

2016 Legislative Issue Proposal Form Word Document Worksheet

****Edited for space and submitter privacy – no submitted content removed****

- 3. Issue Topic:** *(In fewer than 30 characters, including spaces, please provide a broad description for your submission. Example: Higher Education; Breakfast after the Bell; Social & Emotional Learning)*

Amplify Fund Basic Education

- 4. Issue Description:** *(In fewer than 300 characters, including spaces, please provide a description of the issue you are submitting. The description must follow the below format. Examples of what others have done follow below...)*

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that:

...fulfill Washington state's paramount duty to amplify fund basic education. Funding solutions must be progressive revenue sources that are sufficient, sustainable and equitable, and must not cut services that support the whole child, or rely only on redistributing existing education funds.

(Examples)

- Improve the quality and nutritional content of school breakfast and lunch programs.
 - 85
- Increases the affordability and access of Higher Education for middle and lower income families with affordable tuitions, affordable loan programs, while also supporting additional funding for “State Need Grants” (SNG) and “College Bound” scholarship programs that target low income families and at-risk students.
 - 317

- Support school district capital improvements and help fund school facilities by passing simple majority for bonds, adjusting the state’s capital funding formula in the School Construction Assistance Program and requiring the improvement of, and use of school facility impact fees in local jurisdictions.
 - 308
- Institutes a state-wide Breakfast After the Bell Program and initiate policies at the District Level that encourage Early Adoption of Breakfast After the Bell Programs.
 - 171

Supporting Documentation

Please complete the following questions. Use Hyperlinks where appropriate to substantiate and provide additional background information.

5. What are key facts associated with this problem or the solution? Please include references and links to substantiate facts?

This next legislative biennium (17-18) is a critical moment in time for this issue that has been long standing on WSPTA’s platform. The 2017-18 school year is the deadline that the State promised and the Supreme court ordered the State to fully fund basic education¹. The current gap between what the state funds and what is required to comply with the McCleary decision is estimated to be from the \$3.5 billion and \$10 billion per biennium². While there was some progress made during the ’15 legislative session, the State is still far short. Following the 15 legislative session, the Supreme Court issues sanctions, “The State does not comply with the Court order by providing a plan or funding, again, and is sanctioned \$100,000 per day ‘until it adopts a complete plan for compliance with article IX, section 1 by the 2018 school year.’”³

Among the areas where the state has come up short are⁴:

- Class size reduction and all-day kindergarten (page 6)
- Underfunding of school salaries – (page 6)

At the same time, Washington State has the most regressive tax system in the nation.⁵ The low and middle income Washingtonians are paying a greater percentage of their income than high income individuals. Further, tax breaks for corporations are larger than even expected⁶.

6. Please provide a 250 word persuasive “for” statement. This statement should include the following points:
- a. Why this issue should be supported by the Washington State PTA?
 - b. What is the current problem this issue is solving?
 - c. What is the solution to the problem?
 - d. How will this legislation improve the lives of the children in your community and across Washington State?

¹ <http://waschoolexcellence.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/Chart-Aug2015.pdf>

² <http://projects.seattletimes.com/2016/education-funding/>

³ http://www.courts.wa.gov/content/publicUpload/Supreme%20Court%20News/843627_081315McClearyorder.pdf

⁴ http://www.courts.wa.gov/content/publicUpload/Supreme%20Court%20News/843627_081315McClearyorder.pdf

⁵ <http://www.seattletimes.com/business/economy/washington-suffers-most-regressive-tax-system-in-u-s/>

⁶ <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/boeings-historic-tax-break-from-state-even-bigger-than-thought/>

Basic education is an investment in Washington’s future and the foundation of our democracy. The Legislature has completed the necessary work to define “basic education,” but contrary to its Constitutional mandate, Washington State has underfunded basic education for decades. As a result, school districts have had to rely on unstable and inequitable levies to make up the shortfall. In addition, parents, teachers, community members, local businesses, and PTAs have spent innumerable hours and countless dollars subsidizing basic education--thus inadvertently exacerbating the equity and opportunity gaps.

The last legislative session before the 2018 deadline for amply funding basic education that was established by the Legislature and reaffirmed by the Supreme Court is imminent. As the largest child advocacy organization in Washington and a founding member of NEWS, the WSPTA must maintain active engagement and focused advocacy until the State fulfills its paramount duty and meets the deadline promised in the McCleary case.

Ample funding cannot be ensured by redistributing the local and state funding currently collected to pay for education, nor can ample funding be found in shifting money out of the many health and human services programs that exist to benefit the development of the whole child. New revenue is needed, and that revenue needs to be raised in a manner that is equitable and progressive. All of Washington’s children stand to benefit when our program of basic education is amply funded.

7. Optional, include a quotation about this issue (in less than 200 characters, including spaces) that may expand or complement the “for” statement. If this quote is from a source other than the submitter, include contact information or citation for the quotation.

8. What, if any, are the potential fiscal impacts of the issue? *

Yes, see #5

9. Are any legislators and/or groups or coalitions currently working on this issue? Please describe any work in progress.

NEWS (<http://www.waschoolexcellence.org/>) is a coalition of community groups (including WSPTA), teachers and school districts fighting for full funding of K-12 education. They are part of the McCleary lawsuit which resulted in the Supreme Court decision that Washington State is

failing in its paramount duty to fully fund basic education.

The **Economic Opportunity Institute** (<http://www.eoionline.org/>) seeks to advance public policies that promote high-quality education and other shared investments in our future. They publish research, shape public debate, and catalyze policy initiatives.

Our Economic Future (<http://oureconomicfuture.org/>) lobbies legislators to raise revenue.

Washington State Budget and Policy Center (<http://budgetandpolicy.org/>) does comprehensive budget and policy analysis, providing ideas for budget solutions, and raising public awareness. They're currently focused on tax loopholes and the recent court ruling that Initiative 1053 (which requires a supermajority for tax increases) is unconstitutional.

Washington's Paramount Duty (paramountduty.org) a grassroots lobbying organization whose mission is to compel Washington State to amply fund basic education and swiftly fulfill its paramount duty. We envision a future where all children have equitable access to an amply funded basic education, as guaranteed by the Washington State Constitution

10. Has this topic been on the short-term legislative platform in the past?
(If yes, then please cite the issue and year.)

Yes. Is the #1 issue for the 15-16 biennium

11. Please list state and national PTA positions, long-term principles or resolutions that align with your offered position (Please cite the position title, resolution title and the platform year if known.).

The PTA's long-term position on budget says, "The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy affecting tax policies that are fair, equitable, and provide stable, adequate revenues for public education and for programs that benefit children and youth."

Resolution 18.5 - Funding for Basic Education

Resolution 18.6 - Uninterrupted Operation of Public Schools

Resolution 18.11 - Common School Construction Funding

Resolution 18.18 - Reduction in Class Size

Resolution 18.21 - K-12 Vocational Technical Education

Resolution 18.22 - Children with Special Needs

Resolution 18.28 - Increasing revenue (Especially " Washington State PTA will consider taking public positions in support of fair, equitable and ample revenue increases as a necessary component of fully funding education and meeting other needs of children and youth"