



TWIO

This Week In Olympia

January 22, 2021

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About TWIO

This Week in Olympia (TWIO) is published by WASA in support of our members and members of our partners in WASBO, WSPA, and AEA.

TWIO is emailed each Friday during the Legislative Session and archived on WASA's website at <https://wasa-oly.org/WASA/TWIO>.



This Week in Review

Normally, during the first week of the session, much time is spent on organizing the House and Senate and going through traditional start-of-session ceremonies—including swearing in new members, officially electing leadership, and hearing from the governor presenting the annual State of the State Address. Legislative Committees begin meeting, with mostly work sessions to bring new members up-to-speed and to ensure all members have a common understanding of the issues. Along with the work sessions during the first week, a few Committees jump right into action by holding public hearings on bills.

As discussed in last week's newsletter, the first week of the session certainly was not "normal." This "remote" session forced limitations on traditional opening ceremonies. New legislators were sworn-in prior to the start of session via Zoom and the Joint Session of the House and Senate to hear Governor Inslee's State of the State Address was really not a Joint Session, but a large Zoom meeting (some watched on TVW). In fact, not only did legislators not come together, Governor Inslee was not present either. He prepared a recorded speech beforehand.

Like an airplane that takes a while to move down the runway before it takes off, with all the start-of-session festivities, the Legislature usually takes some time to build momentum. Again, there is no normal here and the start of the 2021 Session was more like a rocket, building up speed immediately. Committee hearings started on the second day of session and, while a few Committees started with work sessions, most Committees jumped straight into public hearings on bills. At the end of the first week and into this second week of session, several Committees already moved to executive action adopting priority bills. Already four bills sit in the House Rules Committee awaiting action by the full House, while sixteen bills await action in the Senate Rules Committee. Many other bills passed out of their policy Committee and were moved to one of the fiscal Committees for action.

It was understood that moving bills would be time-consuming and potentially difficult this session, so legislators were encouraged to limit bill introductions. House Democratic Leaders, in fact, provided specific guidance to their members urging them to limit themselves to seven bill introductions. They were further urged to only introduce legislation if the matter was "urgent and needed to be adopted in 2021." Certainly, bill introductions are down—through the first twelve days of session, over 700 bills, resolutions, and memorials have been introduced, compared to 1,300 pieces of legislation at this same time in 2019. While some legislators held back from introducing bills, others blew through the requested (but not required) seven bills. For example, Representative

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WASA Legislative Report Podcast



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 WASA•WSSDA•WASBO
 Legislative Conference,
 February 21. Register now
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Brad Klippert (R-Kennewick) has already introduced fourteen bills, while his seatmate, Representative Matt Boehnke (R-Kennewick) has introduced two bills. There is a bit of a caveat using those two members as an example. They are both Republicans and the House Democratic Leadership guidance was aimed at their own members. After a quick review of House Democratic members' bill sponsorship, it appears that they are holding to the seven-maximum request. A good many of them were in the 5-7 range, just hovering at the edge, however. It appears the only Democratic member currently over the limit is Representative Gerry Pollet (D-Seattle). He has introduced ten bills.

(NOTE: see [WASA's Bill Watch](#) at the end of this and every *TWIO* for the list of bills of highest importance to school administrators. A more [comprehensive list of bills](#) being monitored is also available on the WASA website.)

The flood of legislation is sure to continue for several weeks, but thankfully the Legislature's self-imposed "[cut-off](#)" dates are already rapidly approaching. The House of Origin Policy Committee cut-off date, wherein all House bills must be out of their original House policy committee and all Senate bills must be out of their original Senate policy committee, comes on February 15. That is Day 36 of this session and seems to be light-years away, but legislators have been moving quickly (as quickly as they can) in two short weeks and the mass execution of bills, which forces legislators to narrow their focus, cannot come soon enough.

Committee Action

The reopening of schools is a major priority of many legislators—in all four caucuses. The issue is sure to garner much attention this session and the first shot across the bow came this week. On Monday, the Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education Committee heard [SB 5037](#). The bill would have established a process—and requirements—for school districts to reopen schools for in-person instruction. Clear school opening metrics based on the COVID positivity standards within counties would have been established. As originally introduced, school districts in counties below a five percent positivity standard for two weeks would have been required to offer in-person learning to all students. School districts in counties above a five percent positivity standard would have been required to reopen, but could choose how to deliver education to their students (in-person, distance learning, or a hybrid model).

WASA was prepared to testify in support of the concept of the bill, while expressing concerns (rather than support or oppose, we signed in as "Other"). Positively, the bill would establish clear and rational new metrics based on science, following the current research across the country (and the world) which indicates schools are generally safe if specific protocols are in place—hand washing, masking, social distancing, etc. Of concern was the specific requirement to reopen schools without considering districts' unique circumstances. Some districts do not have an appropriate number of staff, others have issues with facilities (both size/configurations necessary to allow for social distancing and/or inadequate ventilation), and others are dealing with a range of fiscal issues.

Prior to the hearing, a [Proposed Substitute](#) version of the bill was brought forward. The new version of the bill would have further adjusted school reopening metrics. Under the new bill:

- a. school districts in a county below a five percent positivity standard would be required to offer in-person learning to students in all grades, K–12;
- b. school districts in counties with a COVID-19 case rate of below 200 cases per 100,000 would be required to offer in-person learning to students in all grades, K–12; and
- c. school districts in counties with a COVID-19 case rate of below 350 cases per 100,000 would be required to offer in-person learning to students in grades K–8.

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More importantly, the new bill clarified the in-person learning requirement would be met if school districts offered hybrid or rotating schedules with in-person learning and distance learning.

WASA expressed our concerns (noted above) but stated that the new version of the bill (with clear metrics, but flexible requirements) likely would provide a path for us to support the bill. That said, we do not believe this bill will move; however, it has already sparked a conversation in Olympia about how to get students back to in-person learning. It seems likely that some type of bill like this will be adopted before this session closes.

I should note—and you won't be surprised—that WEA opposes this bill. In fact, it is unclear if they would support any bill requiring in-person learning—even if the definition of “in-person” was fairly flexible. Why? The WEA Board recently adopted a [position on COVID-19 vaccination](#). While the position states that all school employees “should receive priority access to COVID-19 vaccines because of the importance of safe, equitable, and effective instruction and support,” the position also bluntly notes: “Before more educators are ordered back to in-person services, every employee must be given access to vaccine shot #1 and shot #2 before resuming in-person services and instruction.”

As a side note regarding vaccinations, late last week WASA, WSSDA, WASBO, and AWSP [co-authored a letter](#) to Governor Inslee and Washington State Secretary of Health Shah, urging them to revise the recent guidance on vaccination phases so that all school employees who wish to get a vaccination can receive one in February as part of Phase 1B2.

The Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education Committee also heard [SB 5147](#), regarding alternative school calendars. SB 5147 would require OSPI to establish two pilot programs focused on school calendars. Districts in the first pilot would be allowed to extend the number of instructional days in a school year to 210 days. Districts in the second pilot would be allowed to implement a year-round school calendar, providing 180 instructional days over the course of the entire calendar year. Each pilot would be limited to 50 school districts, with up to 30 districts in each pilot coming from the west side of the state and up to 20 districts located in the east side of the state. Additionally, the selected districts: must enroll at least 500 students; and must enroll at least 50 percent of students eligible for the Free and Reduced-Price Meals program or used the Community Eligibility Provision. The pilots would run from the 2022–23 school year through the 2025–26 school year.

Adopting a pilot program to experiment with school calendars could be a worthy effort. We expressed support for the concept, but also noted our concerns that small school districts were specifically excluded from the pilots. Small school districts, in many cases, would be more nimble and better able to pull off an adjusted school calendar and it seems appropriate that they be included. A greater concern is that if the pilots were deemed successful and the Legislature moved to require an adjusted calendar in all districts, there would be no evidence from the pilots to determine if this would provide a positive outcome in small districts. Whether these pilots are authorized or not, the idea of alternative school calendars is starting to gain momentum. In fact, implementing a “balanced” calendar to shrink summer learning loss is one of [Superintendent Reykdal's major policy priorities](#).

The House Education Committee spent their hearing on Tuesday voting bills out of Committee. Included was [HB 1121](#), State Board of Education requested legislation, to implement an emergency waiver program to allow school districts to waive certain graduation requirements (see [SBE's Summary](#)). The bill would allow a waiver of credit and subject matter graduation requirements and/or the graduation pathway requirement on an individual student basis. The bill would reauthorize (with some modifications) the emergency credit waiver which was established by the Legislature at the end of the

2020 session ([EHB 2965](#)). That waiver program applied to the Class of 2020 and the emergency authority expired July 31, 2020.

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The new waiver authority would allow school districts to waive certain graduation requirements when necessary given significant disruption caused by a local, state, or national emergency. Obviously, this bill is a reaction to the current COVID-19 pandemic (as was last session's EHB 2965); however, this bill would be a permanent fix and remain in place if another "significant disruption" occurred in the future. The emergency waiver is intended for use as a last resort when a student, who has otherwise demonstrated they are ready for postsecondary plans, is unable to complete graduation requirements, despite a district's good faith effort to assist the student.

HB 1121 is one of the bills waiting in the House Rules Committee for action by the full House.

The Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education Committee took executive action this week as well. On Wednesday, the Committee adopted an education community priority bill, [SB 5128](#). The bill would preserve some of the vulnerable pupil transportation funding due to school districts not using buses (or not using them as much as projected) as are students being taught remotely. Last week's *TWIO* ([Week 1, January 15](#)) addressed this bill, so there is not much of a need to rehash that information, especially given that the bill received a facelift before being adopted. In short, the original version of the bill would have established an alternative pupil transportation formula, providing school districts 70 percent of their estimated allocation for the school year, assuming full in-person instruction, rather than the amount the district would receive under the traditional allocation formula. There is also a "safety net" mechanism that allows school districts to apply for additional funding if they exceed their allocation amount due to providing expanded services.

While this is a priority issue, it was a bit of a surprise that it moved. We have not talked here about the enrollment stabilization legislation that we have been working behind-the-scenes because the actual bill has not yet been introduced. It was all-but-complete when the issue was set down last week and we suspected that SB 5128 (which is one half of an enrollment/transportation stabilization combo package) may get caught in the same web. More on that below. For now, let's discuss the new SB 5128.

When the Committee met on Wednesday, a [Proposed Substitute](#) to SB 5128 was on the table. The Proposed Substitute, which was adopted by the Committee, makes multiple changes:

- There is a technical change to the description of an "eligible emergency."
- The funding level of pupil transportation during an emergency is adjusted. Rather than providing 70 percent of a district's estimated allocation assuming full in-person attendance, the new bill provides 70 percent of the estimated allocation OR the amount that would ordinarily be generated by the transportation formula, whichever is greater. Additionally, the 70 percent allocation is increased to 80 percent if the district is providing in-person instruction to at least 50 percent of enrolled students.
- New language specifies that districts receiving funding under the regular (that is, the current) transportation formula are not eligible for safety net funding.
- New language provides that districts receiving allocations under the alternative formula will receive increased funding, from 70 percent to 80 percent, for the duration of the year if they provide in-person instruction to at least 50 percent of enrolled students on any enrollment count day.

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- The bill clarifies that districts may use allocations for transportation services already permitted by law, as well as fixed transportation costs such as school bus maintenance and basic administrative, regulatory, safety, and operational expenses.
- The safety net process is further refined and provides a timeframe by which districts must apply for safety net awards (May 1) and by which OSPI must allocate safety net awards based on anticipated costs (June 1). Adjustments may be made until August 31, after which OSPI must recover any excess safety net awards.

You are encouraged to review this bill (especially business officers) to see if this package would solve your transportation funding problem (or at least provide enough additional funding to avoid the catastrophic situation you have been expecting).

This bill, now SSB 5128 was adopted by the Committee and was referred to the Senate Ways & Means Committee—which has already scheduled it for a public hearing next week: **Thursday, January 28, at 4:00 p.m.**

On Thursday, the House Education Committee held a public hearing on an OSPI request bill regarding school attendance. [HB 1113](#) would emphasize the need for multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) for students that are not attending school and more explicitly requires attempts at tiered supports/interventions before a truancy petition is filed. Additionally, the bill would adjust truancy petitions, extending the timeline for districts before requiring the filing of a petition. The bill would allow districts to file a petition after five unexcused absences but requires the filing of a petition for 15 absences. Current Community Truancy Boards would also be renamed to Community Engagement Boards to change the emphasis from punishment to providing supports. For additional details, review [OSPI's Summary](#) of the bill.

Budget Stabilization

As we approached this session, the education community's almost singular focus was to seek a set of funding fixes to: address school district enrollment declines; and protect pupil transportation funding that is at risk of being “clawed back” when OSPI reconciles allocations in a few weeks.

Since well-before this session started, we have been working with key legislators in the House on an “enrollment stabilization” bill to ensure districts' current apportionment is not dramatically reduced because of substantial enrollment declines. While asking for more funding is always a tough fight, even in good budget times, we had a few things going for us. One major issue is that, as a technical matter, we were not asking for “more.” What we have been asking for is to protect the current enrollment allocations that the Legislature has already provided.

We knew it was not going to be easy, but the fight became real when Governor Inslee introduced his budget proposals in December. His proposed 2021 Supplemental Operating Budget includes a net reduction of \$915.1 million. This reduction is comprised of a Maintenance Level reduction of \$1.25 billion and some targeted Policy Level additions of \$338.5 million. Over half (\$737.8 million) of the Maintenance Level reduction comes from K–12 education, “largely due to lower school enrollments and pupil transportation costs amid the pandemic”—to use the governor's words. As was mentioned in previous *TWIO's* ([Opening Day Special Edition, January 11](#); [Governor's Budget Release Special Edition, December 18](#)), the governor has not been shy about what he is doing. He boldly declares there are budget savings in the K–12 budget and proposes “reinvesting some of that savings to meet critical needs, while using the rest to help balance the budget.”

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So, instead of shoring up school district budgets by giving school districts funding that has already been allocated to them, Governor Inslee proposes to capture our “savings” and spend some of it outside K–12 and use the remainder to pad the budget’s bottom line.

Regardless, we knew we were not going to be assisted by the governor; however, over the last few months our arguments have been gaining traction and key legislators stepped up to provide assistance. Members in the House have taken the lead on an enrollment stabilization bill and, as noted above, we have been working with them on a bill since before session started. Last week, the bill was polished, language was agreed upon, and it was set to be introduced. At the last minute, we were notified that the bill was on hold because legislators had another plan.

As discussed in last week’s *TWIO*, legislative leadership, especially in the House had decided to take prompt action to quickly provide federal funds from December’s COVID stimulus package to school districts (technically to OSPI, who would distribute the funds to districts using the Title I formula, similar to the previous round of federal funds last year).

Washington’s share of the \$54.3 billion provided for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, Round Two (ESSER II), dedicated to K–12 education is \$824,852,000. Ten percent (\$82,485,200) is reserved at the state level, with the remaining 90 percent (\$742,366,800) provided to school districts.

Hold that thought. Part two of our requested protection of K–12 funding was vulnerable pupil transportation dollars. We were working with the House on an enrollment stabilization bill, while we were working with the Senate on a pupil transportation bill. When the House’s enrollment stabilization bill was held up because of the plan to push ESSER II dollars out to school districts, we thought the pupil transportation bill may also be held up. As discussed above, SB 5128 continues to move...while the enrollment stabilization bill in the House continues to be bottled up.

As we have noted before, getting those federal dollars into school district’s hands promptly is positive. In fact, before we even knew there would be another stimulus package, WASA’s Legislation & Finance Committee addressed the issue in WASA’s 2021 Legislative Platform, saying, “as the federal government provides relief funds dedicated to K–12 education, those resources must promptly be appropriated to school districts, without supplanting state funding.”

The concern we have now is that the ESSER II funds may be allocated to school districts in lieu of providing additional funds for enrollment stabilization and/or to provide additional state funding to shore up pupil transportation. And that fear reached a peak on Monday when we learned Superintendent Reykdal had been shopping a “Budget Stabilization” proposal with legislators that very specifically would send ESSER II funds to school districts “to support reopening of schools (*transportation and enrollment funding stabilization*, health and safety equipment)...”. [emphasis added]

You likely received the proposal from Superintendent Reykdal (and/or T.J. Kelly, OSPI CFO) earlier this week. Whether you did or not, **you are encouraged to read it**. For those of you who did not receive it, links are here: [Supt. Reykdal cover letter to superintendents](#); [T.J. Kelly cover memo](#); and [Budget Stabilization Plan brief and budget estimates](#).

As you review the funding estimates, please be aware that they ARE just estimates. In fact, there has already been an update since the plan was released Tuesday: [UPDATED fund estimates](#)—and I understand another update may be out soon.

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Because you are strongly encouraged to read the plan, I will not go into detail here, but will hit the high-points. Essentially, the plan is for the Legislature to promptly take action to roll out the \$742 million in ESSER II funds that have been dedicated to school districts. (From conversations with legislators, they may start this process as soon as next week.)

The federal legislation states the use of funds must be related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19 (similar to round one of ESSER funds). Additionally, funds can be used for: addressing learning loss; preparing schools for reopening and testing; and repairing, and upgrading projects to improve air quality. As noted above, Superintendent Reykdal has clearly linked the “preparing schools for reopening” to “transportation and enrollment funding stabilization.”

The plan is to use funding expectations in the pupil transportation bill (SB 5128) and the enrollment stabilization bill (the behind-the-scenes draft, not yet introduced) and use federal ESSER II dollars to provide that funding to districts. Because ESSER II funds (like ESSER I) are driven out by Title I formulas, some districts will receive less federal funding than they would receive from the two bills in holding. As part of Reykdal’s proposal, those districts would receive state funds (estimated to be approximately \$240 million) to make them whole. The expectation is the state funds would include the same conditions as the federal funds (that is, to support reopening and learning loss, specifically). Take a look at the two funding examples on Page Two of the plan brief.

There are positives and negatives here. Positively, school districts won’t have a billion dollars dropped in their laps and fall into a horrible bargaining situation (because those one-time funds would already be tied down). Negatively, while the funding will presumably fill the holes caused by enrollment declines and expected transportation losses when OSPI goes through the reconciliation process in a few weeks, there is still a needed fix to the transportation funding formula, and while funding for enrollment declines will be covered, there are problems with several programs that have funding based on enrollment. Not making necessary policy changes will cause districts to lose funding for the Learning Assistance Program, Institutional Education, Skills Centers, Local Effort Assistance—and districts’ levy lids will be lowered (if they use the per pupil calculation). There are other concerns, but the ripple effect of enrollment declines on other programs seems to be the biggest issue.

We strongly encourage you to understand this plan (and verify your estimated dollars)—and we encourage you to engage in this conversation. As we have talked about many times, most legislators simply don’t understand how your districts are funded or how your operations work and it will be easy for them to assume handing you a check with your ESSER II dollars will solve all of your problems. Things change quickly in Olympia and this may be a dead issue in a day; however, it appears that key legislators have already bought off on it. (The holding of the enrollment stabilization bill is one piece of evidence.) IF this plan moves forward, a key message to legislators is the critical need to address the policy issues surrounding this plan. One fear is that the Legislature will act to roll out nearly \$1 billion to K–12, consider the job done, and turn their attention to other issues. There is a fiscal lane and a policy lane here. Driving out this money is the fiscal piece; ensuring that programs that receive funding using calculations based on enrollment is the critical policy piece that **MUST** be addressed.

One final note about this plan. It is expected (if this plan is adopted) that school districts will have to submit a specific school reopening plan and a specific plan to address learning loss. If those issues have not been front-of-mind, it would be wise to begin those conversations.

AEA

By Mitch Denning

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Last Friday, AEA submitted written testimony on [SB 5128](#), **student transportation funding during an emergency**, which was heard in the Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education Committee. WSNA testified in favor, as it allows districts to use their buses to deliver school meals to students. We also liked the flexibility that it provides, as some districts are able to provide mostly in-person instruction, they can staff both nutrition and transportation departments at full or near-full capacity.

AEA are concerned, however, that the funding which might be used to fund the bill could be federal funds, which could supplant state monies. One of our 2021 AEA short-term priorities is that the state should not supplant state obligations using federal funds. The substitute bill has now moved to the Senate Ways & Means Committee, where it has a public hearing on January 28.

AEA supports [HB 1235](#), which allows districts who have paid state sales tax on qualifying school construction projects to be reimbursed for what sales they paid for labor and materials. This exemption applies to construction activity which begins on or after August 1, 2021. This bill has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing.

Our associations are watching with high interest [SB 5037](#), **transparent school opening metrics tied to COVID prevalence**. This bill would direct districts and charter schools to use defined metrics during COVID to determine the education modality for the schools in each county. It requires in-person learning in certain circumstances, and requires the Secretary of Health, State Board of Health, and local health officers to follow the education modality requirements. Finally, it prohibits emergency orders by the governor from superseding, waiving, or suspending statutory and regulatory obligations which relate to these education modalities. The bill was heard in the Senate Early Learning & K–12 Education Committee on Monday of this week.

Pensions/Health Benefits

By Fred Yancey – The Nexus Group

Health, Pension, and Other Benefit Issues

The secret of making progress is to get started.

Mark Twain

Even though the Democrat leadership has asked members to limit the number of bills they introduce, clearly, they and their Republican counterparts didn't listen. Even so, the reality, however, given that the session is an entirely virtual one, is that just a fraction of these bills will make it through the process compared to previous sessions.

At this point, a few bills deserve highlighting:

Retirement Related Proposals

[HB 1032](#): Concerning early retirement options for members of the teachers' retirement system and school employees' retirement system plans 2 and 3.

Sponsors: Harris, Stonier, Dolan, Boehnke, Leavitt, Ortiz-Self, Callan, Riccelli, Santos, Bergquist

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The bill proposes reducing early retirement penalties for older school employees in order to help protect vulnerable older teachers and classified employees from health COVID-19 related health risks. As an example, currently, school employees with 30 years and at age 62 can retire with no reduction in benefits. This bill proposes lowering the age to 60 until such time as the Governor's proclamation of emergency is repealed. The penalty for early retirement for those with less than 30 years would also be reduced. If passed, this would allow older employees most at risk to the virus an option to retire earlier. If passed, it would also save a school district dollar by losing its higher paid employees. This bill is currently before the House Appropriations Committee awaiting a hearing.

School Employees' Benefits Board (SEBB)

SB 5322: Prohibiting dual enrollment between School Employees' Benefits Board and Public Employees' Benefits Board programs.

Sponsor: Robinson

By Request: Health Care Authority (HCA)

The proposed legislation makes it clear that members who are dual-eligible for both PEBB and SEBB must choose to receive their health benefits (medical, dental, and vision) from either the PEBB or SEBB program. 6189(4) could have been read to allow dual-eligible members to pick and choose which program to get each component of health benefits from, which would have been very difficult to administer and would likely have caused confusion for members.

This bill has been sent to the Senate Ways & Means Committee and will have a public hearing on January 28.

SB 5326: Concerning health and pension benefits for school bus drivers employed by private nongovernmental entities.

Sponsor: Robinson ([Bill Report](#))

This bill is basically a reintroduction of a bill offered last session to guarantee health insurance (SEBB) and pension contributions for providers of school district transportation services.

Obviously, any private provider will pass the costs of these employee benefits to the district. This would be (surprise, surprise) an unfunded mandate.

It has not currently been assigned to a committee for a hearing.

Other Bills

There are a large number of bills proposed primarily dealing with expanding various employee benefits and qualifications. They address such areas as unemployment compensation, family and medical leave, and workmen's compensation. These proposals may or may not apply to school districts. If so, there will be a fiscal cost to districts.

It is no surprise, for example, that the Unemployment Insurance fund has been severely depleted. Ideas have been floated as to how best to replenish the fund without just hitting employers with a huge premium increase.

HB 1343: Proposes to provide employer relief in unemployment insurance by relieving COVID-19 related benefit charges, providing contribution relief, and making appropriations to rebuild the unemployment trust fund. Note that the sponsors are all Republican which does not bode well for the bill's passage. See the Democrat and Governor proposal below.

Sponsors: Hoff, Stokesbary, Chambers, Corry, Ybarra, Dufault, Barkis, Walen, Dent, Walsh, Dye, Schmick, Boehnke, Gilday

The [bill report](#) outlines details of the proposal.

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The bill is currently before the House Labor & Workplace Standards Committee awaiting a hearing.

SSB 5061/HB 1098: Concerning unemployment insurance. This bill would increase the minimum weekly benefit for unemployed workers, starting later this year. It also would refigure rates used to calculate unemployment insurance taxes paid by employers to prevent their tax bills from soaring.

Sponsors: Keiser, Conway, Billig, Dhingra, King, Nguyen, Saldaña, Stanford, Wilson, C.
By Request: Office of the Governor

This bill has passed out of Senate Labor, Commerce, & Tribal Affairs Committee and is in House Rules Committee awaiting floor scheduling.

The **bill report** outlines details of the proposal.

Another example: The Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) legislation passed in 2017 was an agreement between Washington’s employers and workers.

Two bills (**HB 1073** and **SB 5097**) in the 2021 virtual legislative session are proposing changes.

- Lowering employees’ eligibility for benefits from having to work 820 hours or more to just earning \$1,000 in the qualifying period.
- Expanding the “family member” definition to include non-blood related individuals whose close association is the equivalent of a family member.
- Removing the exemption for small businesses (less than 50 employees) from job restoration and health benefit coverage mandates.
- Lowering the eligibility for job restoration rights from having to work 12 months for an employer to merely 90 days.

Both bills have had public hearings and will move to Executive Session by their respective committees.

Comment: In the ‘old days’ legislators and their aides could be approached either formally or informally to discuss these types of proposals. Lobbyists and association representatives were in constant contact with legislators and staff to help craft proposals of benefit to all parties. Given the virtual-ness of the current reality, that previous process will not work. That is why constant electronic communication by constituents, school leaders, and association representatives like those from WASA and WASBO are more needed than ever.



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Legislative Resources

Committee Meeting Schedule

Legislative Committees Meetings are scheduled to be held at the following times but are subject to change.

Up-to-date meeting schedules and agendas are available on the [State Legislature website](#).

Mondays

1:30–3:30 p.m.
Senate Early Learning & K–12
Senate Hearing Room 1

3:30–5:15 p.m.
House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

4–6 p.m.
Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

Tuesdays

8–10 a.m.
House Education
House Hearing Room A

1:30–3:30 p.m.
House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

3:30–5:15 p.m.
House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

4–6 p.m.
Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

Wednesdays

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Senate Early Learning & K–12
Senate Hearing Room 1

Thursdays

1:30–3:30 p.m.
House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

3:30–5:15 p.m.
House Appropriations
House Hearing Room A

4–6 p.m.
Senate Ways & Means
Senate Hearing Room 4

Fridays

8–10 a.m.
Senate Early Learning & K–12
Senate Hearing Room 1

10–11 a.m.
House Education
House Hearing Room A

Useful Links

Washington State Government
<http://www.access.wa.gov>

State Legislature
<http://www.leg.wa.gov>

Senate
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate>

House of Representatives
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/House>

Legislative Committees
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/pages/committeelisting.aspx>

Legislative Schedules
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/pages/calendar.aspx>

Office of the Governor
<http://www.governor.wa.gov>

OSPI
<http://www.k12.wa.us>

TVW
<http://www.tvw.org>

Session Cut-off Calendar

January 11, 2021

First Day of Session.

February 15, 2021

Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

February 22, 2021

Last day to read in committee reports from House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees in house of origin.

March 9, 2021

Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).

March 26, 2021

Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

April 2, 2021

Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from House fiscal, Senate Ways & Means, and Transportation committees.

April 11, 2021*

Last day to consider opposite house bills (5 p.m.) (except initiatives and alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session).

April 25, 2021

Last day allowed for regular session under state constitution.

*After the 91st day, only initiatives, alternatives to initiatives, budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets, messages pertaining to amendments, differences between the houses, and matters incident to the interim and closing of the session may be considered.

Bill Watch

TWIO tracks critical education bills each week as they are introduced. Detailed bill information can be accessed by clicking on the bill number. The following is a list of the bills of highest interest to school administrators. A more comprehensive bill watch list is located on the [WASA website](#).

| Bill # | Title | Status | Sponsor |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| HB 1006 | Immunization, declining | H HC/Wellness | Klippert |
| HB 1010 | Motor vehicle sales tax | H Appropriations | MacEwen |
| HB 1016 | Juneteenth | H SGOVDP | Morgan |
| HB 1023 | Predesign requirements | H Cap Budget | Steele |
| HB 1024 | Sunshine committee/juveniles | H State Govt & Tribal | Springer |
| HB 1028 | Residency teacher cert. | H Education | Bergquist |
| HB 1032 | TRS & SERS early retirement | H Appropriations | Harris |
| HB 1039 | Bicycle & pedestrian travel | H Transportation | McCaslin |
| HB 1040 | Retired school employee health | H Appropriations | Dolan |
| SHB 1056 | Public meetings/emergencies | H 2nd Reading | Pollet |
| HB 1065 | Epidemic, pandemic vaccines | H HC/Wellness | Eslick |
| HB 1066 | Ed. service district boards | H Education | Stonier |
| HB 1067 | State dinosaur | H State Govt & Tribal | Morgan |
| HB 1073 | Paid leave coverage | H Labor & Workplace | Berry |
| HB 1077 | Federal Way school district | H Appropriations | Johnson |
| HB 1079 | Charter schools time frame | H Education | Dolan |
| HB 1080 (SB 5083) | Capital Budget 2021–23 | H Cap Budget | Tharinger |
| HB 1081 (SB 5084) | State gen. obligation bonds | H Cap Budget | Tharinger |
| HB 1085 | Students w/seizure disorders | H Education | Kloba |
| HB 1087 | Family/med leave continuity | H Labor & Workplace | Berry |
| HB 1093 (SB 5091) | Operating Budget, 2nd supp. | H Appropriations | Ormsby |
| HB 1094 (SB 5092) | Operating Budget 2021–23 | H Appropriations | Ormsby |
| HB 1113 (SB 5153) | School attendance | H Education | Ortiz-Self |
| HB 1121 | Graduation reqs/emergency | H 2nd Reading | Santos |
| HB 1131 | Private schools/waiver | H 2nd Reading | Rude |
| HB 1139 | Lead in drinking water | H Education | Pollet |
| HB 1149 | Public health education | H Education | Pollet |
| HB 1153 | Language access in schools | H Education | Orwall |
| HB 1156 | Local elections | H State Govt & Tribal | Harris-Talley |

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| HB 1162 | High school graduation | H Education | Stonier |
| HB 1176 | Student fines and fees | H Education | Paul |
| HB 1180 | Public testimony | H Local Govt | Kraft |
| HB 1182 (SB 5209) | Crisis response services | H HC/Wellness | Orwall |
| HB 1189 (SB 5211) | Tax increment financing | H Finance | Duerr |
| HB 1195 | Charter school time frame | H Education | Dolan |
| HB 1208 | Learning assistance program | H Education | Santos |
| HB 1212 | Repair of electronics | H ConsPro&Bus | Gregerson |
| HB 1214 | K-12 safety & security serv. | H Education | Senn |
| HB 1215 | K-12 education scholarships | H Education | Kraft |
| HB 1225 | School-based health centers | H HC/Wellness | Stonier |
| HB 1226 | School district elections | H Education | Stonier |
| HB 1264 (SB 5274) | Equity impact statement | H State Govt & Tribal | Thai |
| HB 1270 | Leadership skills grant program | H Appropriations | Young |
| HB 1273 (SB 5070) | Menstrual products/schools | H Appropriations | Berg |
| HB 1295 | Institutional ed./release | H Education | Callan |
| HB 1302 | College in the high school | H Education | Berg |
| HB 1305 | Right to refuse vaccines | H HC/Wellness | Kraft |
| HB 1306 | School boards/bond training | H Education | Sells |
| HB 1308 | Apprenticeship utilization | H Cap Budget | Riccelli |
| HB 1309 | Levy certification dates | H Finance | Eslick |
| HB 1317 | Right to refuse/health | H HC/Wellness | Young |
| HB 1321 (SB 5114) | Reopening/public health | H HC/Wellness | MacEwen |
| HB 1329 | Public meetings | H Local Govt | Wicks |
| HB 1331 | Early learning impact fees | H Local Govt | Harris-Talley |
| HB 1334 | Appropriations/COVID-19 | H Appropriations | Stokesbary |
| HB 1336 | Public telecomm. service | H Comm & Economic Dev | Hansen |
| HB 1338 | School resources/COVID-19 | H Civil Rights & Judiciary | Harris |
| HB 1340 | Pandemic task force | H Comm & Economic Dev | Lovick |
| HB 1342 | Reduced-price lunch copays | H Appropriations | Berg |
| HB 1343 | Unemployment ins./employers | H Labor & Workplace | Hoff |
| HJR 4200 | School district bonds | H Education | Stonier |
| HJR 4203 | 2/3rd vote for tax increases | H Finance | Sutherland |

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|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| SSB 5013 | Local redistricting deadline | S Rules 2 | Hunt |
| SB 5017 | School district procurement | S EL/K-12 | Wellman |
| SB 5021 | Retirement benefits/furlough | S Ways & Means | Hunt |
| SSB 5030 | School counseling programs | S Rules 2 | Mullet |
| SB 5037 | School opening metrics | S EL/K-12 | Braun |
| SB 5043 | School employee housing | S EL/K-12 | Salomon |
| SSB 5044 | Schools/equity training | S Rules 2 | Das |
| SB 5070 (HB 1273) | Menstrual products/schools | S EL/K-12 | Rivers |
| SB 5080 | Youth ed. programming funds | S Ways & Means | Carlyle |
| SB 5083 (HB 1080) | Capital Budget 2021-23 | S Ways & Means | Frockt |
| SB 5084 (HB 1081) | State gen. obligation bonds | S Ways & Means | Frockt |
| SB 5091 (HB 1093) | Operating Budget, 2nd supp. | S Ways & Means | Rolfes |
| SB 5092 (HB 1094) | Operating Budget 2021-23 | S Ways & Means | Rolfes |
| SB 5096 | Capital gains tax | S Ways & Means | Robinson |
| SB 5097 | Paid leave coverage | S Labor, Comm & Tribal Affairs | Robinson |
| SB 5105 | Office of equity task force | S State Govt & Elections | Hasegawa |
| SB 5110 | Telecommunications companies | S Environment, Energy & Tech | Ericksen |
| SB 5111 | Public employee independence | S State Govt & Elections | Ericksen |
| SB 5114 (HB 1321) | Reopening/public health | S State Govt & Elections | Braun |
| SB 5115 | Health emergency/labor | S Labor, Comm & Tribal Affairs | Keiser |
| SSB 5128 | Student transportation funds | S Ways & Means | Wellman |
| SB 5129 | Vapor & tobacco/minors | S Human Svcs, Reentry & Rehab | Saldaña |
| SB 5130 | Personnel files & discipline | S Labor, Comm & Tribal Affairs | Kuderer |
| SB 5144 | COVID-19 vaccine, declining | S Health & Long Term Care | Ericksen |
| SB 5147 | Alternative school calendars | S EL/K-12 | Hawkins |
| SB 5151 | Foster care & childcare | S EL/K-12 | Wilson |
| SB 5153 (HB 1113) | School attendance | S EL/K-12 | Wilson |
| SB 5156 | Budget stabilization appropriations | S Ways & Means | Rolfes |
| SB 5161 | Teaching tribal history, etc. | S EL/K-12 | Wellman |
| SB 5162 | Unanticipated revenue | S Ways & Means | Rolfes |
| SB 5171 | Unemployment insurance | S Ways & Means | Wilson |
| SB 5181 | Low-income school districts | S EL/K-12 | Honeyford |
| SB 5184 | K-12 foster care contact | S EL/K-12 | Nobles |

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| SB 5197 | Unemp. contributions/wages | S Labor, Comm & Tribal Affairs | Schoesler |
| SB 5200 | Scholarships/tax credit | S EL/K-12 | Schoesler |
| SB 5202 | School depreciation subfunds | S EL/K-12 | Schoesler |
| SB 5205 | K-12 education vouchers | S EL/K-12 | Schoesler |
| SB 5208 | Public records fees/approval | S State Govt & Elections | Wilson |
| SB 5209 (HB 1182) | Crisis response services | S Behavioral Health | Dhingra |
| SB 5211 (HB 1189) | Tax increment financing | S Business, Finan Serv & Trade | Frocket |
| SB 5216 | Tax preferences | S Ways & Means | Carlyle |
| SB 5223 | Motor vehicles sales tax use | S Ways & Means | Fortunato |
| SB 5242 | Media literacy & digital cit | S EL/K-12 | Lias |
| SB 5249 | Mastery-based learning | S EL/K-12 | Wellman |
| SB 5252 | School consultation/tribes | S EL/K-12 | Wellman |
| SB 5254 | Protective devices/health | S Labor, Comm & Tribal Affairs | Salomon |
| SB 5257 | School levy exemption | S EL/K-12 | Fortunato |
| SB 5264 | Chinese American history | S State Govt & Elections | Wagoner |
| SB 5265 | Bridge year pilot program | S EL/K-12 | Hunt |
| SB 5274 (HB 1264) | Equity impact statement | S State Govt & Elections | Hasegawa |
| SB 5277 | Early achievers prg/suspend | S EL/K-12 | Short |
| SB 5289 | Senior citizens/prop. taxes | S Ways & Means | Fortunato |
| SB 5299 | Computer science/HS grad. | S EL/K-12 | Wellman |
| SB 5322 | SEBB & PEBB dual enrollment | S Ways & Means | Robinson |
| SCR 8400 | Special legislative session | S State Govt & Elections | Ericksen |