

Weekly Legislative Update: Education

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Priority Bills Needing Action This Week

Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, **so please leave the “Organization” box blank.** A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

HB 1630 Makes it unlawful to carry a firearm onto facilities being used for official meetings of a school district board of directors. This would also apply to city, town, county and other municipality buildings being used for public meetings. Public meetings need to be safe for elected officials, community members and students.

⚠ This bill will be heard in the House Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee on Wednesday, Jan. 12 at 10 am. **Please sign in as Pro** at

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=House&mId=29362&aId=143748&cald=1848&tId=3>

HB 1664 Adds additional nurses to the prototypical school funding model. This will help somewhat with students' mental and emotional needs.

⚠ This bill will be heard in the House Education Committee on Thursday, Jan. 13 at 1:30 pm.

Please sign in as Pro at

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=House&mId=29407&aId=143579&cald=18510&tId=3>

SB 5595 Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support staff, plus increases the number of school nurses. This seems to cover more support staff than HB 1664.

⚠ **Please sign in as Pro** at

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=Senate&mId=29366&aId=143726&cald=18435&tId=3>

SB 5537 Changes compulsory school attendance to include children five, six, and seven years of age. Washington is the only state that requires school attendance beginning with children who are eight years of age. LWVWA has supported this change for many years.

⚠ **Please sign in as Pro** at

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=Senate&mId=29367&aId=143730&cald=18466&tId=3>

Bills We Support

[HB 1590](#) / [SB 5563](#) Enrollment stabilization funding for local school levies to address enrollment declines due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[HB 1630](#) Makes it unlawful to carry a firearm onto facilities being used for official meetings of a school district board of directors. This would also apply to city, town, county and other municipality buildings being used for public meetings.

[HB 1664](#) Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support in schools by increasing the number of school nurses.

[HB 1723](#) Closes the digital equity divide by increasing the accessibility and affordability of telecommunication services, devices, and training.

[SB 5497](#) Extends voting authority to student members on the state board of education.

[SB 5537](#) Changes compulsory school attendance to include children five, six, and seven years of age. Washington is the only state that requires school attendance beginning with children who are eight years of age. LWVWA has supported this change for many years.

[SB 5595](#) Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support staff, plus additional increases of the number of school nurses.

[SB 5630](#) Expands the program of basic education to include early learning. Early learning would be phased in for three and four year-olds starting in the 2026-27 school year and making it an entitlement by the 2029-30 school year. LWVWA has had a position that basic education should include birth to five years. This is a start.

Bills We Oppose

[HB 1591](#) Provides access to local enrichment funding for charter schools. Funding for school districts is provided through levies approved by the voters, which doesn't include extra state funding for charter schools.

[HB 1633](#) Family Empowerment Scholarship Program would provide vouchers for homeschooling or private schools. Public funding should go to the public schools as the Constitution requires.

How You Can Be Involved

- During the legislative session we will send Action Alerts in the [Legislative Newsletter](#). Please respond to these, which will direct you to an application to facilitate communicating with your legislators on an important vote in committees or on the chamber floor.

- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have education teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Catherine Ahl, Education Issue Chair, cahl@lwwva.org.