



Washington State  
School Directors' Association

# Legislative Update

By [Marie Sullivan](#), WSSDA Director of Governmental Relations

December 17, 2013

## Santa Baby

Governor Jay Inslee submitted his supplemental budget to the Legislature today, including \$6.4 million in new policy investments for K-12 public schools. Inslee, a Democrat, described his request as a “hold-steady budget in a get-ready year,” and said the heavy lifting would come in the 2015-17 biennial budget two sessions from now. See the TVW announcement [here](#).

The supplemental budget would include about \$60 million to support an additional 10,200 students forecasted to begin school in 2014-15, and \$11.2 million to support College Bound Scholarship students who have met the requirements or to cover savings assumptions that will not be met in this biennium. Inslee said these are “must-dos” and are part of the \$150 million needed to meet cost increases or fill holes that were not anticipated when the budget was approved six months ago. Other items on the list are prison capacity issues, wild fire costs from last season, critical IT investments, and compliance with legal settlements.

Beyond these maintenance level adjustments, the modest K-12 policy investments can be framed under three categories: support for first-year and new teachers, making sure high school works for all students, and bolstering STEM education. For an overview of the Inslee supplemental budget, please use this [link](#). The detailed summaries are found [here](#) (go to the K-12 section for education information.)

- **\$3 million** for teacher/mentor programs, which would support more than half of first-year teachers. The budget bill includes language to expand the program to all first-year teachers in the 2015-17 biennium.
- **\$2 million** for technical corrections to the 1,080 instructional hours to more fully cover costs associated with the 80-hours increase. The Governor's budget also would propose to change the 2.2222 hours per week formula by adjusting the planning time assumption for classroom teachers in the basic education funding allocation to automatically cover differences in class sizes, substitute teachers and administrative services.
- **\$495,000** to enhance science and math curriculum to support Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, of which \$150,000 would be for small grants to school districts.
- **\$400,000** to restore the pre-apprenticeship grants that were cut in the 2011-13 biennial budget. Grants are for school districts and have proven an effective way to interest certain students in family-wage careers.
- **\$300,000** to develop a curriculum framework on course equivalencies for CTE and skills centers courses with graduation credit requirements.
- **\$250,000** for small grants to school districts to reduce students from dropping out of high school.

Inslee also proposed increases to early learning and higher education. Specifically, the mid-biennium budget request would add 500 slots to the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) for low-income preschoolers, and \$400,000 for the Math and Science Achievement (MESA) program at six community colleges to backfill federal funding that expired. The Governor would invest \$1 million in the STEM Alliance, and has appointed WSSDA

Legislative Committee member Nancy Truitt Pierce (Monroe School District) to the Alliance (created under HB 1872 in 2013).

The Legislature left town June 29 – one day shy of Washington’s own version of a government shutdown – after making investments in transportation, MSOC, and full-day kindergarten for the 2013-14 school year. Lawmakers added funding (with strings) to the Learning Assistance Program and included new money for students who exit the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program. Funding was earmarked for the 2014-15 school year for smaller class sizes in grades K-1 and for an additional 1,080 hours of instruction for grades 7 through 12. That’s the funding, said budget staff, which the state will point to when describing state investments to meet McCleary in 2014.

The Inslee supplemental doesn’t go as far as advocates would like. During today’s press conference, Inslee said it was his intention to fully fund I-732 COLAs in the 2015-17 biennium. (This is the Washington Education Association’s top priority.) Superintendent Randy Dorn is requesting nearly \$500 million in the supplemental to nudge McCleary forward. “I can count votes,” said Inslee, noting that changes to the tax structure would be unlikely in the short session with a divided House and Senate.

WSSDA has prioritized keeping the pressure on funding for basic education. The agency also is seeking sponsors for legislation that would fund two days of professional development for all classroom teachers and instructional assistants, and building administrators, starting next school year. The price tag for this request is about \$30 million for each day of professional development. As a comparison, the supplemental budget would include about \$100,000 for teacher-leader training on Common Core and Next Gen Science – a drop in the bucket for this system-wide change.

Since the September and November revenue forecasts, budget negotiators Sen. Andy Hill, R-Redmond, and Rep. Ross Hunter, D-Medina, have said that beyond a few technical fixes, caseload adjustments, and corrections to assumptions made in the 2013-15 budget, any new funds should be banked for a more robust ending fund balance. Inslee’s projected ending fund balance, including the Rainy Day Fund, would be about \$810 million.

At his press conference today, Inslee stressed that new revenues would be necessary to address a backlog of unmet needs and the McCleary obligations for state education funding when lawmakers meet in 2015. He pegged the total new revenue needed at \$5 billion, saying that the state couldn’t cut its way or increase the budget inequities to meet necessary Washington services and support education for Washington students.

“The underlying budget is based on one-time solutions that aren’t sustainable,” said Inslee, who added that another 30,000 students are expected to attend Washington public schools during the 2015-17 and 2017-19 biennia. (This is above and beyond the 10,000 projected students for next school year.) “The fact is, the math just doesn’t add up for the next biennium.” Inslee said he would be working on repealing tax preference policies and exemptions that are no longer needed or have run their course as a part of the solution for new revenue.

The 2014 Legislature will convene January 13, 2014. The regular session is scheduled for 60 days.

## **Sleigh Ride**

Remember to register now for the WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference January 26 and Day on the Hill January 27 in Olympia. Go to [www.wssda.org](http://www.wssda.org) or click on [2014 Legislative Conference](#).

Sunday presentations are from 1-5 p.m., with caucus meetings and a networking reception that evening. Meetings with legislators take place Monday, mainly on the hill. Appointments are scheduled by WSSDA Legislative Committee members.

"It is critical we show a strong presence in Olympia this year, even if it is an off-budget year," said Danny Edwards, Chair of the WSSDA Legislative Committee. "This is a great opportunity to talk with our legislators about how the new investments are being used in our schools and why it is so important to stay on course with funding each year."

### **Run Rudolph Run**

Remember to review the draft accountability framework [rules proposed by the State Board of Education](#). Deadlines for public comment are quickly approaching.

Written comments must be submitted by **Friday, January 3, 2014** to Linda Drake at [linda.drake@k12.wa.us](mailto:linda.drake@k12.wa.us) or fax (360) 586-2357. Snail mail is Old Capitol Building, 600 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA, 98504.

A public hearing is scheduled for January 8, 2014 at 2:15 p.m. in Olympia at the New Market Skills Center (7299 New Market Street SW, Tumwater, WA 98501, Lecture Hall Room). The SBE is expected to adopt the rules at its business meeting January 9th. The rules would go into effect 31 days after adoption.

### **Do You Hear What I Hear**

As many of you might recall, two Senate Democrats sided with 23 Republicans to form the Majority Coalition Caucus last year. The MCC cemented its majority with Republican Jan Angel's win over incumbent Sen. Nathan Schlicher, D-Gig Harbor. Angel had been a member of the state House and is a former county commissioner.

At a [press conference last week](#), leaders of the MCC gathered to reflect on accomplishments from the past year and answer questions about 2014. The clip is about 45 minutes long, but provides good insight into what school directors and others can expect next session.

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