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LIFETOUCH

What Principals Need to Know About **THE 2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Roz Thompson

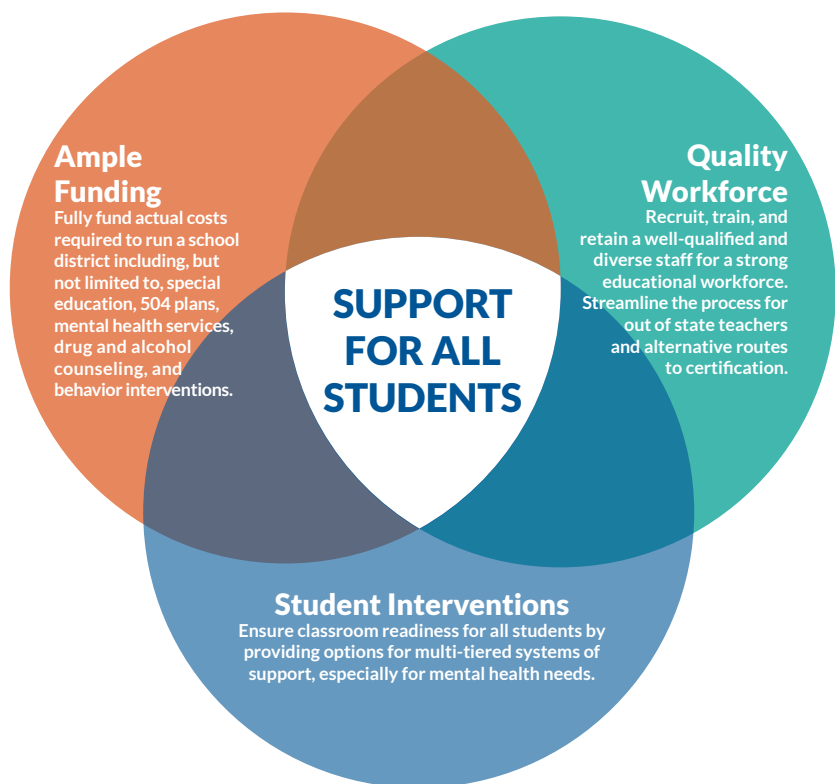
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There are so many things to know about the 2018 legislative session — or any legislative session — and boy, did I learn a lot in my first official one representing AWSP!

If you need to know some of the basics about where to park or charge your phone or get another cup of coffee at the Capitol, I can definitely help you with that. In this article, I will also try to help give you some of the basics of what happened this past session with regards to education policy. It won't be an exhaustive description of everything so if you have further questions after reading this, please contact me. I've learned to rely on my skills as a librarian in my new role — knowing where to go or who to contact to find good information if I don't know something!

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The 2018 legislative session really was a short 60-day session ending on time. A flurry of last-minute issues unrelated to the budget ranged from school safety, gun laws, the use of deadly force by police, the public records act, and a potential energy tax and consumed much of the final weeks. Most education lobbyists felt this session moderately addressed the needs of our districts and schools. As your districts work with the new budget information for next year and beyond, I will be curious to know what works well with the new education funding and what remains to be “fixed” or enhanced next legislative session.



Here is a quick recap of some major legislation. Throughout this session, I tracked legislation according to the three main areas of our platform: Ample Funding, Quality Workforce, and Student Interventions. I also have a fourth category titled “Other” for some miscellaneous policy issues.

AMPLE FUNDING

ESSB 6032 (the supplemental operating budget for the state) will add more than \$776 million to K-12 salary allocations, as well as additional money for mental health, health care, and higher education. The budget also includes a one-time property tax cut for state residents in 2019.

Funding is provided to reach the full funding of state salary allocations in the 2018-19 school year, as required by the Supreme Court. The minimum salary allocation is \$65,216 for Certificated Instructional Staff; \$46,784 for Classified Staff; and \$96,805 for Certificated administrative staff (these figures are

adjusted by IPD — the implicit price deflator).

Legislators believe this satisfies the court requirements from the McCleary case to fully fund education by September 2018. However, according to an April 16 editorial in *The Seattle Times*, additional funding is needed for special education and reducing the opportunity gap in order to increase graduation rates. The *Times* also mentions the need for further assistance for children with mental health supports and increasing funding for both early learning and low income students who move on to higher education.

In addition to a supplemental budget, a much needed “McCleary fix” bill was passed. **E2SSB 6362** moves ahead the schedule for full funding of the increased state salary allocations for school employees to the 2018-19 school year and revises limitations on salary increases in the 2018-19 school year. It increases regional

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salary adjustments for districts west of the Cascade Mountains adjacent to a district with a regionalization factor more than one tercile higher and adds an experience factor adjustment for school districts with above-average education and experience for Certificated Instructional Staff. The special education excess cost multiplier increases from 0.9309 to 0.9609, and the high-poverty Learning Assistance Program allocation is now based on the three year rolling average of enrollments in free and reduced-price meal programs in a school.

This “fix” bill also provides a hold-harmless payment to districts for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years meeting specified criteria, appropriates \$12 million for hold harmless payments, establishes a work group to make recommendations for defining duties performed in a “school day,” requires hourly rates in time-based supplemental contracts not exceed the hourly rates provided for basic education salaries, and requires non-time based supplemental contracts document additional duties.

The governor vetoed a provision of this bill, which means the state will fund one professional learning day in 2018-19. This bill delays the requirement districts meet kindergarten through grade 3 class size ratios until the 2019-20 school year.

More explanation about education funding is located on the OSPI finance page at: www.k12.wa.us/finance

Frequently Asked Questions regarding collective bargaining impacts are available from WASA: <https://wasa-oly.org>

As I mentioned earlier, please keep me posted about what is working and what is not working in your districts with regards to education funding.

QUALITY WORKFORCE

PARAEDUCATORS

SSB 6388 is the paraeducator bill that passed and delays the implementation of new testing requirements for existing paraeducators until Sept. 1, 2019.

New paraeducator hires must meet these requirements by the date of hire:

- Beginning on Sept. 1, 2018, paraeducators must be at least 18 years of age, and;
- Receive a passing grade on the education testing service paraeducator assessment; or
- Hold an associates of arts degree; or

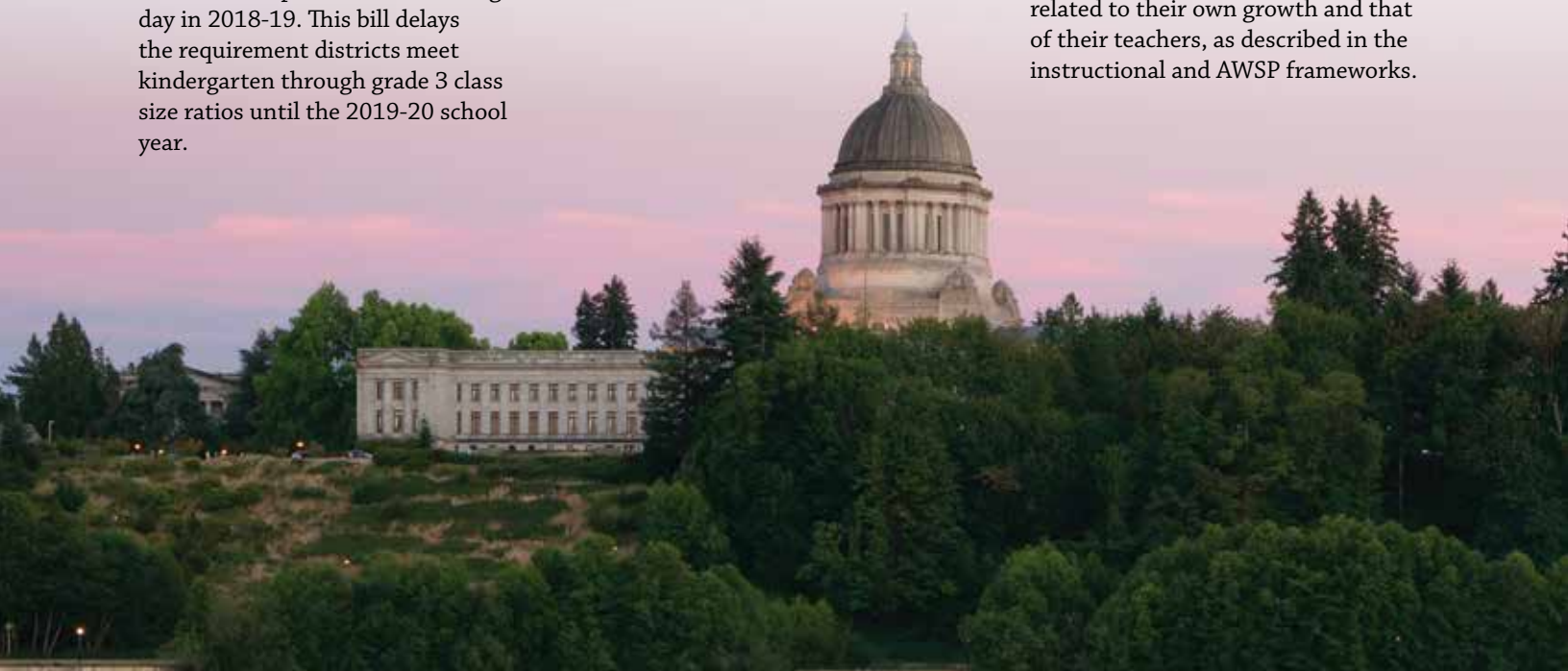
- Have earned 72 quarter credits or 48 semester credits at an institution of higher learning; or
- Completed a registered apprenticeship program.

Funding is provided to PESB to develop professional development for paraeducator subject matter certificates in ELL and Special Education.

Beginning Sept.1, 2019, school districts must provide a four-day fundamental course of study on state standards of practice to paraeducators who have not completed the course. School districts must use best efforts to provide the course before paraeducators begin work.

TPEP

The funds districts get for teacher and principal training related to TPEP will remain about the same for next year, but have been combined into one pool. This will reduce some paperwork within districts and allow for more flexibility in using these dollars. Administrators can use these funds for framework trainings (Stage 1 and 2) and some travel costs. They can also be used for Learning Focused Supervision trainings, as well as other professional learning related to their own growth and that of their teachers, as described in the instructional and AWSP frameworks.



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In other TPEP news, a bank of student perception questions for use by teachers will soon be available on eVAL. These questions are aligned to each instructional framework, and can be used to develop an electronic survey for students. Teachers choose who they share the results with; these should be helpful in reflecting on instruction and setting goals. New videos will also be available soon in eVAL to use as calibration videos for your administrator group. This is a great activity to do together in August. Both tools are available to districts not currently using eVAL. Talk to your district's technology coordinator or contact eVAL support (eval@esd113.org) for help.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT

E4SHB 1827 did not pass this session but contained many significant issues, such as teacher recruitment and retention programs, additional support for loan forgiveness, and slight modifications to teacher evaluation. However, a bit of progress was made in some

related bills and many stakeholders are hopeful we can more fully address these topics in 2019.

Additional funding will be devoted to students in higher education through the State Need Grant, \$19.1 million in state funding to match private donations for the Opportunity Scholarship program, and \$50 million for the College Bound Scholarship program. **E3SHB 1488** will expand higher education opportunities for certain students (DACA status, U or T nonimmigrant status, work permit or in deferred action status). And **SHB 1445** from 2017 asks the Professional Educator Standards Board to administer the bilingual educator initiative, which is a long-term program to recruit, prepare, and mentor bilingual high school students to become future bilingual teachers and counselors.

The Educator Workforce Development Workgroup is proud of the work going on with the Teach WA website. If you haven't checked it out lately, do so by visiting <https://www.teachwa.org>! Over 140 districts in Washington are now advertising jobs in one place. We hope this helps attract some great candidates to our state.

Finally, **SB 6210** allows tribal compact schools the option of participating in Plans 2 or 3 of the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and Plans 2 or 3 the School Employees' Retirement System (SERS). Being connected to

retirement plans is significant for these employees. For more information about health care, retirement, and pension issues, see Fred Yancey's update on our website.

STUDENT INTERVENTIONS

Several bills increasing support for students passed this session. Breakfast After the Bell (**2ESHB 1508**) provides some one-time start-up grants to each high needs school to implement this program.

ESHB 2610 is the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act. This bill prohibits schools and districts from taking action directed at a student under the age of 15 to collect unpaid school meal fees, and from stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for a school meal. It also requires school districts to notify parents or guardians of the negative balance of a student's school meal account no later than 10 days after the account has reached a negative balance and requires schools and districts to improve systems to identify homeless students, students in foster care, runaway students, and migrant students to ensure each student has proper access to free school meals.

2SHB 1377 enhances the nonacademic professional services for students around mental health by specifying the roles and duties of school counselors, social workers, and psychologists and requiring first-class school districts to provide a minimum of six hours of professional collaboration time per year for school counselors, social workers, and psychologists beginning in the 2019-20 school year. It also establishes the Professional Collaboration Lighthouse Grant

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Program, through August 1, 2020, to assist school districts with early adoption and implementation of mental health professional collaboration time.

E2SHB 2779 reestablishes the the Children’s Mental Health Work Group through the year 2020 and requires the delivery of mental health instruction in two high school pilot sites.

OTHER

Several bills in this “other” category will impact the work of principals in the future.

SSB 5064 is the student press bill that essentially reverses the Hazelwood decision from 1988 and allows student editors of school-sponsored media to determine the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of student media. This bill has been introduced several times over the past 10 years and this year we were able to add one amendment before it passed both houses.

The bill says that:

School officials may only prohibit student media that:

- is libelous or slanderous;
- is an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- is obscene or indecent pursuant to the Federal Communications Act or any rule or regulation of the Federal Communications Commission;
- violates school district policy or procedure related to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination;
- incites students to commit an unlawful act on school premises or violate a lawful school regulation; or
- creates a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

A school official must base a forecast

of material and substantial disruption on specific facts, including past experience in the school and current events influencing student behavior. A school official may not base a forecast of a material and substantial disruption on an undifferentiated fear or apprehension.

“ In addition, a student media adviser may not be terminated, transferred, removed, or otherwise disciplined for failing to suppress protected student media.”

“School-sponsored media” means any matter that is prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcast by student journalists, that is distributed or generally made available, either free of charge or for a fee, to members of the student body, and that is prepared under the direction of a student media adviser.

The definition of “school-sponsored media” listed above is taken from **SB 5064** and would also extend to yearbooks since they are generally considered to be media that is made available “for a fee”.

In addition, a student media adviser may not be terminated, transferred, removed, or otherwise disciplined for failing to suppress protected student media.

Clear communication regarding school newspapers and yearbooks is critical. Advisers and students need to have clear policies and a solid understanding of journalism standards so that sound, ethical decisions regarding content are made. Plan to have a conversation (or several) with your journalism and yearbook advisers before school starts again in the fall. Connect with

the students who are responsible for the content of these publications. We all want our students to be critical thinkers, readers, writers and speakers who use high quality sources for their information and can look at complex issues from many sides. Guiding and teaching our students how to do this properly is important.

Check out these websites for more information:

Principal’s Guide to Scholastic Journalism
principalsguide.org

SchoolJournalism.org
schooljournalism.org

Student Press Law Center
www.splc.org

Washington Journalism Education Association
wjjea.org/

2SHB 1896 is the civics bill OSPI worked on for a few years. This bill establishes an expanded civics education teacher training program (program) at OSPI, including providing for the selection of a team of social studies teachers and civics educational specialists from across the state who will be tasked with developing teacher training materials and providing professional learning opportunities. It requires each school district operating a high school to provide a mandatory stand-alone course in civics by the 2020-2021 school year for each high school student, and establishes basic content requirements for the course. And, it directs OSPI to select two school districts diverse in size and in geographic and demographic makeup to serve as demonstration sites for enhanced civics education.

E2SSB 6162 is the dyslexia bill that passed. This bill requires school districts, beginning in the 2021-22 school year, to screen students in early grades for indications of, or areas of weakness associated with, dyslexia and provide interventions

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if necessary. It also directs OSPI to convene a dyslexia advisory council to identify screening tools and resources that meet certain criteria, develop best practices for implementing the required screenings and interventions, and review the first year of district implementation. I will work with OSPI to make sure principals are involved in this new advisory council.

Many more bills passed this session and there is not enough space to cover all of them. WASA, WSSDA and OSPI have some great resources with legislative session summaries if you need more information. Advocacy is an ongoing effort for AWSP, so if you have any specific questions, concerns, or thoughts for 2019, please contact us!

NATIONAL ADVOCACY UPDATE

A group of 12 principals and AWSP staff from Washington state went to the “other” Washington (D.C.) in March to advocate for school principals at a national level. We were there the week the budget passed and were able to emphasize our need for Title II dollars to be included in the federal government’s budget. We were able to meet with all 12 members of congress (10 representatives and two senators) or their staff and our conversations and connections with the members and their staff were very positive. Additional topics like school safety, professional learning, the teacher shortage, and the opposition of school vouchers were also covered.

Many thanks to those who took time out of their buildings to advocate, especially in the snow! ■

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