



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Senate Releases 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget**

## About TWIO

*This Week in Olympia* is emailed to active WASA and AEA members each Friday during the Legislative Session and is posted on WASA's website at [www.wasa-oly.org/TWIO](http://www.wasa-oly.org/TWIO).

## Special Edition:

### Senate Releases 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget

The Legislature's "Budget week" continued today with the Senate's release of its 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget (a Proposed Substitute of **SB 6246**). Additionally, the House and Senate released competing proposals for a 2016 Supplemental Capital Construction Budget (we will review details of those proposals in this Friday's regular edition of *TWIO*).

The House and Senate versions of the Operating Budget are significantly different and it will likely be more difficult than first anticipated to reconcile those differences and adopt a compromise, final budget. With 15 days remaining in this 2016 Session, however, no one has yet discussed any possibility of a necessary Special Session. The spending levels in the competing budgets is the first major difference. The House proposes to increase spending above the underlying 2015–17 budget by \$466 million. This includes a proposed salary increase in beginning teacher salaries (to \$40,000) along with a \$650 annual bonus for other teachers, costing a total of \$98.5 million (for full details, see [WASA's Special Edition of TWIO](#), released February 22). Even if you removed that from the House's total spending increase, the House proposal would still spend significantly more than the Senate's proposal. The Senate proposes to increase spending by just \$49 million (this spending increase comes from a net increase in maintenance level spending of \$168 million and a net decrease in policy spending of \$119 million).

The House and Senate proposals vary in spending levels and they differ in where resources come from. The House proposes to eliminate six tax "loopholes" (**HB 2996**), specifically to fund its teacher salary package, and also would spend a fairly large portion (\$318 million) of the Budget Stabilization Account (BSA). To access money from the BSA, a supermajority of both the House and Senate must approve of the move. The Senate does not request any tax increases (or loophole closures) and they would not touch any of the resources in the Budget Stabilization Account.

How the House and Senate account for mandatory maintenance level spending for caseload and other adjustments based on current law requirements is also very different. The House budget provides \$219 million to cover increased maintenance level costs, while the Senate budget provides \$168 million. For K–12, the House would provide an increase of \$43.07 million to cover maintenance level costs, while the Senate would actually decrease K–12 maintenance level spending by \$9.47 million. Each year, the governor's budget and the two legislative budgets have to reconcile differences in maintenance level spending; however, the differences usually are not this extreme.

## Special Edition: Senate Supplemental Operating Budget

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Finally, the four-year budget outlook is a bit different in the two proposals. Both the House and Senate project to have \$5.0 million in the Ending Fund Balance in 2017–19. Including the Budget Stabilization Account, the House’s reserves would total \$453 million, while the Senate anticipates total reserves to be \$1.3 billion.

K–12 education details (what little there are) follow below. Complete details of the Senate’s budget are available from the [Legislative Evaluation & Accountability Program Committee](#).

### K–12 Education Enhancements

#### Charter Schools – \$6.6 million

Funding is provided in the Senate budget to support [E2SSB 6194](#). The bill would reenact and amend charter school laws to designate charter schools as non-common schools in the public school system and funds these non-common schools from the Washington Opportunity Pathways Account (lottery revenues). Funding is provided for charter schools for the following: (1) additional K–12 enrollments for charter schools that became private schools as a result of the Supreme Court decision; (2) expected enrollment increases for charter schools in school year 2016–17; and (3) the continued operations of the Washington State Charter School Commission.

#### Teacher Shortage – \$1.0 million

Additional funding is provided for the Professional Educator Standards Board for the Alternative Routes and Retooling conditional scholarship programs. These programs are designed to help school districts recruit teachers in subject matter and geographic areas with teacher shortages. Participants of these scholarships agree to teach in specified subject shortage areas in Washington K–12 public schools.

#### Paraeducator Certification – \$907,000

Funding is provided to implement [2SSB 6408](#), which creates minimum employment standards for paraeducators; creates a paraeducator oversight board; and requires OSPI to create a fee supporting paraeducator certification system, develop a paraeducator practicum training program, and provide school district grants to field test the implementation of the paraeducator certification.

#### Student Mental Health – \$134,000

Funding is provided to OSPI for to create and maintain online social and emotional training modules for educators, administrators, and other school district staff based on the recommendations of the Social and Emotional Learning Benchmarks Workgroup. Funding is also provided for OSPI to compile and report school district mental health inventory as required by [2SB 6243](#).

#### Education Funding Task Force – \$19,000

In addition to the \$500,000 appropriated in [E2SSB 6195](#) to support the Education Funding Task Force, additional funding is provided (\$19,000) to OSPI to collect and report school district data as required under the bill.

### K–12 Reductions or “Savings”

#### Quality Education Council – \$160,000

Funding for OSPI staff support of the Quality Education Council is eliminated, assuming the elimination of QEC, pursuant to [HB 2360](#). This is really the only commonality between the House and Senate K–12 proposals.

## Special Edition: Senate Supplemental Operating Budget

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### Other Details

#### Truancy Reform – \$1.5 million

Funding is provided to implement [2SSB 6497](#), which requires all school districts to establish community truancy boards or other evidence-based interventions to address student unexcused absences. Eighteen HOPE beds and ten Crisis Residential Center beds are funded to assist truant and other at-risk youth in need of support and services. These beds will be added throughout the state based on need and volume of truancy petitions.

#### Education Funding Task Force – \$500,000

Funding is provided for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (via The Evergreen State College) to contract with independent consulting services for the Education Funding Task Force as required in [2SSB 6195](#). (Note: funding was already appropriated for this purpose in 2SSB 6195; this is not an additional appropriation above and beyond that funding.)

#### MESA Community College Program – \$450,000

Funding is provided, via the Community and Technical College System budget, to bring six Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) program community college pilot sites to scale. MESA improves students' math outcomes, degree completion, and attainment, resulting in more underrepresented students entering science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. With these resources, the program would reach an additional 350 community college students.

#### Youth Suicide – \$97,000

Funding is provided for the Forefront program at the University of Washington to collaboratively work with K–12 ESDs to develop a two-day youth suicide prevention training program for middle and high school administrators, teachers, counselors, and psychologists, social workers, and parents or guardians as provided in [2SSB 6243](#).

#### Paraeducator Certification – \$47,000

Funding is provided to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (via The Evergreen State College) to conduct a study of the effectiveness of paraeducators in improving student outcomes as required in [2SSB 6408](#).

