

School Funding COALITION

Proud Advocates for Public Education

Who We Are

The School Funding Coalition represents eight statewide education associations and nearly 8,000 leaders from Washington's 295 school districts. Together, we bring firsthand knowledge of leadership excellence and school finance—and a unified voice for the 1.1 million students we serve every day.

Our collective mission is clear: to ensure that every student, regardless of ZIP code, has access to a well-resourced, high-quality public education that is the paramount duty of the State of Washington.



2026 Legislative Session Priorities

Washington's public schools stand at a critical crossroads. Chronic underfunding continues to erode our ability to meet students' basic needs and fulfill our collective and constitutional promise for the public education of each and every student in our care.

In 2025, the School Funding Coalition called for immediate investments in the Big Three—and the need has only intensified:

- **Materials, Supplies & Operating Costs (MSOC):** Fund the true cost of operating schools so students and staff have safe, functional environments for learning.
- **Special Education:** Fully support services for every student who needs them. No child's opportunity should depend on local budgets.
- **Pupil Transportation:** Ensure every student can get to school safely and equitably, no matter where they live.

As we enter this short but vital 2026 legislative session, we urge the Legislature to act decisively to provide the MSOC funding necessary, so districts can keep schools open, warm, and primed for learning.

The SFC also remains committed to ensuring that the Prototypical School Funding Model (PSFM) catches up with the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup Recommendations as a strong roadmap for a more sustainable, equitable future. Recognizing the challenges of the session ahead, the SFC reminds the Legislature of this aim for the biennia ahead.



Contact Information

AEA:

Mitch Denning
medenning@comcast.net

AESD:

Tim Merlino
tim.merlino@esd112.org

AWSP:

Roz Thompson
roz@awsp.org

WACTA:

Michelle Spenser
michelle@wa-acte.org

WASA, WASBO, WSPA:

Marissa Rathbone
mrathbone@wasa-oly.org

WSSDA:

Logan Noel-Endres
l.noelendres@wssda.org



To learn more,
scan the QR code or visit
www.waschoolfunding.org.

The Prototypical School Funding Model

Adopted in 2010, the values embedded in the PSFM were intended to ramp up from a cost-neutral conversion in 2012, to the staffing values that students deserve over time. Instead, progress on full implementation has stalled. The 2019 Staffing Enrichment Workgroup, as directed by the Legislature, provided a clear two-phase plan to realize the original intent of this system:

- **Phase I:** Address student safety, social-emotional well-being, and leadership capacity.
- **Phase II:** Expand staffing across all areas and invest in professional learning to sustain excellence.



For full details, see the
Workgroup Report:
<https://bit.ly/3r6byIP>

Continuing PSFM Investments

The 2022, 2024, and 2025 Legislatures made meaningful progress toward implementing the 2019 Staffing Enrichment Workgroup recommendations by strengthening support for counselors, nurses, social workers, paraeducators, and office staff.

Now, we ask you to finish this essential work:

- Expand support for school leaders/building principals and professional development.

- Add continuous improvement coaches to strengthen student outcomes.
- Reduce class sizes and ensure every student receives the attention they deserve.

By completing Phase I and beginning Phase II, the Legislature can align state-funded staffing levels with what our schools and our students truly need to thrive.

A Call to Action

Across Washington, communities are rallying to support their schools, but they cannot do it alone. The constitutional responsibility to amply fund public education rests with the state.

Every investment in basic education is an investment in Washington's future, its children, its workforce, and its communities. That looks like full funding for MSOC now and renewed commitment to adequately funding staff allocations in the sessions ahead.

The **School Funding Coalition** calls on lawmakers to act with urgency, courage, and vision:

- To make good on our state's promise.
- To fulfill our paramount duty.
- To ensure that every child, in every district, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed through a basic education.