

December 10, 2021

Finding Your Voice:

The Importance of Legislative Advocacy

Legislative Advocacy

➤ **WHY**

- Motivation/rationale to engage

➤ **HOW**

- Building relationships
- Constant contact

➤ **WHAT**

- Policy items
- Budget requests



***WHY* Should I Engage?**

Legislative Advocacy: Why Be Engaged?

**If YOU don't advocate for your
students,
your district, and your staff,
*who will?***

The Importance of Engagement

- You can be sure *someone* WILL speak up—and they may not have the same information, experience or position as you
- You can't let the legislative vacuum be filled with voices that do not reflect your knowledge, experience and opinions

**OH SO YOU'RE A POLITICIAN
WHO HAS
NEVER TAUGHT A CLASS?**

**TELL ME MORE ABOUT HOW
SCHOOLS SHOULD BE RUN**

Legislative Engagement

- Legislators believe they are education “experts,” but most have little background in school district issues
- Part of your job as a school administrator is to educate legislators, making sure they understand how their decisions in Olympia affect your school district—your students, your staff, your academic program, your budget, etc.

**Remember, YOU are the education “expert”
and a valuable resource to legislators**

Legislative Engagement

- WASA will provide you resources, tools and assistance; however, YOU are in a position to **establish trust and credibility** with legislators—so they will go to you for information and advice
- You are also in a position to explain the complexities of public education and your specific needs. And only YOU can “**tell your story.**” Build data to make your case; however, frame your “ask” with a local story; personalize issues with names of students, teachers, school buildings. Stories Stick!



***HOW* Should I Engage?**

Effective Advocacy

- Be informed:
 - about the *PROCESS*
 - about the *ISSUES*
 - about the *PLAYERS*

Be Informed About the *Process*

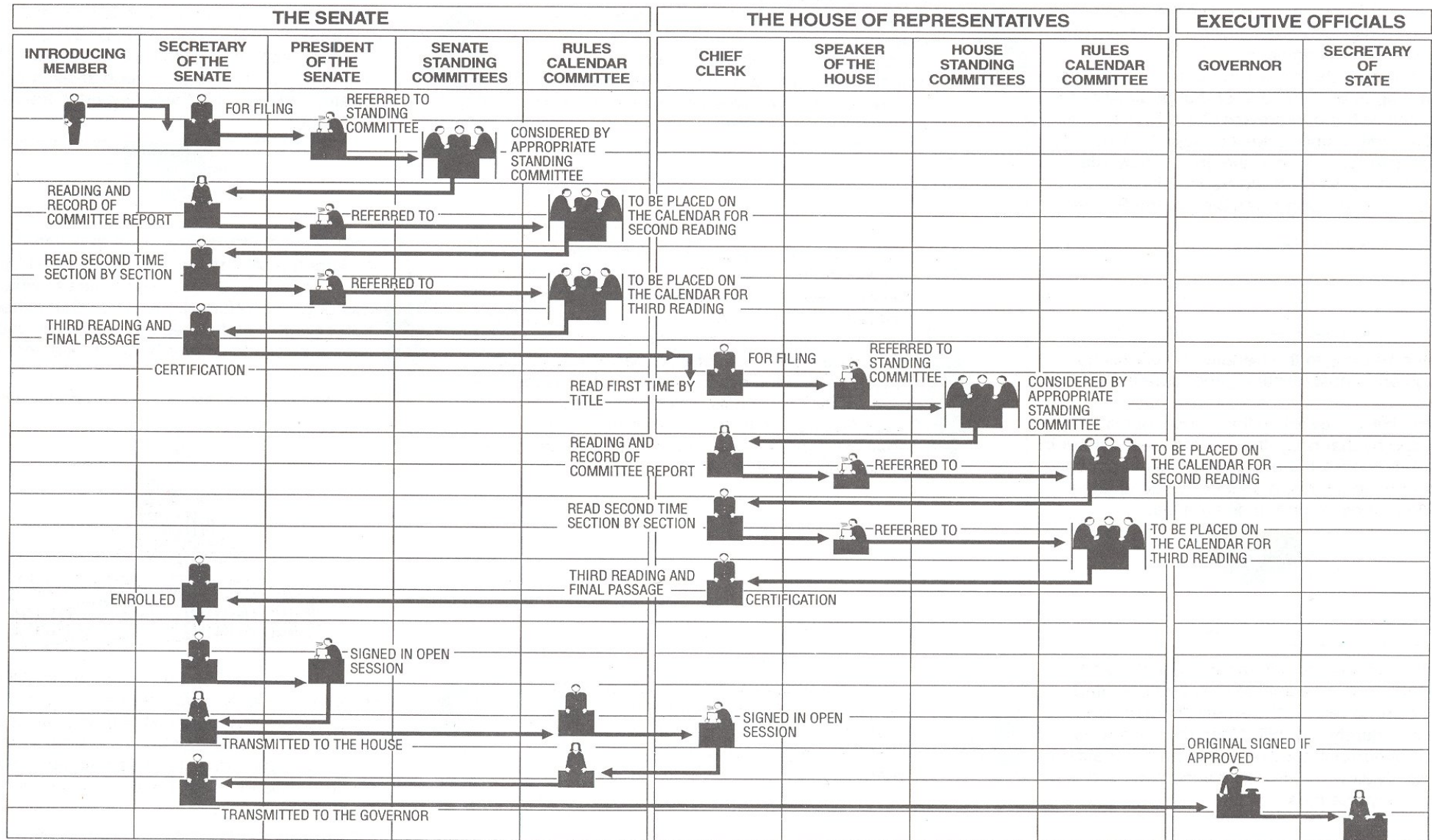
How a Bill Becomes Law:

aka

“Structured Chaos”

THE COURSE OF A BILL

Published by the Senate and The House of Representatives



The above procedure for a noncommittee bill introduced in the Senate is the simplest possible, neither veto nor amendment has occurred. If such a bill is introduced in the House, the Chief Clerk would perform essentially the same functions as the Secretary of the Senate as indicated above, and the action of the Senate thereon would occur after passage thereof by the House.

GIVES BILL CHAPTER NUMBER IN SESSION LAWS PERMANENTLY FILED



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What's happening on the floor?

The Legislature will convene for a Regular Session on January 10, 2022.

Please check the [Committee Schedules website](#) for the most up-to-date information concerning individual committee meeting dates and agendas.

Scheduled hearings and floor sessions: Today

Committee	Agenda	Date/Time	Location	View Video	Last Updated
Joint Committee on Veterans' & Military Affairs (J)	Agenda	12/09/2021 1:00 PM	Virtual	View Video	11/09/2021

Highlights

Legislative Hotline: 1.800.562.6000

Let Your Voice Be Heard

[Contact Your Legislators](#)[Participating in the Process](#)[Find Member Information/Rosters](#)[Accessibility Information](#)

Find

[Laws & Rules](#)[Your District & Legislators](#)

Bill Status; Text of a Bill; Amendments



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Bill Information

Search by Bill Number



Find Specific Text in a Bill



Standard Reports

Common information requested most often

Reports

Prefiled Bills

Retrieve a report of the bills that have been prefiled in the House and Senate for the current biennium.

House Introductions (latest) All Intros

Lists the bills to be introduced in the House today.

Senate Introductions (latest) All Intros

Lists the bills to be introduced in the Senate today.

Bill Status Report (formerly Daily Status)

Retrieve a list of all bills and their current status.

Advanced Reports

More detailed information used less often

Detailed Legislative Reports

Historical information back to 1991.

Bill Information

Text of a Legislative Document

Bills by Sponsor

Roll Calls on a Bill

Bills In/Out of Committee

Bills By Citation

Committee Schedules/Agendas



Washington State Legislature

Member Information

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About Legislative RSS Feeds

What Is RSS

Legislature Employment
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Participating in the Process

Main Sections

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Agendas, Schedules, and Calendars

Committee Meeting Agendas, Schedules, and Documents

Committee meetings you may filter by date, chamber, and committee and view by schedule, agenda, or bill.

Calendars

Session Cutoff Calendar

Relates calendar dates to legislative days and notes session deadlines for committees and floor action.

Senate Weekly Meeting Schedules / Floor Schedules

Links to weekly PDF files of the Senate schedule.

Floor Activity Reports

Bills currently being debated on the floor in the House and Senate (updated in real time), bills scheduled for floor debate with links to amendments, histories, bill text, and roll call votes.

House

Senate

Bill Introductions

Lists all introductions in the current calendar year.

House

Senate

Capitol Campus Activities and Events

Calendar of Events on the Capitol Campus (goes to Dept. of Enterprise Services website)

Be Informed About the *Issues*

➤ WASA: www.wasa-oly.org

➤ Education Associations:

- WASBO: www.wasbo.org
- WSPA: www.wspa.net
- WSSDA: www.wssda.org
- AWSP: www.awsp.org
- WEA: www.washingtonea.org
- PTA: www.wastatepta.org

➤ Education Agencies:

- OSPI: www.k12.wa.us
- SBE: www.sbe.wa.gov
- PESB: www.pesb.wa.gov

➤ Legislative-related:

- Legislature Homepage: www.leg.wa.gov
- Governor's Homepage: www.governor.wa.gov
- LEAP (Budget info): www.fiscal.wa.gov

2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

A PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

PO Box 14459 | Tumwater, WA 98511 | 360.943.5717 or 800.859.9272 | www.wasa-oly.org

<https://bit.ly/3wXC9Ez>

Includes:

- Comprehensive review of 2021-23 Operating Budget
- Comprehensive review of 2021-23 Capital Budget
- Detailed review of all education-related bills adopted in 2021
- Summary of all education-related bills that died in 2021

2022 Legislative Session Guide



Available after session begins

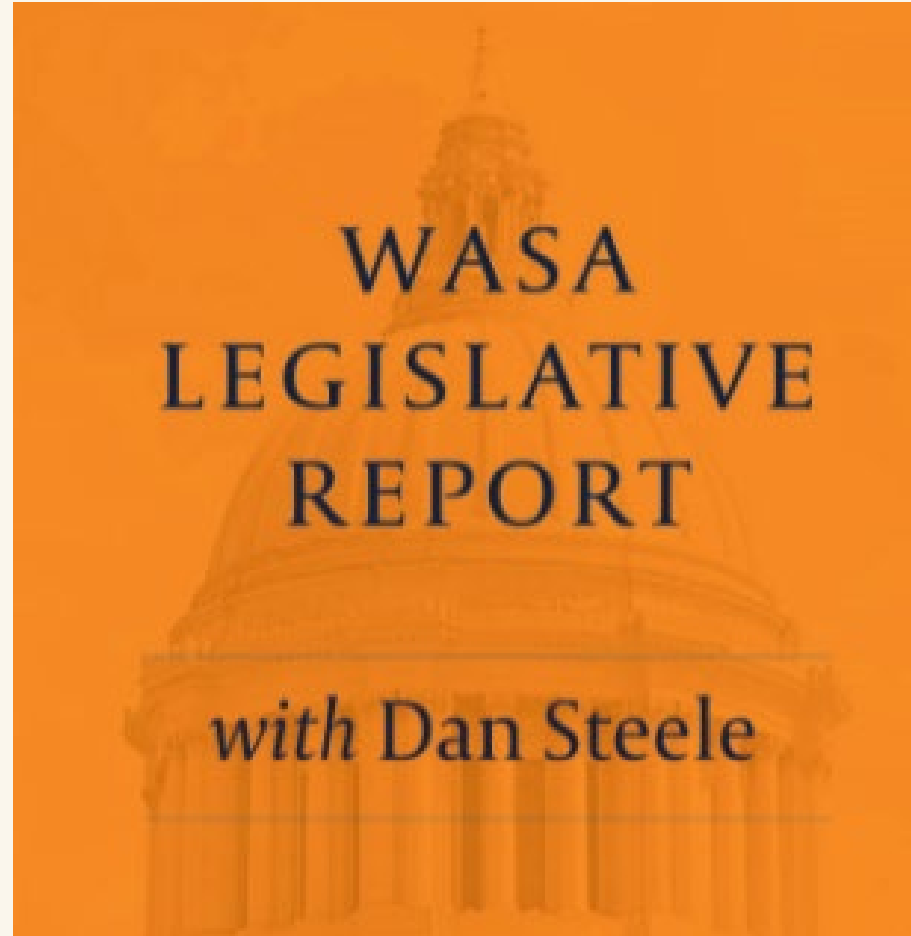


All issues archived at: www.wasa-oly.org/TWIO

TWIO

This Week In Olympia

WASA Legislative Podcast



Archived Podcasts and Subscription Information:

<https://bit.ly/2QlgWT0>

Be Informed About the *Players*

➤ Legislators:

- What District?
- What Committee assignments?
- Leadership position?
- Issues of interest/expertise?
- Personal information: occupation, social/civic memberships, schools attended, church affiliation, hobbies



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District Finder

Enter your street address (all fields are required) to find your legislative or congressional district.

Street *

City *

State

WA

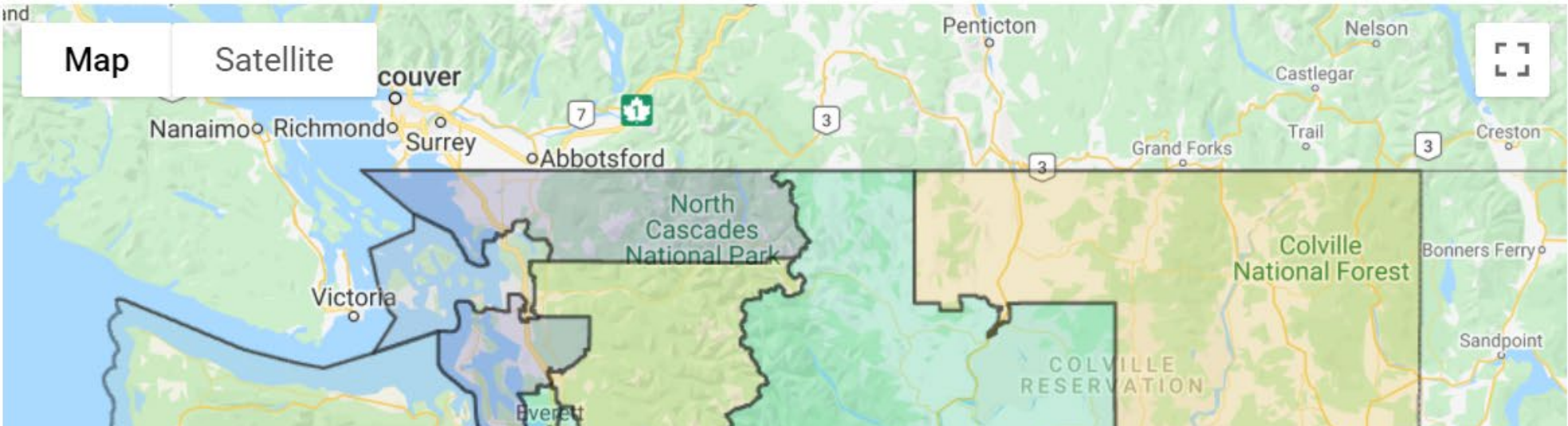
Zip *

Find My District

District Type:

Legislative

Congressional



Be Informed About the *Players*

➤ Additional Players in the process:

- Legislator's personal staff
- Committee staff
- Caucus staff
- Agency liaisons
- Lobbyists



How to be Heard in Olympia



How to be Heard in Olympia

- Contacting your legislators:
 - Face-to-face (or electronic) meetings
 - Personal letters
 - Phone calls
 - E-mail
 - Public testimony

2022 COVID Operations—HOUSE

- No public access to House Members' offices (JLOB and Leg Bldg offices); potential meeting spaces, TBD; must sign attestation confirming no symptoms
- Limited public access to Gallery—maximum of 17 people; vaccine or test verification required
- Only vaccinated Members permitted on House Floor; total Members allowed is limited; hybrid Floor sessions will continue
- Committee hearing rooms closed to the public; virtual Committee hearings will continue

2022 COVID Operations—SENATE

- Senators are encouraged to conduct remote meetings with public. In-office meetings allowed, but limited to three members of the public. For in-office meetings, public required to check in with security, must attest no COVID symptoms, required to check out with security; Senators allowed to reserve alternative meetings spaces, to ensure social distancing guidelines for larger gatherings
- All Senators are expected to be in-person during Floor action; Caucus meetings in-person when Floor action scheduled; remote meetings on non-action days
- Limited public access to Gallery—12 people on each side; masks and social distancing required
- Committee hearing rooms closed to the public; virtual Committee continue

hearings will

Meeting with your Legislator(s)

➤ Tips:

- Schedule meeting well in advance
- Note subject matter and attendees
- Do your homework (*know the process; issues; and players*)
- Prepare presentation or outline; select spokesperson
- Introduce yourself and/or team

Meeting with your Legislator(s)

➤ Tips, cont'd:

- Briefly present your case
 - “just the facts” — avoid emotion
 - note the impacts; use a district example
 - use visuals and prepare supporting data/information
 - leave time for legislator to speak
- Leave one-page summary
- Follow up with written “thank you”
 - re-state your position and provide follow-up information answers to questions

or

Writing to your Legislator(s)

➤ Tips:

- Think about your timing
- Stick to one subject
- Be brief
- Be positive; be polite
- Ask for action — and a response
- Think about letters from students
- Avoid form letters
- Say “thank you”

Phoning your Legislator(s)

➤ Tips:

- Ask for legislator or specific assistant (*know the players*)
- Name, title, school district
- Focus on one issue/bill
- State your position—be prepared to provide rationale for position
- Ask for your legislator's position

E-mailing your Legislator(s)

➤ Tips:

- See tips for “writing to your legislator(s)”

- AND -

- Limit e-mail to very short messages or if timing is crucial
- Provide your full postal address (address of voter registration)

Public Testimony—Remote Hearings

➤ Options:

- **REMOTE TESTIMONY**—registration closes 1 hour before hearing begins; time will likely be limited; registering does not guarantee ability to speak
- **WRITTEN TESTIMONY**—window for written testimony will close 24 hours after the start time of hearing
- **NOTE POSITION** on bills for the record—same registration process, without testimony or written comments

Participating in Hearings:

<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Participating.aspx>

Participating in the Process



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Participating in the Process

You are a vital part of the legislative process. The legislative web site offers ways to contact a legislator and even participate in committee hearing activity. See below for information about the different options.

Communicating with a Legislator

Send an Email

You can send an email message to your elected official by clicking their name hyperlink.

Send a Message about a Bill

After searching for a bill, click the "Comment on a Bill" button on the Bill Summary Page to send a message to your elected official and share your opinion. You can request a response to your message if you wish.

Participating in a Committee Hearing

Testifying in a Virtual Hearing

During the 2021 Session, you can register to testify in a virtual hearing in a similar manner as you would on campus.

Submitting Written Testimony to a Committee

If you do not wish to testify in a committee hearing, you can still submit written testimony on a bill for the archived legislative record.

Get Your Position on a Bill Noted for Legislative Record

If you wish, you could choose to have your position noted. The Committee Sign In - Remote Testimony page also allows you to select a chamber, committee, and bill, then indicate you wish to have your position noted for the archived legislative record.

<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Participating.aspx>

Public Testimony—Remote Hearings

➤ PRIOR TO TESTIFYING:

- Register in Committee Sign In page:
<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Participating.aspx>
 - To testify, registration closes one hour before the start time of the hearing
 - Written comments are accepted for 24 hours after the start time of the hearing
- Prepare your remarks in writing if possible
- After registering, you'll receive a unique sign-in link; test your system in advance and be punctual signing into the hearing
- Be mindful of amendments or substitutes to your bill

Public Testimony—Remote Hearings

➤ MAKING YOUR REMARKS:

- Introduce yourself; clearly indicate who you're representing, if anyone
- Be prepared to have very limited time
- Be brief and be clear about your position; use your written comments to guide you, but don't READ your testimony
- Avoid technical jargon, acronyms
- Be prepared for questions—but don't answer if you don't know ("I'll get back to you"—AND then follow through)

Additional tips for Effective Advocacy

- Be prepared
- Be respectful of the office
- Don't argue (although it's OK to respectfully disagree)
- Don't exaggerate
- Give examples (tell your "stories")
- Follow up

Additional tips for Effective Advocacy

- Don't assume legislators know more than they do
- Avoid education jargon and acronyms
- Don't be too informal
- Avoid "information overload"
- Make sure you have a specific "ask"
- Say "thank you"—for their time; for their consideration; their support; or just for their service

for

Legislative Engagement

RELATIONSHIPS

are a crucial to effective advocacy!

It is incumbent upon YOU to establish ongoing,
personal relationships with legislators

Legislative Advocacy is not a Spectator Sport—
It is a “*Contact*” Sport

Legislative Advocacy is also a *Team* Sport



While the Superintendent must take the lead,
Don't be a Lone Ranger!

- All 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—their perspective is unique and valuable



Legislative Advocacy

Two additional important reminders:

Advocacy is not a one-time thing, but a year-round effort

The best time to establish and build relationships is well-before the Legislative Session begins

Effective advocacy does NOT have to be hard, time-consuming, or intimidating

You must commit to it, however



***WHAT* am I Advocating For?**

2022 Legislative Platform

»» WASA's strategy is to be bold and honest, advocating for what our students and school districts NEED—not what we think we might be able to achieve

»» We will continue to play the “long game,” building momentum and laying the groundwork for future success



Developed from a position of equity, school administrators are committed to pursuing the following priorities:

- Update Staff Allocations
- Provide Consistent, Equitable, and Ample Education Resources
 - Fix Pupil Transportation
 - Fully Fund Special Education
 - Adjust Regionalization/Experience Factors
 - Provide Technology and Connectivity
- Advance Equity
- Invest in Learning Recovery
- Support Capital Facilities

School Funding Coalition



- Coalition members have agreed to maintain a singular focus: advocating for updated staffing ratios in the Prototypical School Funding Model
- The Model is a core, foundational part of the current school funding structure and the goal is to achieve more realistic state-funded staffing levels in all schools
- School Funding Coalition adopted 2022 Priority Statement on Oct. 20. Document has been disseminated to all legislators and all members of Coalition associations

<https://bit.ly/3IGVJct>

Additional Issues

➤ **ENROLLMENT STABILIZATION**

- OSPI request to maintain currently appropriated funding ≈\$500M

➤ **K-12 WORKLOAD RELIEF (STAFFING STABILITY)**

- Waive or extend cap on retiree work hours



Your engagement is crucial to success



2022 WASA • WSSDA • WASBO

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE AND WEEK ON THE HILL

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE	WEEK ON THE HILL
JANUARY 30 1–5 P.M. VIRTUAL	DATES TBD VIRTUAL

Registration is open: www.wasa-oly.org/Leg22

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