

Top 5 Legislative Priorities

<p>Social Emotional Learning</p>	<p>The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that integrate Social Emotional Learning and Trauma Informed Practices in the education system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide pre-service and in-service educator and administrator training; • Ensure staffing levels in schools are funded to meet student need and to support student learning and well-being; • Increase partnerships with after-school providers and community partners; • Ensure staffing levels meet the needs of students, including but not limited to: psychologists, counselors, family and community engagement coordinators, social workers, speech-language pathologist, behavior specialists and nurses; • Support adoption of the Washington State SEL framework.
<p>School Construction and Simple Majority for Bonds</p>	<p>The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that equitably assist districts to fund their capital needs for the 21st century to lower K-3 and Career and Technical Education (CTE) class sizes and address capacity, growth, modernization, and safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing school construction bonds from super-majority (60%) to simple majority vote; • Updating the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP); • Renewing the K-3 grant program with capital funding to support class-size targets; • Documenting use of portables, including but not limited to: age, quantity, condition, and purpose.
<p>Prevent Gun Violence</p>	<p>The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that reduce dangerous access to firearms by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting implementation of I-1639; • Ensuring continued eligibility and safety training for firearms ownership, using the best available background check; • Permitting and encouraging destruction of crime guns by the Washington State Patrol and other agencies; • Prohibiting the arming of school staff except for trained school resource officers (SROs); • Extending the law regarding possessing dangerous weapons on school facilities to childcare, daycare, and early learning settings; • Prohibiting the sale and use of high-capacity magazines; • Notifying relevant school district authorities of Extreme Risk Protection Orders pertaining to a minor.
<p>Strategies to Address the Teacher Shortage</p>	<p>The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that recruit and retain effective educators, develop a diverse workforce, and ensure equity and access to educator preparation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding of recruitment and conditional scholarship programs; • Expansion of Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)-approved conditional certificates and alternative routes to certification; • Phased-in expansion of Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) grants to all schools.
<p>Strategic K-12 Investments to Close Gaps</p>	<p>The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that include non-regressive revenue sources for any new funds needed to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Special Education funding gaps; • Increase the Prototypical School Model to I-1351 levels; • Include a categorical allocation for high mobility students; • Expand High Poverty Learning Assistance Program (LAP) by lowering the threshold; • Allow school districts to choose between the two enrichment levy caps and increase the Local Efforts Assistance (LEA) ceiling.

Also Supported (listed alphabetically):

Best Practices for School Meals - Lunch

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Modify WAC 392-157-125 “Time for Meals” to define a minimum lunch period for students. Language should be added to specify a minimum of 20 minutes to eat lunch after being seated, with additional time scheduled to move through the lunch line;
- Promote recess before lunch for elementary students;
- Promote healthy and respectful eating environments and discourages practices such as silent lunch.

Best Practices for School Recess

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Define a *minimum* of 30 minutes of daily recess time for elementary school students;
- Prohibit recess from being withheld due to academic or punitive reasons;
- Promote schools as an effective and necessary partner in guiding children to meet the CDC recommendation of 60 minutes of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- Specify that recess should be outdoors and primarily unstructured, with contingency plans for inclement weather or other safety concerns.

Engaging Families in Student Success

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that increase transformative family engagement practices by:

- Replacing “Parent Involvement Coordinator” with the more inclusive “Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinator” in the funding formula;
- Adopting a clear definition for FACE Coordinators;
- Funding at least a 1.0 FTE FACE Coordinator per school, starting with high poverty schools first.

Equitable Identification of Highly Capable Students

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that achieve equitable representation of all demographic groups in highly capable programs, regardless of zip code, especially low-income students, students with disabilities (“twice exceptional”), English Language Learners, and highly mobile students by universal screening:

- All students by 2nd grade, and again by 6th grade; and
- At students’ school of attendance, during the regular school day; and
- Using unbiased screening instruments.

Fund Paraeducator Training

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Fully fund the training requirements for paraeducators mandated by law, including the 28-hour fundamental course of study and the additional 70 hours of professional development required within the first three years of employment.

Increase Access to High Quality Preschool

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Develop a plan to ensure all preschool-age children in Washington state have access to preschool that is:
 - High-quality
 - Local
 - Developmentally appropriate
 - Evidence-based
 - Inclusive
- The plan must address the equity gaps and improve student outcomes in the pre-K-12 public school system.

Raise the Age of Tobacco and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems to 21

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Limit access, sale, and distribution of all tobacco products and electronic nicotine delivery systems, including but not limited to, e-cigarettes, vaping and Juul devices, to age of 21 and up;
- Prohibit packaging and marketing targeted at youth.

Safe School Plans and Emergency Preparedness

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that support emergency preparedness planning in schools through:

- Development of clear and specific guidelines and standards for safe school plans;
- Funding to support schools in developing safe school plans;
- Funding to ensure that every school is able to implement a safe school plan that will serve all students equitably.

For a full description of the platform and Top 5 issues, please visit: <https://www.wastatepta.org/focus-areas/advocacy/>.

For more information, contact WSPTA Advocacy Director Sherry Rudolph at ptaadvocacydir@wastatepta.org or WSPTA Legislative Consultant Marie Sullivan at legconsultant@wastatepta.org.