

Weekly Legislative Update: Education

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Bills Needing Action This Week

We will be watching all our bills to see if they pass their policy committees by February 21. Some come with high costs and may not make it into the budget.

Bills We Support

SB 5102 Concerning School Library Information and Technology Programs. This bill would ensure every board of directors provide resources and materials for the operation of a school library information and technology program so that every student has access to the program. Left from last Session and **still in Senate Rules. Probably dead.**

HB 1109 Providing Funding for School Districts for Special Education. This bill would provide funding for public schools to conduct evaluations for special education and to develop individualized education programs for eligible students during the summer. Left from last session and **still in House Rules. Probably dead.**

HB 1956/SB 5923 Addressing Fentanyl and Other Substance Use Prevention Education. Fentanyl and other opioid prevention education delivered through health classes or other discretionary programs must be provided to as many seventh and ninth grade students as possible during the remainder of the 2024-25 school year, and annually to seventh and ninth grade students thereafter. **SB 5923 didn't make it out of committee. HB 1956 passed the House and had a hearing in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee on Feb. 15.**

HB 2180/SB 6014 Increasing the Special Education Enrollment Funding Cap. This would increase funding from 15% to 17.25%. **SB 6014 didn't make it out of committee. HB 2180 passed the House on Feb. 13 and referred to the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee.**

SB 5882/HB 1960 Increasing prototypical school staffing to better meet student needs. This would phase in additional staff allocations for paraeducators, office support staff, and non-instructional aides in the prototypical school funding model. More still needs to be done. **HB 1960 is dead, but SB 5882 passed the Senate and had a hearing in House Appropriations on Feb.15.**

SB 5953 Concerning Financial Aid Grants for Incarcerated Students. This provides education resources for incarcerated students. **Was passed by the Senate on Feb. 8, and a vote will be taken by the House Post-Secondary Education & Workforce Committee on Feb. 20 or 21.**

SHB 2494 Increasing state funding for operating costs in schools. The MSOC (materials, supplies and operating per pupil amounts defined in the prototypical formulas would be updated and include a \$23 per pupil increase, from \$1,519.04 to \$1,542.04 per pupil. **It passed the House and has a hearing in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Feb. 19 at 1:30 pm.**

SB 5873 Providing Adequate and Predictable Student Transportation. This bill would authorize another year studying/gathering data on this issue, but would not provide adequate funding currently. **It passed the Senate and was referred to House Appropriations.**

Bills We Are Watching

SB 5964/HB 2058 Increasing Student Access to Free Meals Served at Public Schools. This bill would provide breakfast and lunch without charge to any requesting students. **Neither HB 2058 nor SB 5964 made it out of committee. Dead again this session.**

Bills We Oppose

HB 1897/SB 5809 Concerning Enrichment Funding for Charter Public Schools. Voters, who are represented by elected school boards, vote to approve enrichment levies. There is no process or ability for charter school parents to do this. **SB 5809 was heard by Ways & Means on Feb. 2. HB 1897 was heard by House Appropriations on Feb. 1. Neither passed out of committee.**

How You Can Be Involved

- If you are interested in a particular bill, use the links above to go to the webpage for that bill. These pages include staff summaries and reports including who testified PRO versus CON on the bill. There is also information about how to access videos of hearings that have been held.
- Read and take action through the **LWVWA Legislative Action Newsletter**, distributed each Sunday during the legislative session.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Please direct questions or comments to **Catherine Ahl** (360-697-7924), Education Issue Chair.