



TWIO

This Week In Olympia

Week 9 | March 12, 2010

IN THIS ISSUE:

Week 9 - March 8-12, 2010

Sine Die

The 2010 Regular Session adjourned on March 11. The 2010 1st Special Session will begin March 15. This is the last regular edition of TWIO. A Special Edition of TWIO will be sent when the budget passes.

This Week In Olympia is emailed to active WASA and AEA members every Friday and is posted on WASA's [website](#). TWIO provides schedules for committee hearings, a Bill Watch (which tracks bills as they move through the legislature) and information on legislative issues important to school administrators.

The Legislature celebrated their sine die (last day) of the regularly scheduled 2010 session last night at about 8:30 p.m. Because they did not complete their business on the supplemental operating budget and the tax/revenue packages, they have been called back for a special session to begin Monday, March 15 at noon. The special session can last up to thirty days but key legislators have said they should be able to finish in seven to ten days.

The supplemental budget [SSB 6444](#) passed the House late on March 5. Some K-12 elements in the *current* budget proposal include:

- The school "consolidation and reorganization" which was added to the Senate budget has been taken out and replaced with: SPI must analyze the feasibility of increasing efficiencies and economies of scale in school district administration and non-instructional operations through shared-service arrangements and school district cooperatives. The analysis shall include an examination of administrative efficiencies achieved through school district cooperatives currently in place and strategies to replicate best practices. A report is due to fiscal committees by December 15, 2010.

- ALE and K-4: for 2010-11 the K-4 ratio goes from 53.2 to 52.69 unless the district has more than 25% of its K-4 students enrolled in online learning. If they do have more than 25%, then the ratio for K-3 is reduced to 49 and to 46 for grade 4. (Additional CIS can be allocated up to 52.69 to equal documented staffing levels in K-4.) ALE will have separate financial accounting beginning with the 2010-11 school year.

- LEA is funded at \$539.875m tied to the passage of [ESHB 2893](#) (changing levy provisions) which passed on March 11 and is on the Governor's desk. (As passed, ESHB 2893 does NOT include the "LEA redistribution" proposal that was in Senate bill 6518-which died.)

- Implementation of all day kindergarten for high poverty is retained and funded through the ed legacy trust fund.

- BEST, lid day and I-728 are eliminated.

- The per pupil inflator is 4%.

- Sales tax on bus purchases will not be reimbursed until the last payment.

- The June 30-July 1 apportionment delay is *not* in this budget.

It is important to remember that the budget is a "work in progress". We

will not have the actual reductions/increases for K–12 until the final budget is passed and the Governor signs it.

Now is a good time to call your legislators (800-562-6000) and leave a message about how the current version of the budget affects your district. For example-how important the K–4 ratio, all day kindergarten, LEA, etc. are.

See last week's [TWIO](#) for a comparison chart for K–12 in the budgets.

Education Bills That Passed

A number of the bills relating to education passed shortly before the legislature adjourned last night. At this time, the final bill reports for all of these bills are not available, but we are working on a detailed analysis of each and will include them in our 2010 Legislative Report.

The Governor has twenty days after adjournment to act on a bill. After this, all bills the Governor has not acted upon automatically become law. After reviewing a bill, the Governor may decide to sign it, veto a *section* of the bill (usually called a line-item veto), or veto all of it. Line item vetoes are only permitted in the budget. In order for the Legislature to override a veto a two-thirds majority vote is necessary in both chambers.

- [E2SHB 1418](#)-Establishing a statewide dropout reengagement system.
- [HB 2621](#)-Designating resource programs for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction in K-12 schools.
- [2SHB 2731](#)-Creating an early learning program for educationally at-risk children.
- [SHB 2776](#)-Regarding funding distribution formulas for K–12 education (prototypical funding model).
- [SHB 2801](#)-Regarding antiharassment strategies in public schools.
- [2SHB 2867](#)-Promoting early learning.
- [SHB 2893](#)-Changing school levy provisions. (4% levy lid lift; 2% increase in LEA; expanded base; supplemental levy; and reverse severability)
- [ESHB 2913](#)-Authorizing innovative interdistrict cooperative high school programs.
- [HB 2996](#)-Including approved private schools in the superintendent of public instruction's record check information rules.
- [E2SHB 3026](#)-Regarding school district compliance with state and federal civil rights laws.
- [SHB 3036](#)-Requiring a public meeting before a school district contracts for nonvoter-approved debt.
- [SSB 6367](#)-Allowing agencies to direct requesters to their web site for public records.
- [ESSB 6403](#)-Regarding accountability and support for vul-

nerable students and dropouts.

- [SB 6593](#)-Transferring the administration of the infant and toddler early intervention program from the department of social and health services to the department of early learning.
- [ESSB 6604](#)-Providing flexibility in the education system (eliminates student learning plans for all but 8th grade students.)
- [E2SSB 6696](#)-Regarding education reform. (Accountability for Title I and RTTT: Teacher and Principal Evaluations; Principal Performance; Encouraging Innovations (STEM); Alternative Routes for Teaching; Common Core Standards; Parents and Communities; Collective Bargaining; and Closing the Achievement Gap)
- [2SSB 6702](#)-Providing education programs for juveniles in adult jails.
- [SSB 6759](#)-Requiring a plan for a voluntary program of early learning.
- [ESSB 6724](#)-Addressing the shared leave program.

Messages From OSPI

OSPI's Legislative Wrap-Up-Updated

As a result of the upcoming special legislative session, OSPI will reschedule the Legislative K–20 Video conference originally scheduled for March 18. We will plan to hold the Video conference within one week from the end of the special session and will provide the time and date when it becomes available. Click [here](#) for details.

Race To The Top Q&A (Updated)

Click [here](#) to view the updated Race To The Top Q&A.

Draft K–12 Common Core State Standards Available For Comment

The draft common core standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics are now available for public review and comment through April 2. While Washington districts should continue to stay focused on implementation of our current learning standards in these areas, this is an important opportunity for interested parties to review the proposed common core standards and to provide input. View the informational PowerPoint [presentation](#) with a Washington focus.

Anyone interested is encouraged to review the drafts and complete one of the feedback surveys found at www.corestandards.org. OSPI will conduct a comparison between these standards and our existing standards, and will also be submitting input to CCSO on these drafts. Send your questions to corestandards@k12.wa.us.

Schools Eligible for Federal Improvement Grants

This afternoon, Superintendent Randy Dorn released the list of Schools eligible for Feder-

al Improvement Grants. See his press release [here](#).

Retirement and Health Benefits

As of Thursday, March 11, two pension bills that could impact K–12 school employees have been sent to the Governor. These are HB 1541-Past Part-Time Service Credit, and HB 2877-Stock in Lieu of Salary. SHB 2617/ESSB 6426-the Governor's bills that suspend or eliminate certain boards and commissions including either the SCPP or the ERBB are still alive because they can impact the budget. SSB 6584, which has been sent to the Governor, is the only health benefit bill that could impact some school employees. It sets up a review of HCA complaint processes.

ESSB 6444, the supplemental operating budget which has passed both houses, needs to be commonly agreed upon by both bodies. Neither budget makes any further reductions this year in the area of retirement that impact K–12 employees. The House version has funds to continue the study of disability benefits. The only change in health benefits is made in the Senate budget. That is a reduction of the health benefit remittance to the HCA for retirees from \$64.90 to \$60.00 per month starting September 1, 2010.

Additional information has been added to the Department of Retirement System (DRS) website regarding a number of retirement related issues. These include employee contribution rate flexibility, State Actuary pension plan study recommendations, an update on gain-sharing, and WSIB investment losses, etc. These issues can be found at <http://www.drs.wa.gov/news-announcements/>. Additional updated information on pension and health benefit bills can be found on our association's web site under "[Retirement/Health Benefit](#)" bill watch.

AEA

AEA continues to watch the budget process. We're concerned with important programs in K–12 like levy equalization and K–4 staffing enhancement that have a direct bearing on the services provided by our three associations.

AEA is particularly watching the levy equalization legislation. We are grateful to WASBO members who expressed concerns earlier in the week regarding Sen. Tom's per-pupil LEA allocation proposal. Earlier today, the Senate passed the House's version of SHB 2893 which increases the levy lid while also increasing levy equalization, defined in the current formula. WASBO will be a member of the Local Funding Working Group. It will look at the strengths and weaknesses of the current LEA system, and provide recommendations for improving this process.

The capital budget has yet to be finalized, and we are watching the \$200M energy grant process found in the House budget. The Senate does not contain this provision, and we're hopeful that a compromise can be reached that allows schools to improve their buildings' energy efficiency and useful life.

Finally, we're pleased that the elimination of the K–12 breakfast and K–3 lunch reduced price copays remain in both operating budgets. In these days of challenging economic times, our children need the opportunity to eat healthy meals at school.

Committee Members/Keeping up with the Legislative Session-Useful Links

Legislative Hotline: (800) 562-6000

[Washington State Government](#)

[State Legislature](#)

[Senate](#)

[House of Representatives](#)

[Office of the Governor](#)

[OSPI](#)

[Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education](#)

[House Education](#)

[Senate Ways and Means](#)

[House Ways and Means](#)

[House Education Appropriations](#)

[House Capital Budget](#)


[TWV](#)

Tracking "Tell Your Story"

Make sure *your* legislators know what impact the cuts proposed in the budgets would have on *your* district.

[Tally](#): 22 school districts-90 legislators

[View](#) the stories.



Barbara L. Mertens, Ed.D.
Government Relations
Email: bmertens@wasa-oly.org

Washington Association of School Administrators
825 Fifth Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Phone: 800-859-9272
360-943-5717
FAX: 360-352-2043
Web: www.wasa-oly.org