

K-12 funding in the 2018 legislative session

WEA's Unity Agenda for 2018 includes the following goal:

Fix the flawed 2017 education funding plan, including raising the levy lid, improving the staff funding formula and passing a school construction budget

K-12 funding increases

Gov. Jay Inslee's supplemental budget proposal provides an additional \$1 billion for K-12 educator salaries, as ordered by the Washington Supreme Court in its most recent McCleary action. WEA supports the governor's supplemental budget.

It also is essential for the Legislature to pass a capital projects budget, including funding for school construction. School districts are beginning to delay much-needed construction projects.

K-12 funding fixes

WEA and other education groups have highlighted unintentional flaws in the McCleary school funding plan approved by the Washington Legislature in 2017. The 60-day supplemental budget session is an ideal and appropriate time to fix those flaws. Among the needed fixes that WEA supports:

- If the Legislature follows Gov. Inslee's lead and substantially increases salary funding as required by the Supreme Court, then remove temporary restrictions on negotiated salary increases scheduled to go into effect in 2018-19.
- Change the new salary regionalization system to smooth salary funding differences between neighboring districts. (The new regionalization system provides some districts with more funding for educator salaries based on the cost of housing beginning next year.)
- Include teacher experience and education level in the certificated salary allocation formula for districts with above-average staff experience and education. An additional 8 percent in salary funding for those districts would help. (The new formula, which has not gone into effect yet, provides the same state salary allocation for every teacher, without taking into consideration the actual cost of teacher salaries in a district. That leaves districts with teachers who have above-average experience and education at a disadvantage.)
- Modify scheduled limits on voter-approved school levies to provide school districts with additional flexibility to meet local students' needs. Many school districts have expressed concern the new levy caps are too low and must be raised.

