

Special Ed

John Sander, Franklin Pierce

Superintendents

Mary Templeton, Washougal

Federal Liaison

Rob Banner, Clover Park
Michelle Price, NCESD 171
Wade Smith, Walla Walla
Krestin Bahr, Peninsula

At-Large

Jim Kowalkowski,
Rural Education Center/
NEWESD 101

Consultants (non-voting)

Mitch Denning–AEA
Fred Yancy–The Nexus Group
Pensions/Health Benefits
Melissa Gombosky–AESD

KEY PHONE NUMBERS ALL AREA CODES (360)

Office of the Governor.....	902-4111
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Secretary of State.....	902-4151
Legislative Service Center.....	786-7000
Operator.....	753-5000
Legislative Information Center (Bill Room).....	786-7573
Tour Information.....	902-8880
Secretary of the Senate.....	786-7550
Chief Clerk's Office (House).....	786-7750
Senate Committee Services.....	786-7400
House Office of Program Research.....	786-7100

WEBSITES

Washington Association of School Administrators....	www.wasa-oly.org
Washington State School Directors' Association.....	www.wssda.org
Association of Washington School Principals.....	www.awsp.org
Washington Education Association.....	www.washingtonea.org
Washington State PTA.....	www.wastatepta.org
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.....	www.k12.wa.us
Office of the Governor.....	www.governor.wa.gov
Washington State Legislature.....	www.leg.wa.gov

The Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) represents approximately 1,477 active school administrators statewide.

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2024 SESSION CUTOFF CALENDAR

January 8	First Day of Session
January 31	Last day to read in committee reports (pass bills out of committee and read them into the record on the floor) in house of origin, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
February 5	Last day to read in committee reports (pass bills out of committee and read them into the record on the floor) from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees in house of origin.
February 13	Last day to consider (passed) bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
February 21	Last day to read in committee reports (pass bills out of committee and read them into the record on the floor) from opposite house, except House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
February 26	Last day to read in opposite house committee reports (pass bills out of committee and read them into the record on the floor) from House fiscal committees and Senate Ways & Means and Transportation committees.
March 1*	Last day to consider (pass) 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).
March 7	Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

* After 5:00 p.m. on the 54th day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, matters that affect state revenue, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session may be considered.

Committee Meeting Calendar

(TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. UP-TO-DATE 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES AND AGENDAS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE STATE LEGISLATURE WEBSITE AT WWW.LEG.WA.GOV/LEGISLATURE/PAGES/CALENDAR.ASPX.)

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8–10 a.m.				House Education HHRA & Virtual	
1:30–3:30 p.m.	House Education HHRA & Virtual Senate Early Learning & K–12 SHR1 & Virtual		Senate Early Learning & K–12 SHR1 & Virtual	Senate Early Learning & K–12 SHR1 & Virtual	
4–6:00 p.m.	House Appropriations HHRA & Virtual Senate Ways & Means SHR4 & Virtual	House Education HHRA & Virtual Senate Ways & Means SHR4 & Virtual	House Appropriations HHRA & Virtual	House Appropriations HHRA & Virtual Senate Ways & Means SHR4 & Virtual	