



**WEA OurVoice update, March 9, 2018**

## **Students, educators win big this legislative session**

Because of WEA members' tireless advocacy, we are coming out of the 2018 legislative session with multiple and meaningful wins for students, educators and public education.

"Thanks to the hard work and persistence of WEA members, we've won billions of dollars in new funding for education – mainly for competitive salaries so we can continue attracting and keeping caring, qualified and committed educators for our students," said Kim Mead, WEA president.

"Now is our opportunity to join together and negotiate substantial pay raises for all of our members – K-12 certificated staff, education support professionals and higher education faculty members."

Remember two years ago when we said, "It's time?" Well, now "It's our time." After years of underfunding and falling behind, and in the face of a serious shortage of teachers and other school employees, now is the time for our locals to push their school districts for competitive professional salaries as ordered by the Supreme Court and intended by the Legislature.

The 2018 legislative session ended March 8, and in addition to increased funding for salaries, we achieved many of our Unity Agenda goals for students, educators and retirees.

Here's a high-level view of how our [2018 Unity Agenda](#) fared. *Many of these wins are a direct result of the new pro-union, pro-public education majority in the state Senate.*

### **United for higher education employees**

- **Passed:** Full and equal collective bargaining rights for community and technical college faculty. The freedom to negotiate fair pay is a fundamental union right and has been a top WEA priority for more than a decade.

### **United for K-12 classified and certificated employees**

- **Passed:** \$1 billion to fund salaries in the 2018-19 school year to comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary order. WEA has supported the McCleary case from the start, more than 10 years ago.

- **Passed:** 4 percent increase in salary allocations for districts whose teachers have above-average experience, beginning in 2019.
- **Passed:** The time line for minimum employment standards for paraeducators has been extended by one year to Sept. 1, 2019.

#### **United for aspiring educators**

- **Passed:** More money for state need grants

#### **United for retired educators**

- **Passed:** 1.5 percent COLA on the first \$25,000 of income for Plan 1 Retirees.
- **Passed:** Increase in Medicare subsidies to \$168, up from \$150.

#### **United for our students**

- **Passed:** Expanded access to college financial aid for DACA students.

#### **Other new funding highlights include:**

- \$27 million for special education
- \$4.4 million for a new 6 percent regionalization factor for school districts abutting another regionalized school district that receives a regionalization factor of 12 percent or more.
- A two-year hold harmless revenue provision for school districts that would otherwise receive a net reduction in funding because of last year's funding plan.

The WEA Governmental Relations Team will be providing more detailed session information soon. Visit [www.washingtonea.org/ourvoice/](http://www.washingtonea.org/ourvoice/) for updates.