

Build equitable supports for each student to accelerate learning

WEA Legislative Priorities for 2022 Session

Washington's educators are rising to the challenge of meeting our students' needs from early learning to higher education with creativity, flexibility, and dedication, regardless of what the pandemic brings. But now the more than 18 months of adaptation are taking a toll on our school and college communities, laying bare inequities and resource gaps that we have an urgent and unique opportunity to address.

Our students are arriving in classrooms with more acute mental, physical, and social-emotional health needs. We have implemented new supports and new flexibility for students that begin to address the pandemic challenges; it's time to bolster those innovations and recognize the permanent need for those, and more.



Support robust, equitable COVID recovery for students and schools.

- Continue to provide resources to enable schools and colleges to meet COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.
- Substantially expand mental and physical health supports in schools by increasing prototypical school funding for positions that address whole child needs and by ensuring that small and rural school allocations provide meaningful resources to accomplish this work.
- Increase community connections to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate supports for students and families.
- Continue to implement and expand access to financial aid and housing and nutrition stability for students and their families.



Ensure our schools and colleges are welcoming, safe, and engaging teaching and learning environments for all.

- Continue efforts to dismantle institutional racism and meet the needs of every student in Washington schools and colleges.
- Devote meaningful resources to the implementation of ethnic studies and Since Time Immemorial curricula.
- Provide additional caring, qualified staff in education support roles who can provide multi-tiered systems of support for students' academic, behavioral, and mental health needs.

- Create partnerships with community-based organizations to bring more culturally relevant services and supports to students and families.
- Engage and elevate student and community voices.
- Expand restorative justice models to promote social-emotional growth and positive relationship-building in schools.
- Create additional pathways and flexibility to demonstrate the learning needed for graduation.
- Recruit and retain a more diverse workforce.
- Allocate funding equitably to target the highest poverty schools.



Provide our schools with the resources they need to meet each student's needs.

- Update education funding and policies to ensure that districts and colleges have the resources and flexibility they need to provide equitable learning opportunities for each student.
- Fully fund special education.
- Provide the financial supports needed to drive recruitment and retention, including updating COLAs for inflation impacts, creating more tenure track positions, and providing pay parity for part time faculty.
- Address school districts' challenges with levy equalization and other levy changes.
- Provide a dignified retirement for educators by ensuring a reasonable cost of living increase for all retirees and by addressing rising retiree health care costs.
- Fix our upside-down tax code by implementing policies that raise progressive revenue.

