



April 11, 2019

Honorable Members of the Legislature:

On behalf of more than 3,200 Washington state school directors and school district administrators, we are writing to urge your consideration of legislation that would provide a clear definition for teacher compensation and the funding for it.

We wholeheartedly acknowledge that collective bargaining is fundamental to the relationship between school districts and their employees. We have also been patently supportive of increased state funding for employee salaries and wages to ensure the staff in schools and districts receive fair and competitive compensation.

However, if a district levy is increased for a specific educational purpose, there needs to be clear guidelines that provide necessary limits. More definition is needed to ensure levy dollars are ultimately utilized for their intended purpose — specifically, those levy dollars that have been generated in districts for staffing beyond what is funded by the state, specific educational programs, and support services for students. School districts desperately need guidelines from the Legislature to clarify that use of levy dollars for compensation should be tied precisely to duties and responsibilities associated with a specific assignment. Levy dollars used to supplement state funding for teacher salaries must be for extra work that is above and beyond the program of basic education as defined by the state.

With its response to *McCleary*, the Legislature has attempted to establish salary fence posts for districts. But greater structure is needed with respect to teacher compensation. Each of Washington state's 295 public school districts has a fiduciary duty to ensure not only compliance with fiscal regulations, but also the continued solvency of their districts. Clear guidelines will better help district school directors and superintendents administer teacher compensation beyond what the state provides for basic education.

We urge your adoption of the aforementioned guidelines this session. These guidelines would provide a clarity that is essential to school districts as they maximize available resources to achieve their mission of educating the children and young people who attend their schools.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our input. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue in greater detail, or provide additional information should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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School Administrators (WASA)

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