

WASHINGTON STATE PTA

Issue Guide



Prepared for the 2009 WSPTA Legislative Assembly

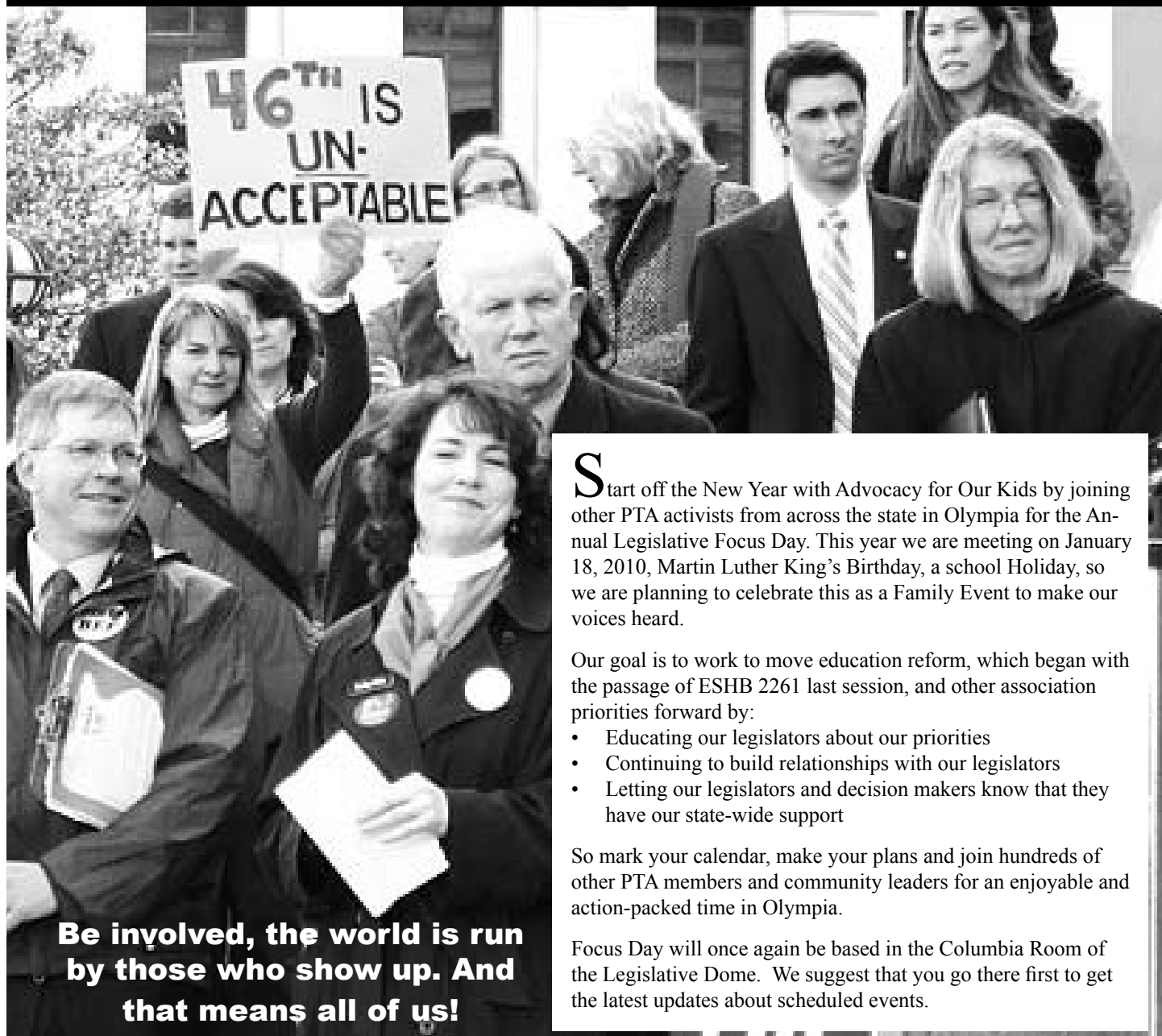
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PTA[®]

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Focus Day 2010

in Olympia



**Be involved, the world is run
by those who show up. And
that means all of us!**

Start off the New Year with Advocacy for Our Kids by joining other PTA activists from across the state in Olympia for the Annual Legislative Focus Day. This year we are meeting on January 18, 2010, Martin Luther King's Birthday, a school Holiday, so we are planning to celebrate this as a Family Event to make our voices heard.

Our goal is to work to move education reform, which began with the passage of ESHB 2261 last session, and other association priorities forward by:

- Educating our legislators about our priorities
- Continuing to build relationships with our legislators
- Letting our legislators and decision makers know that they have our state-wide support

So mark your calendar, make your plans and join hundreds of other PTA members and community leaders for an enjoyable and action-packed time in Olympia.

Focus Day will once again be based in the Columbia Room of the Legislative Dome. We suggest that you go there first to get the latest updates about scheduled events.

SAVE THE DATE!
January 18, 2010

Look for additional information on the WSPTA website: www.wastatepta.org.

For questions, contact the WSPTA office at (253) 565-2153

Washington State PTA 2009 Issue Guide

August 25th, 2009

Welcome to the 2009 Washington State PTA Legislative Issues Guide.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Washington State PTA Legislative and Public Policy Advocacy Program. Each year PTA members work with educators, administrators, policymakers, and government officials to promote effective legislative and public policy changes that benefit our children.

This year will mark our 31st Legislative Assembly event, thanks to the continued participation of our active and passionate membership!

To update you on changes to our platform development process, last year WSPTA changed our issue cycle to align with the two year bill cycle which is followed by the legislature. Issues that were approved by last year's delegates will remain on the platform and retain their rank order this year. Four new issues have been submitted by members and approved for your consideration. These will be debated and prioritized by our voting delegates. If approved by delegates, these new issues will be added to the end of the current platform. There are also amendments being proposed for two current platform issues. If approved, amendment proposals will replace current issue statements. These replacements will retain their ranking from last year. These are the logistics of the new program. More important to the association, the new two year Legislative/Advocacy cycle enables us to focus two years on our priorities, giving more time to accomplish the goals set by our membership.

The focus of the Assembly this year will be on education, training and advocacy preparation regarding our current platform, including important updates and planning for next steps. To acknowledge the wide range of experience of advocates who attend Legislative Assembly (40% are first timers) we will include clear identification of those classes geared for either novice or advanced advocates. It is our hope that offering these options will allow both those who are new to Legislative Assembly and those who are seasoned advocates the ability to learn new skills to take back to their communities.

We will also review and reconfirm our Legislative Principles, or overarching themes, previously known as our long term platform. One amendment to the Legislative Principles is being proposed. Information about this has been included in this packet and will be presented to the delegates for approval.

Resolutions, our longer term association positions, may be presented at both Convention and Legislative Assembly. No new resolutions are proposed for this Legislative Assembly. The deadline for proposals for our annual state convention is November 15. The form is available on our website.

Changes to Legislative Assembly are a direct result of our membership feedback, and process improvement efforts led by our Legislation and Resolution Committees. We hope that you will take advantage of this unique and exciting opportunity to begin or to continue advocating on behalf of the children of Washington State.

Our focus is Everychild, One Voice – Our membership brings passion, and heart to this effort every year. It is centered around something we all care a great deal about, our children. This is what makes our organization stand apart from others and you are what makes this organization great!

On behalf of the WSPTA Legislation and Resolution Committees, Thank you!

Jeanette Muck,
WSPTA Legislative Director

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Current Issue Platform

Approved by delegates to the 2008 Legislative Assembly

For information about progress made on these issues during the 2009 Legislative Session see discussion beginning on page 5 of the 2009 Legislative End of Session Report at www.wastatepta.org/advocacy/session_0809/index.html

TOP FIVE PRIORITY ISSUES

1

Basic Education Funding:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that strive to redefine and appropriately fund a new basic education system in accordance with the demands of education reform and our global economy. 2. that support a new definition of Basic Education focused on improving student outcomes, instead of inputs such as seat time. 3. which focus on meeting the needs of all children according to their individual potential and in alignment with their personal goals 4. that increase the transparency, flexibility, equity and accountability of the entire system.

2

Strengthening Math and Science Curriculum and Education:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that strengthen math and science education by 1) providing students access to curricula that has clear examples and explanations, aligns with the new WA math and science standards and national math panel recommendations which include a focused, coherent progression that emphasizes key topics to prepare students for success in authentic algebra and geometry and simultaneously develops conceptual understanding; computational fluency in basic number facts, standard algorithms, and fractions; and problem-solving skills. Parent involvement in all phases of math/science curriculum adoption is critical. 2) implementing initiatives to attract, train, and retain qualified math/science teachers 3) providing students who are able to excel in math/science opportunities to advance quickly.

3

Washington State Assessment System Improvements:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that improve the Washington State Assessment System to make it more efficient and focused on student learning, while preserving high standards. This shall be accomplished by requiring the assessment system to 1) provide nationally comparable individual student progress data, 2) provide diagnostic assessments to determine student needs, 3) measure individual student growth in a manner that is reliable and valid, 4) provide results quickly so that they can be used to guide instruction during the current school year. The assessment system must also be cost and time efficient, while continuing to meet education testing requirements from the federal government.

4

Support State Board of Education CORE 24 Framework:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that endorse the Core 24 framework proposed by the State Board of Education. This proposal is contingent upon the provision of adequate, sustainable, supplemental funding from the State.

5

Support Rational Approaches to Teacher Compensation:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that 1. eliminate outdated inequities based on the grandfathering that occurred when the current salary schedule was adopted. 2. promote teacher compensation agreements that have sufficient resources and flexibility to recruit and retain highly qualified profes-

sionals 3. base realistic pay on comparables considering state labor market factors, plus characteristics that have been demonstrated to contribute to improved student outcomes.

SUPPORTED ISSUES:

6

Creating a School Safety Zone:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that increase the penalties for felony or registered crimes committed against children within school district designated walking zones, and within 100 feet of bus stops. Crimes to include Luring, Stalking, Communication with a Minor for Immoral Purposes, Indecent Exposure with Sexual Intent to a Minor, and all sex crimes or violent crimes.

7

Autism Insurance Parity:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that phase in health insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

8

School Emergency Preparedness:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that that strengthen the level of emergency preparedness in our schools by requiring hands-on emergency training for staff members, as well as providing clear guidelines requiring schools to have on hand emergency supplies and equipment, as recommended by the American Red Cross, FEMA, and other state and national Emergency Management experts. Such legislation must include the funding necessary for schools to meet these requirements. Funding for training and emergency supplies and equipment must be included.

9

School Traffic Safety:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that mandate the creation of posted school speed zones on any highway, road, or street adjacent to a public school and shall require counties

and incorporated cities/towns to post standardized advance warning signs that must include the word "School". In addition, local government, not public school districts shall be required to pay for the installation and maintenance of traffic safety devices for school zones.

10

Training for School Nurses:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that seek to provide state funding for regional training and support for school nurses through the regional Educational Service District and School Nurse Corps infrastructure. School nurses have to practice independently in non-medical settings. The practice is unique and complex. New school nurses need specific orientation and mentoring to quickly and competently practice in schools. With the rapidity of change in school health services, all school nurses across Washington State need ongoing training and support.

11

Firearm Violence Prevention:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that promote the safe storage of firearms to help curb unsupervised access to firearms by children or adolescents and encourage firearm violence prevention in school health programs.

12

Conditional Scholarships:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide links between state conditional college scholarships and loan repayment with federal conditional scholarship and loan repayment programs. Both programs provide scholarship and loan repayment in exchange of teaching service in Washington State's public K-12 schools in high-need areas – including high-need areas of teaching, such as special education, math, science and teachers with bilingual abilities and high-need districts of the state. These two programs should be linked to maximize the benefit of state dollars.

ISSUE 1: AMENDMENT TO BASIC EDUCATION FUNDING

Issue Statement

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that advance the Education Finance reform legislation, ESHB 2261, passed in 2009, and restore both the early learning component and the highly capable safety net to include:

1. the formation of the Funding Working group report with recommendations due by December 1, 2009;
2. the formation of the K-12 Data Governance Group with initial report due by November 5, 2009 and follow up by Sept. 1, 2010;
3. the completion of the accountability proposal by the State Board of Education with report due by December 1, 2009;
4. the completion of work charged to the Professional Educator Standards Board to address teacher standards and certification with initial recommendations due January, 1, 2010 and subsequent reports in 2011;
5. the formation and preliminary report answering specified questions of the Quality Education Council by January 1, 2010;
6. the addition of targeted early learning to the definition of basic education;
7. the addition of a highly capable safety net process for districts that can demonstrate significant need.

Issue Submitted by

John Stokes, Byron Shutz, Corrine Patten, Janis Traven, Nancy Hartnell, Leigh Stokes, Dennis Gerlitz, Shelley Kloba, Anne Moore, Brooke Valentine, Carol Stamper, Jody Mull, Leah Gillis, Patty Betz, Nancy Campi, Kirsten Taniguchi, Chad Magendanz, DeeDee Loberg, Cathy Renner, Pat Montgomery, Deborah Parsons, Sherry Krainick, Stacey Riley, Lisa Layer Brunken, Julie Wright, Mark Laurel, Suzanne Weaver, Marianne Kersten, Pam Deming, Kathleen Reynolds, Gayle Hickey, Alison Meryweather, Heidi Bennett, Dawn McCravey, Ramona Hattendorf, Stowe Sprague, Liz Piekarczyk, Pam Teal

Explanation Statement:

ESHB 226, enacted during the 2009 legislative session, put us on the path towards addressing the basic education funding issue approved by our members at the 2008 Legislative Assembly. This proposed issue amendment would completely replace the 2008 issue statement, to reflect the new focus of the work, which is now being led by a variety of state agencies. Bullets 1-5 outline the work groups which are scheduled to follow up on both the design and phase in of the new system. Though the title will remain the same, it is an oversimplification of the proposal. The new system is about more than funding. The proposal would phase in program enhancements and funding with the goal to provide all students with the opportunity for success in today's world. Each work group was designed to address an important facet of the equation to ensure that we make progress towards this goal.

Bullets 6-7 speak to two pieces of the final legislation that were vetoed by the Governor. The amendment is advocating that these ideas be revisited by both the legislature and the Governor as important elements of the reform efforts.

Staff Analysis:

Important progress was made during the 2009 session to address our top priority issue. Achieving significant education reform legislation, in one session, which sets the stage for complete phase in of a new program of education by 2018, was truly historic. However, this was just the first step in a long journey...now the real work begins. Agencies must take the legislative direction and with stakeholder input, translate it into workable policies.

New work groups have just been formed to develop these policies. Significant initial reports are due from each group from November 2009 to January 1, 2010. Each group will need to come up with a plan and coordinate their planning with the oversight group, the Quality Education Council. The importance of coordination and communication between the work groups and the Quality Education Council (QEC) can not be overstated. This body consists of key legislators and agency leaders, who will control the timeline and content of implementation of the various interrelated proposals.

Although some legislative proposals which may further develop this issue are likely, most of our attention with regard to this issue will be on the state agencies and

work groups established in ESHB 2261. This type of lobbying is considered at least as important as lobbying the legislature. PTA advocates will need to be engaged with the progress of this ongoing work to ensure both quality and timely completion.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

This amended Issue statement is designed to focus the WSPTA on the completion of the work begun with the adoption of ESHB 2261, recognizing: (1) The great strides made by the Legislature in the 2009 session with the signing into law of ESHB 2261 expanding the definition of basic education and setting forth transformative goals for achieving a new basic education system in accordance with the demands of education reform and our global economy; (2) the fact that the WSPTA has had the issue of Basic Education Funding for the last three years as its number one issue, and historically; and (3) the great importance full implementation of this transformative legislation will have on the level of education of every child in the public schools of the State.

The WSPTA must continue to focus its efforts on the implementation of this bill given that it is a framework for the future, not a static bill. The amended issue is designed to set out the work to be started or accomplished

by the Legislature and/or the Quality Education Council and the four Workgroups, as well as several State agencies in 2009-10 as the first part of full implementation of this landmark legislation by 2018. Unless the parents, through WSPTA on behalf of the children of this State, speak up and are as engaged in the implementation as we were in the passage of the bill, the promise of decades of work to redefine and fully fund basic education will not be fulfilled.

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

The views expressed in this statement do not necessarily represent those of the legislation committee, but are provided as alternative viewpoints, to help you evaluate this issue.

By striking out the entire #1 issue from 2008-09 and replacing it with this new issue, we may be focusing too narrowly on HB 2261, the bill addressing this our original issue, which was enacted during the 2009 session. While this bill addressed many of our goals, the final version was watered down substantially compared to earlier versions. As work continues regarding education reform at both the state and national levels, it would be wise for us to keep our broader goals in place.

ISSUE 2: AMENDMENT TO SUPPORT RATIONAL APPROACHES TO TEACHER COMPENSATION

Issue Statement

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that advance the achievement of the stated goals of ESHB 2261 relating to teacher standards, certification and compensation to include:

1. the completion of work charged to the Professional Educator Standards board to adopt performance standards for effective teaching and continuous student improvement, calibrated for each level of certification and along the entire continuum; to continue work on the Professional Certification assessments; to develop a definition of master teacher that includes teachers with National Board certification; to recommend a proposal for a classroom-based means of evaluating student-teacher effectiveness which includes multiple measures of performance;
2. the formation of the Compensation work group by the Office of Financial Management in July, 2011 to recommend the details of an enhanced salary allocation model that aligns educator development and certification with compensation.

Issue Submitted by

John Stokes, Byron Shutz, Corrine Patten, Janis Traven, Nancy Hartnell, Leigh Stokes, Dennis Gerlitz, Shelley Kloba, Anne Moore, Brooke Valentine, Carol Stamper, Jody Mull, Leah Gillis, Patty Betz, Nancy Campi, Kirsten Taniguchi, Chad Magendanz, DeeDee Loberg, Cathy Renner, Pat Montgomery, Deborah Parsons, Sherry Krainick, Stacey Riley, Lisa Layer Brunken, Julie Wright, Mark Laurel, Suzanne Weaver, Marianne Kersten, Pam Deming, Kathleen Reynolds, Gayle Hickey, Alison Meryweather, Heidi Bennett, Dawn McCravey, Ramona Hattendorf, Stowe Sprague, Liz Piekarczyk, Pam Teal

Explanation Statement:

ESHB 2261 addresses teacher certification and compensation reform by asking that the Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB) complete their work on professional development and certification issues first. The work of the PESB to address these issues is also cited in the proposed amendment to education funding. In a second phase, which is scheduled to begin in July, 2011, the Office of Financial Management will begin work to address teacher compensation. The rationale is that the work to describe the teacher induction, certification and professional development requirements across their career spans needs to be completed prior to addressing changes to the current compensation schedule. Again, the rationale for proposing changes is to improve student outcomes.

Staff Analysis:

This issue proposal updates and completely replaces the issue approved by our delegates to the 2008 Legislative Assembly to reflect the passage of ESHB 2261. Research has shown that there is a strong correlation between teacher quality and student learning. The

challenge becomes figuring out how to provide quality teachers in every classroom every day, recognize outstanding teachers and promote teacher collaboration. Professional development, certification requirements, and compensation schedules are factors that the state can influence as we try to improve teacher quality.

During the 2009 Legislative session, we saw that attempts to address these issues at the legislative level generated intense opposition from the teacher's union. Now the conversation moves to the agency level, with the formation of the two work groups. These are the next logical venues for our lobbying efforts. Given the challenges we have faced, child advocates will need to continue to not only make our voices heard, but also grow our advocacy capacity, during this lengthy process of reform, if we are to achieve our goal of helping all kids achieve at higher levels in preparation for today's world.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

This amended issue statement is designed to focus the WSPTA on the goals and steps toward fulfilling the promise of education reform and transformation begun with the adoption of ESHB 2261 specifically in the vitally important aspect of having effective teachers in every classroom.

The efforts of the Teacher Compensation Work Group and of the Professional Teacher Standards Board are key components of the overall education reform. It will be extremely important for the WSPTA to provide an ongoing parent voice in the deliberations and design

of a new way of providing teachers with incentives and resources so they can become the excellent and effective teachers our children need. We need to make sure that the parent voice and the children's needs are heard and acted upon at each step of the way, and having this amended issue statement in place will help keep us on the path toward the desired objectives.

The parent teacher relationship is in need of mending and strengthening, and by having this focus on the work of the two bodies charged with implementation of the reforms of 2261 WSPTA can exert a positive influence on the deliberations and have a framework for working with the WEA and all teachers to achieve results that increase teacher effectiveness, student achievement and teacher and parent satisfaction in the job being done for all our kids.

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

The views expressed in this statement do not necessarily represent those of the legislation committee, but are provided as alternative viewpoints, to help you evaluate this issue.

The work group which has been authorized to work on the compensation portion of Basic Education Finance Reform, is not scheduled to begin work until 2011. There is no need to focus any efforts on this part of the issue during the 2010 legislative session, as our resources and energies will be fully engaged on the work that is going on during this timeframe.



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PRE-PRINTED MEMBERSHIP CARDS \$11.00 per 100. We will print your membership cards for you. (Members must be enrolled and payment received at the WSPTA office to take advantage of this service. Unused cards previously issued to your PTA must be returned.)

"JOIN PTA" MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE \$11.00 per 100 (free for orders of 50 and under)
A professional looking brochure to advertise the benefits of PTA membership.

MEMBERSHIP ADDRESS LABELS @ \$4.00 per 100 names (A set of labels with the names and addresses of your PTA's active or inactive (or both) members. (Available only if your PTA entered members via the WSPTA online membership program.)

All prices include sales tax.




ISSUE 3: FUND EDUCATION FIRST

Issue Statement

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that fund K-12 education first. In order to implement Article IX of our state constitution which says “It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders”, K-12 education funding would be considered first in any budget process undertaken by the state legislature.

Issue Submitted by

Nancy Hartnell

Explanation Statement:

This issue is a proposal that is technical in nature; it would affect how legislators, staff and state agencies conduct their business. The proposal asks the legislature to craft and pass the K-12 education budget before considering budgets for other state level commitments, such as the environment, health and human services or corrections. By passing the K-12 education budget first, the intent is to remove education from the intense debate and compromise that happens towards the end of session when the legislature is forced to pass a balanced budget.

Staff Analysis:

This proposal is brand new for WSPTA, but has been introduced for the past four years to legislative committees, without gaining any traction. Although the idea is not aligned in concept with any political party, because the supporters in the Legislature have come largely from one political party, it is viewed by many as a partisan issue. The question becomes, should we add our voice to those who support this option for ensuring adequate funding for education, recognizing that there may be a long road to success? We have done this before. The campaign for the simple majority is the most widely recognized example. It took over 30 years for this issue to be addressed by legislation. PTA delegates will need to decide whether or not we want to engage with this issue now.

The answer may depend on whether or not members believe that this technique will actually produce the results desired. Putting “fund education first” into statute may force the legislature to develop a new attitude toward budgeting for K-12 education. By addressing K-12 education first, all eyes, including those of the public and the media, would be focused on education. However, the legislature could also circumvent this technique by

initially funding education at a bare minimum level, with the knowledge that the rest of the budget was yet to be decided.

Whether or not “fund education first” is adopted by the association, education advocates will need to continue to raise their voices and grow their advocacy activity in support of increased attention and resources for K-12 education funding.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

For many year advocates have tried to create new revenue streams for education, the question posed is why, why when the constitution is clear it's the paramount duty of the State of Washington to provide ample funding for our students would we need new revenue when instead we need to fund education first.

ESHB 2261 set the framework as a step forward, creating a new definition of basic education, but now is the time to live by the mandate, the paramount duty, to provide ample provision for basic education. It is time we fund education first, and change the culture of the legislature to be K-12 sensitive. By procedurally placing a dedicated K-12 budget at the front of the line you have made it the paramount duty. Creating a distinct separate K-12 budget passed by the legislature before appropriating monies for other programs would ensure all children in all districts had what it takes to be provided with a meaningful education.

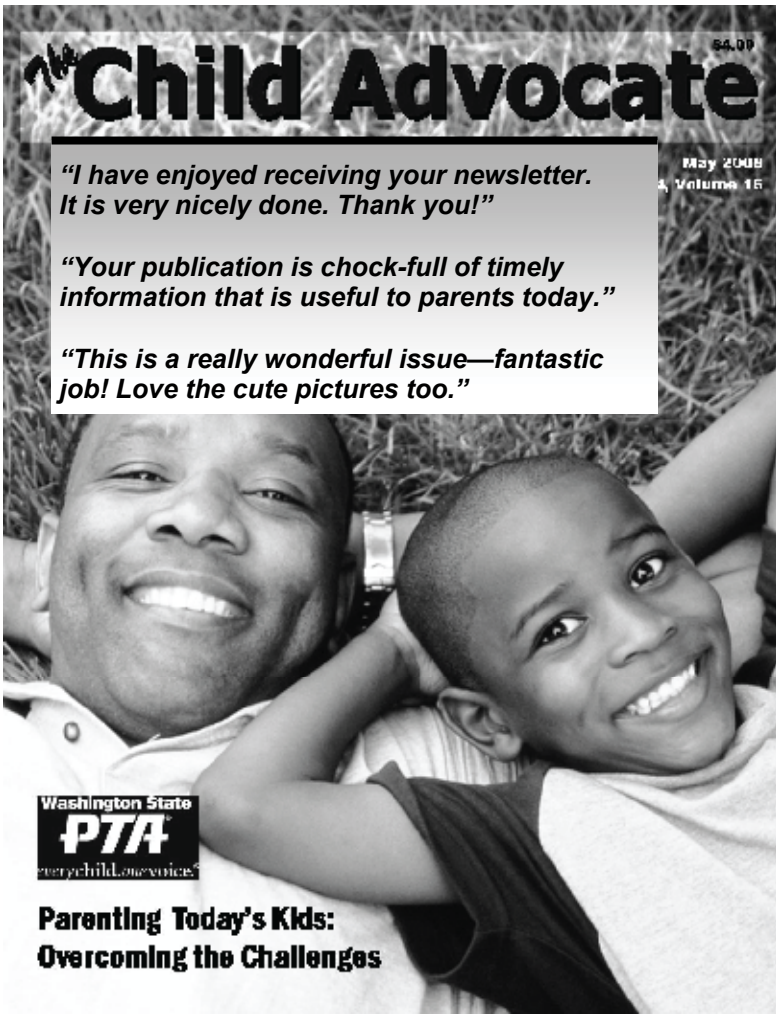
Funding education first would provide a stable, long term, funding process that forces sustainable moderate funding growth to K-12 that would be locked in. Providing a protective pot for education, would allow PTA more time to lobby for issues around the health and welfare associated with our mission statement.

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

The views expressed in this statement do not necessarily represent those of the legislation committee, but are provided as alternative viewpoints, to help you evaluate this issue.

Similar proposals have been introduced for the past several years in the legislature. They have never received enough support from policy committees to move forward. None of these bill proposals has even had a public hearing. We could make better use of our time and energy by pursuing other options.



Child Advocate

May 2008
Volume 15

"I have enjoyed receiving your newsletter. It is very nicely done. Thank you!"

"Your publication is chock-full of timely information that is useful to parents today."

"This is a really wonderful issue—fantastic job! Love the cute pictures too."

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**Parenting Today's Kids:
Overcoming the Challenges**

WSPTA's Premier Parent Involvement Magazine

The Washington State PTA is pleased to bring you our premier parent involvement magazine, "The Child Advocate," available on the Washington State PTA website. Consisting of the same timeless and practical articles that PTA members have become accustomed to over the past 18 years, "The Child Advocate" is available online to all of the 150,000 PTA members in Washington State.

As always, feel free to cut and paste articles or portions of articles from "The Child Advocate" into handouts at PTA events or in school newsletters. PTA's mission is to promote the welfare of children and youth leading to the success for every child, not just the children of PTA members, so please share the relevant parent involvement information contained in this magazine with all the families at your children's school.

Look for each new issue of "The Child Advocate" on the Washington State PTA website from September through May.

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ISSUE 4: INCREASE FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR HIGHLY CAPABLE STUDENTS

Issue Statement

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that

1. increase funding to provide for both identification and delivery of Highly Capable services for at least 3% of district enrollment.
2. ensure that districts are enabled to make decisions about their Highly Capable services in K-12.
3. ensure that small districts receive assistance to provide services.
4. amend Section 403 of ESHB 2261 to add Highly Capable professional development. Content for this training shall align with core curriculum required for Gifted Education specialty endorsement.

Issue Submitted by

Janis Traven, Heidi Bennett

Explanation Statement:

This proposal includes both policy recommendations and requests for funding enhancements to support programs that serve highly capable students. Bullet one is the most significant piece of this proposal; it addresses the finding that current funding levels do not provide for specialized professional development and program options necessary to truly serve the needs of these students. Bullet two supports the idea that local districts should continue to control how they serve their unique populations. The idea is that any new policy which referred to highly capable students would include this idea. Bullet three asks for an additional funding allocation for small districts, recognizing that they have special challenges when trying to adequately serve the needs of diverse populations. Bullet four refers to the Basic Education reform bill that was passed last session, which specified which subjects qualified for professional development funding. The request is that training for highly capable professional development be added to list of professional development programs approved for funding purposes

Staff Analysis:

The provision of highly capable programs was added to the definition of basic education during the last legislative session as part of ESHB 2261. This guarantees some level of funding from the state to serve this population. However, the current level of funding is broadly considered by the education community to be inadequate to provide appropriate services. Typically, districts that can, are currently supplementing state level funding with levy funding to provide programs.

WSPTA has consistently supported providing the necessary resources to provide an appropriate education for these students, categorizing them with other students

who have special needs. The idea is expressed in an association resolution, which was last amended in 2008 and which reads in part: "Resolved, That the Washington State PTA advocate on behalf of special needs students at the federal, state and district levels, requesting adequate funding for services needed to help all students achieve their potential". It is expected that the lobby for these issues will be active during the upcoming conversations about funding levels for prototypical schools.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

Highly Capable Education has been consistently a high priority for WSPTA for many years, culminating in its inclusion in the new definition of Basic Education. The percent allocation for Highly Capable programs, however, only allows Districts to identify, administer, and report on HC programs, but does not ensure that HC students will receive appropriate curriculum and challenge, or that their teachers will be trained to meet their unique educational needs.

Every community has students who are capable of and in need of accelerated learning. Increasing the capacity and quality of these programs statewide will benefit children across the state, who currently find themselves warehoused in school rather than continuously increasing their learning competencies and skills. We must ensure that our educational systems and reforms advance the life prospects of all students, including those students already excelling, who have great potential to make significant contributions to our society and world. These extraordinary students are found in every corner of Washington State, and represent the American dream.

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

The views expressed in this statement do not necessarily represent those of the legislation committee, but are provided as alternative viewpoints, to help you evaluate this issue.

Additional support to highly capable programs must be considered within the context of the total education funding picture. ESHB 2261, passed during the 2009 Legislative Session, asks the Quality Education Council to prioritize needs in order to phase in new funding formulas and a new program of education by 2018. At the same time the current economic recession is causing the legislature to make substantial cuts to current programs.



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Save the Date: April 30-May 2, 2010
WSPTA Convention
Doubletree Hotel, SeaTac

"We were treated to a wide variety of PTA opportunities!"
— Convention delegate

"We will review the information we gathered to uplift our PTA"
— Convention delegate

"Nonstop information was flowing and absorbed!"
— Convention delegate

"I loved it! I can't wait to come back next year!"
— Convention delegate

Join us for leadership training and to build your local unit leadership team for the upcoming year!

ISSUE 5: MUSIC AND ARTS EDUCATION

Issue Statement

Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that ensure that every child in Washington State has access to music and other arts as part of a balanced education addressing the whole child and preparing them for the critical thinking necessary for success in the work force, to include, but not be limited to:

1. comprehensive, sequential music education taught by qualified instructors, recognizing music as the basis for providing all students with substantive education in the arts;
2. programs in music and the other arts that include rigorous instruction, progress monitoring, meaningful assessment, and accountability to school officials, parents, and the community.

Issue Submitted by

Janis Traven

Explanation Statement:

This issue introduces the idea that all districts should be required to provide students with a comprehensive and sequential music program K-12. As students are allowed to take electives, they would have the option of following the entire music program and/or taking other electives. The intent is to provide sequential instruction in one of the arts. The second bullet adds the ideas that other courses will be offered beyond music and that all arts courses should be rigorous and meaningful.

Staff Analysis:

This is a new issue for PTA. To our knowledge, this issue has not been discussed in the legislature or amongst education advocates. Connections would need to be made and education provided to build a coalition in support of this proposal.

The current focus of the state has been to develop K-12 arts standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs). The standards have been around for many years. Grade level expectations are being piloted right now and are due to be released by OSPI next January. The GLEs do not include this comprehensive idea with regard to one of the arts. The guidelines will describe what students should be able to do, by grade level, when they have completed courses in dance, music, theatre and visual arts. Proposed GLE documents are available on the OSPI website now for your review. Staff consulted with an arts administrator at OSPI as to whether or not it would make sense to offer a complete sequential program in music. The answer was that if we were to choose an art for a sequential program, music would make the most logical choice, because districts already offer more programming in music than they do in other arts.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

A study in the Arts Education Partnership's Critical Links (<http://aep-arts.org/files/publications/CriticalLinks.pdf> pp. 142-147) helps confirm the relationship between music study and performance on standardized mathematics tests. The analysis adds substance to the widely publicized correlation between music and SAT scores. The study also provides additional support for the hypothesis that the increases in mathematics scores are not simply correlational, but are due to the music instruction. A meta-analysis of six experimental studies revealed a causal relationship between music and mathematics performance.

In addition, music develops skills needed by the 21st century workforce:

- critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, team work, and more
- Keeps students engaged in school and less likely to drop out
- Improves the atmosphere for learning
- Helps students achieve in other academic subjects like math, science and reading
- Helps communities share ideas and values among cultures and generations

Is a disciplined human endeavor with intrinsic value to society

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

The views expressed in this statement do not necessarily represent those of the legislation committee,

but are provided as alternative viewpoints, to help you evaluate this issue.

Requiring districts to offer comprehensive music education in schools could force them to shift resources from core academic subject areas or from other popular electives. Additional funding may also be necessary for instructional staff, classroom space and equipment. Any new mandate such as this would need to be subject to adequate funding by the state.

ESHB 2261, passed during the 2009 Legislative Session asks the Quality Education Council to prioritize needs in order to phase in new funding formulas and a new program of education by 2018. At the same time the current economic recession is causing the Legislature to make substantial cuts to current programs. During these tough economic times, when cuts are being made to established programs, it is premature to ask for funding for new initiatives.



WSPTA Leadership Resources Available Online

In the "Members Only" section of the Washington State PTA website you will find resources available exclusively to PTA members. This page contains PTA & the Law Resources, Leadership Packet materials, Money Matters, and a variety of resources for PTA officers and members. To access the members only site, your log-on is **PTAmember** and password is **leader**. Please email support@wastatepta.org or call the State PTA office at 1-800-562-3804.

Some of the items that can be downloaded:

- 2009-2010 Leadership Packet
- WSPTA Uniform Bylaws
- Award forms
- IRS filing instructions
- Suggested standing rules
- Email communications resources
- Online enrollment instructions
- and much more...

Washington State
PTA
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ISSUE 6: WEIGHTED GPA

Issue Statement

Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that replaces

WAC 392-415-050, which defines an unweighted GPA (grade point average), with a new law defining a weighted GPA. The current 4.0 GPA would continue for the standard high school curriculum, while introducing a weighted scale for all Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit and honors (H) classes.

For all AP, IB and dual credit classes:

A=5.0, B=4.0, C=3.0, D=2.0, E/F=0

For honors classes:

A=4.5, B=3.5, C=2.5, D=1.5

For standard high school classes:

A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, D=1.0, E/F =0

Issue Submitted by

Susan Wynne, (primary)

Karin Duval

Explanation Statement:

Currently Washington Administrative Code requires that school districts use a five point grade scale for all classes. A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, D=1.0, E/F=0

This proposal would alter the scale for some students by increasing grades by one half point for those students participating in honors classes, or a full point for those in AP, IB or dual credit classes. The intent is to recognize course difficulty in the grade scale. By giving additional weight to more advanced classes in the grade scale, class rank is also impacted.

Staff Analysis:

This is the first time that this issue has been brought to our attention. We have not heard it discussed amongst our education partners or in the legislature, so we really do not know whether other stakeholders would support, oppose or be silent about this proposal. Support for this proposal can be found in Resolution 18.22, which speaks to the need to advocate for children with special needs.

The current grade point scale is described in an administrative rule governed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). If this passes, we would lobby OSPI, which is the decision-making entity which would address any proposed changes to this rule.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by issue submitter(s)

The current grading system affects the decisions made by our high school students as well as the opportunities that they receive upon graduation. The rigor of the curriculum available to our high school students has gradually increased through the years, while the grading system has not kept pace. The top universities in this country expect students to take the most rigorous curriculum that their high school offers, while also selecting students who primarily rank in the top ten percent of their high school classes.

According to WA state administrative code, all the high schools must use an unweighted GPA however; WA administrative code does not specify how class rank is to be calculated. Thus, some WA state high schools have switched to a system of weighted class rank, while most have not.

From the unweighted GPA flows the problem of the unweighted class rank. An unweighted class rank fails to properly represent the academic achievement of the students. Class rank is one of the academic indicators reported on college and scholarship applications and appears to be a significant factor in the admissions process.

To resolve these problems, Two Thirds of the high schools in the United States have already switched to a weighted GPA and class rank. Please help change our grading system to properly encourage and support our students!

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:

provided by the Legislation Committee

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Alternative: The current rule was put in place in an at-

tempt to standardize grading across the state; prior to its adoption 25 years ago, students who had performed similarly in school could have substantially different grade point averages because their schools used different scales. Further, this proposal only affects the students in each district who take or consider taking AP or honors classes. Individual schools and districts can address the concerns underlying this issue by computing class standings using a formula that gives higher values to those classes



BE ON THE FRONT LINE OF CHILD ADVOCACY

Sign Up For WSPTA Communication Tools

The WSPTA is the largest grassroots child advocacy organization in Washington State. We strongly encourage and request your participation in the valuable advocacy work the WSPTA does to enhance the lives of children.

Sign up for one or more of our Legislative Listserv's and get connect with your WSPTA colleagues and the latest legislative news.

<http://www.wastatepta.org/advocacy/>

2008-09 Legislative Principles

Budget and Revenue

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy affecting tax policies that are fair, equitable, and provide stable, adequate revenues for public education and for programs that benefit children and youth: oppose the expansion of gambling; support the passage of state budget bills containing adequate levels of funding for child-related programs; oppose tax credits for elementary and secondary school tuition; and oppose budget policies, deficit reduction efforts, and other legislative proposals that negatively impact funding for child-related programs.

Parent and Family Involvement

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that increases parent and family involvement based on the PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement by advocating for and promoting parent involvement provisions in state legislation affecting children and youth: pre- and in-service training opportunities on Parent/Family Involvement for school personnel; employee release time for parent and community involvement; and outreach to all communities to increase awareness of the importance of parent/family involvement at every level of public policy.

Public Education Policies and Funding

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that will strengthen public education for our state's children and youth: alternative programs for all schools; K-12 class sizes aligned with best practices research findings; continued support for education reform efforts; re-defining basic education; reducing the achievement gap; promotion of early childhood education programs; alignment of P-12 and higher education requirements; restructure of education funding in Washington State; reduction of high school dropout rates; levy and bond election reform; increased state-match funding for school facilities construction and renovation; ample transportation funding; and equitable levy lids, school staff salaries, and levy equalization.

Health and Well-being of Children and Youth

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that protect and promote the health and welfare of children and youth: increased access to health care for children and youth; mental health parity; promotion of children's oral health; effective prevention and intervention programs; comprehensive medically accurate sexual health programs; school nutrition and physical fitness; services for homeless youth and children in foster care; comprehensive juvenile justice programs that focus on prevention, treatment and rehabilitation; and improvements in safety for students with life-threatening health conditions.

Safe and Nurturing Environments for Children and Youth

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that provides safe and supportive settings and climates for children and youth: anti-bullying and anti-harassment; multi-cultural education; student and parent education regarding internet safety; media education; traffic and pedestrian safety; substance abuse prevention; and safe and healthy schools which reduce environmental hazards; consistent, age-appropriate, unstructured play opportunities.

Proposed Amendment to Legislative Principles

Section 3 – Public Education Policies and Funding

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that will strengthen public education for our state's children and youth: alternative programs for all schools; K-12 class sizes aligned with best practices research findings; continued support for education reform efforts; re-defining basic education; reducing the achievement gap; promotion of early childhood education programs; alignment of P-12 and higher education requirements; restructure of education funding in Washington State; reduction of high school dropout rates; levy and bond election reform; increased state-match funding for school facilities construction and renovation; ample transportation funding; and equitable levy and local effort assistance (LEA) funding per student; and equitable lids, school staff salaries, and levy equalization.

Submitted by

Barbara Billinghamurst

Explanatory Statement:

This proposal adds to our thinking about an equitable levy and levy equalization system by introducing the idea that a new system could be developed using a more rational basis than what is used today. Currently, districts calculate their maximum levy authority by multiplying their maximum levy percentage by the combination of federal funding and state funding from the previous year. The result of this calculation is the most that they can request from their communities for the next levy cycle.

Variations in state funding, local funding, and levy authority lids, which are not necessarily based on student learning needs, have led to dissatisfaction which this formula.

Instead, this proposal suggests that levy authority could be calculated based on a per student amount which could be more rationally determined. This amount could be adjusted to account for certain factors that impact both schools and districts. These factors would need to be carefully researched and agreed upon, but could include student population factors and geographical cost differences.

Levy equalization assistance (LEA) would also focus on achieving a per student funding level. LEA could also be adjusted based on agreed upon factors. The goal is that the new program would better target and assist those districts that have lower property tax bases.

Increasing both the clarity and transparency of our funding system is also one of the major goals of this proposal.

Staff Analysis:

Proposals addressing levy lids and levy equalization assistance levels prompted heated debate during this past legislative session. The problem with the proposals was that they tinkered with a flawed system, rather offering a complete overhaul. Proposals that would have clearly favored some districts at the expense of others, did not make it through the legislative process.

The education reform legislation passed last session, ESHB 2261, does call for a work group to develop options for a new system. Part of the charge of this work group is to assure that no district suffers a decrease in overall funding due to implementation of new system. This work will begin in July of 2010, with a report due to the legislature by December 1, 2011. As this date approaches, it is important for us to start thinking about what we want the new system to look like so that we can participate in this conversation.

Statement for Adoption of Proposed Issue:
provided by issue submitter(s)

The levy and LEA system is long overdue for reform. Complex, vulnerable to variability in annual state funding, and opaque to the voters, this system is mired in both technical and anecdotal controversy which distracts from State efforts to properly fund basic education.

Local levies have been and will continue to be an essential component of the state's funding for schools. Research shows local participation/funding can be an important catalyst for advancing public education.

Under the proposed system, the state would set the same base level of levy funding per student for all districts. This base would then be clearly indexed (adjusted up or down) according to the student needs (economic status, special needs) and geographic cost differences for each district. A district would be allowed to levy local tax dollars up to its adjusted base level per student.

Similarly, LEA aid would focus on a targeted funding level per student, also indexed according to student needs and geographic profile. LEA aid would ensure that property-poor districts achieve their targeted funding level if the districts apply an average levy tax rate. LEA aid would be prorated if the district's local tax effort is less than average. Both levies and LEA would adhere to the same principles – accountability, rationality, transparency and focus on the end result – as will the Model Schools system.

Using the same base level of funding to determine districts local levy limits adjusted for districts' student needs and geographical cost differences is fairer than using levy lid percentages that vary irrationally across districts.

Statement Against Adoption of Proposed Issue:
provided by the Legislation Committee

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The Legislative Committee has recognized the need to completely redo the Legislative Principles document, due to internal inconsistencies; some principle statements are very broad, while others are much more prescriptive. This proposal would push this principle statement towards the prescriptive end of the spectrum. Until the Legislative Committee decides what it wants to do to improve this document, new proposals only add to the problem.