

# Washington State PTA 2018 Legislative Platform

## Top 5 Legislative Priorities

<p><b>Social Emotional Learning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize school climate through strong social and emotional learning supports to maximize learning opportunities that help Washington students succeed in school and life.</li> <li>• Integrate social emotional learning and trauma informed practices in the education system, teacher and principal preparation programs and professional learning.</li> <li>• Ensure adequate staffing of psychologists, counselors, social workers, behavioral specialists, and nurses in schools.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Amplify Fund Basic Education</b></p>	<p>It is time to keep the promise made to the children of Washington state in the McCleary decision by fulfilling Washington state's paramount duty to amply fund basic education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding solutions must be progressive revenue sources that are sufficient, sustainable, and equitable.</li> <li>• Solutions must not cut services that support the whole child, or rely only on redistributing existing education funds.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Closing the Opportunity Gap</b></p>	<p>Provide teacher training and student supports that include effective solutions to close the educational opportunity gap by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing the implementation of the recommendations of the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC), and</li> <li>• Implementing the 2016 HB 1541 to close the educational opportunity gap.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standards for Para-educators</b></p>	<p>Provide a quality education for all students receiving instruction from para-educators by establishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide standards, training, and career development for para-educators,</li> <li>• Minimum employment standards, certification, and endorsements,</li> <li>• Training for teachers who have para-educators assisting in their classrooms, and their principals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Breakfast After the Bell</b></p>	<p>Washington State currently ranks 45<sup>th</sup> for utilization of the federal school breakfast program and currently, only 1/3 of eligible children have access to this program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support legislation instituting and funding a Breakfast After the Bell Program in high-needs schools.</li> <li>• Initiate policies that encourage early adoption of Breakfast After the Bell Programs at the district level.</li> </ul>

For more information, contact WSPTA Legislative Director Nancy Chamberlain at [ptalegdir@wastatepta.org](mailto:ptalegdir@wastatepta.org).

For a full description of the platform and Top 5 issues, please visit: <http://wastatepta.org/advocacy>.

## Also Supported (listed alphabetically):

### Addressing the Teacher Shortage

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that improve the teacher pipeline, to recruit and retain effective educators, especially in high-demand, hard to fill positions, in remote locations, or high-poverty schools through

- funding of recruitment and conditional scholarship programs, particularly for teachers of color who reflect the communities in which they work;
- expansion of alternative routes to certification that have been approved by the PESB;
- expanding reciprocity;
- phased-in expansion of BEST grants to all schools

### Best Practices for School Meal Policies

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that

- use CDC and USDA recommendations to clearly define a minimum lunch period for students as a minimum of 20 minutes of *seated* time;
- promote Recess Before Lunch;
- prohibit meal debt policies that shame or punish students;
- promote policies that increase access to school breakfast.

### Career Connected Learning, CTE & Stem

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that support Career Connected Learning K-12 programs that inspire, provide training, CTE, and weave real-life career options in STEM, manufacturing, etc. into K-12 classrooms. The new 2017-19 budget expanded CTE and we need to build on that to implement new programs at the state and local levels.

### Dual Credit Equality & Support

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that

- establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting as many undergraduate credits as possible to students who have received a passing grade on any dual credit course exam;
- support adequate funding & the expansion of these programs to cover family outreach, supplies, staff, and staff training; and
- support adequate funding for credit exams so that all students have equitable access to exams upon completion of a course.

### Engaging Families in Student Success

Increase school and family partnerships that result in increased family participation by:

- Adopting a clear definition and title for Family Engagement Coordinators
- Expanding funding to at least 1.0 FTE Family Engagement Coordinator per school, starting with high-poverty schools first.
  - o Start: 2017-18 school year;
  - o Completion: 2020-21 school year.

### Equity for Highly Capable

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that achieve equitable and full identification within all demographic groups for participation in Washington state public school Highly Capable (HiCap) programs, especially for: low-income students, students with learning and other disabilities, English Language Learners,

and students of color; by using evidence-based best practices for identification.

### Improving Educational Outcomes for Foster Children

Currently less than 50% of foster youth graduate from high school and less than 4% go to college. We support efforts to increase high school and college graduation rates through the creation and support of services which will facilitate smooth transitions between schools for foster youth at risk of not receiving credit for work completed.

### Post-Secondary/Higher Education Access and Affordability

Washington state has the leading economy in the nation and a skills gap that can only be closed by increasing access to and affordability of Post-Secondary education, including associate & bachelor degrees, and career & technical degrees/certificates with affordable tuition and local access to all programs while still supporting "State Need Grants" and "College Bound" scholarship programs.

### Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Gender-based Violence

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that

- present awareness and prevention programs that address sexual harassment and violence and engage students in mandated respect and consent curriculum;
- provide support services for victims of sexual harassment and violence;
- include training on the responsibilities of educational institutions, and the rights of victims, under Title IX.
- include the need for enthusiastic consent as an integral part of middle and high school sex education curriculum.

### Removing Barriers to Implementing ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program)

High quality early learning is a smart investment that helps children succeed in school and life. Washington State PTA supports policies to ensure access to high quality early learning by expanding ECEAP, the state pre-K program, including:

- Expanding capacity by eliminating systemic barriers
- Supporting quality early learning through multiple means.

### Restorative Justice and School Safety

Enhance school safety by incorporating restorative justice models in discipline processes while supporting family and community-based alternatives to achieve youth accountability. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities by leveraging local school districts and juvenile justice systems to institute equitable policies on discipline, safety, and justice.

### School Construction and Class Size Reduction

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that provides stable and timely financing for school construction, modernization, and safety needs; updates the square footage allocation formula, which recognizes modern educational needs and actual cost; replaces the 60 percent super-majority with a simple majority requirement for passage of school bonds; and extends the K-3 grant program.