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THE WEEK AHEAD

YOUR TOP THREE WAYS TO ENGAGE IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

WASA
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

WEEK 6—WEEKLY TOP THREE

February 17, 2026

- Attend Legislator Town Halls
- Protect K–12 Funding
- Weigh in on Bills this Week

- Bottom Line
- Quick Resources

Why This Week Matters

We are only two days into Week 6 (of 9), and it is already shaping up to be a pivotal stretch in the 2026 legislative session. Monday's revenue forecast indicates a predicted increase of \$827 million in the current two-year budget compared to expectations from November, according to a forecast from the state's Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. This 1.1 percent increase reflects early proceeds from the slate of tax increases the Legislature approved last year. That additional revenue will significantly influence the budget negotiations ahead, but it does not eliminate the possibility of reductions.

Today, February 17, is the House of Origin cutoff. All bills must pass out of their chamber of origin by the end of the day to remain alive. In time for that cutoff, the Senate passed [SB 6346](#) (the millionaires tax proposal) on Monday. The bill was [amended](#) before passage to include a phase out of the retail sales tax that currently impacts K–12 staffing and professional development, though those changes would not take effect until 2030.

The timeline now accelerates quickly. The opposite house policy committee cutoff is February 25, meaning policy and fiscal hearings will move rapidly over the next week. Please [monitor bills](#) carefully as they return to policy committees, particularly those with unfunded or underfunded mandates that may still pose concerns.

We anticipate proposed budgets to be released Sunday, with hearings beginning Monday. Despite the improved revenue forecast, districts should be prepared to push back against potential cuts and advocate strongly for stability in K–12 funding. In the meantime...

Attend Legislator Town Halls

What's happening:

House and Senate Democrats have set their next series of Town Halls in their communities (or virtually) in the coming week. There isn't an official statewide 2026 Republican town hall calendar published yet (e.g., on the House or Senate Republican caucus sites) that lists confirmed events for February–March 2026.

Why it matters:

In Washington State, legislative town halls are public forums where lawmakers share updates on session activities, gather constituent feedback, and demonstrate transparency and accountability to the communities they represent. When I attended one in my Legislative District last fall, only two of forty people brought up public education as a focus area or concern. These community events provide a real-time opportunity to elevate public education as a priority and let legislators know what matters most to their constituents during session and before they vote on a budget.

Your action this week:

1. Attend your Legislator Town Hall.
 - [House Democrat Town Halls](#)
 - [Senate Democrat Town Halls](#)

2. Ask your legislators:
 - What are you doing this session to protect K–12 from budget reductions?
 - What are you doing to support meaningful investments in MSOC this year?
3. Request that they:
 - Reject any budget that includes cuts to K–12;
 - Invest at least \$100 million in MSOC this session; and
 - Support legislation exempting school districts and schools from the sales tax on services imposed last year.

Protect K–12 Funding

What’s happening:

The updated revenue forecast released Monday (Feb. 16) showed the projected shortfall is not as severe as anticipated in November. As a result, the Legislature should face less budgetary pressure than previously expected. We hope this improved outlook meaningfully informs their decisions as they finalize budget proposals this week.

Why it matters:

Despite the improved revenue forecast, legislators are still preparing to make reductions across many, if not all, public sectors. Even funding for the state’s paramount duty will not be immune. Every sector is advocating to protect what it has, while many of us are still pushing for the investments necessary to meet the responsibilities the state has assigned and mandated. If we don’t speak up for children in public education, who will?

Your action this week:

1. Reach out to [your legislators](#) by phone or email, or set up a short Zoom meeting through their legislative assistant - especially if you’re unable to attend your town hall.
2. Use these [talking points](#) as a foundation for your communication.

Weigh in on Bills this Week

What’s happening:

Over the next week, leading up to the February 25 opposite house policy cutoff, bills will be heard in policy and fiscal committees in the opposite chamber (House bills in the Senate and Senate bills in the House). These bills have already passed out of their chamber of origin, advancing further than hundreds of other proposals and demonstrating meaningful support. In short, they carry momentum. A hearing schedule is available [here](#).

Why it matters:

Bills scheduled for hearings over the next week may receive less scrutiny in the opposite chamber than they did in their house of origin. In many cases, they are viewed as having been “battle tested.” We often hear the sentiment, “Why didn’t you raise that concern earlier?” when we continue to flag issues in the second chamber. Concerns may have been raised, and, in some cases, amendments were made, but the bill continued to advance with or without changes. The opportunity to influence these bills is narrowing.

Your action this week:

Review the list of bills scheduled for hearings this week and share concerns with us (mrathbone@wasa-oly.org) and directly with your legislators, especially if they sit on the committee where the bill is being heard. Two bills being heard in Ways & Means (Senate) on Thursday, February 19 at 4:00 pm are particularly consequential:

- [SB 6351](#) - Increasing fiscal resources for students and children by providing targeted sales tax exemptions for schools and certain before-and-after school care programs and arts and cultural classes.
 - WASA will be PRO and ask for clarity around the language that currently specifies “elementary and secondary schools” to instead be “K–12.”
- [SB 6260](#) - Implementing efficiencies and programming changes in public education.
 - WASA will sign in but our position is TBD, depending on what we hear from you. What do you think of the threshold for TTK and the cut to bus depreciation and running start?
 - Moves bus depreciation to 180 months.
 - Specifies that TTK is limited to students who meet the income threshold and only up to the number funded in the omnibus budget.

- Cuts Running Start to 1.2 FTE (from 1.4 FTE)

Bottom Line

As we head into the release of proposed budgets, this is not the time to let up on advocacy. Town halls and direct outreach are critical opportunities to reinforce the importance of protecting and strengthening K–12 funding, even as budget pressures dominate the conversation. At the same time, policy bills continue to move, and sustained engagement will ensure the voice of school leaders remains front and center in every debate.

Quick Resources

[WASA Bill Tracker](#)
[WASA legislative platform](#)
[Legislator contact list](#)



WASA Legislative Report Podcast

The podcast will be available every Friday during the Legislative Session on the [WASA website](#), or [subscribe to the Report](#) via multiple podcast apps.



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