



## Senate & House release budget proposals

Each biennium, the House and Senate alternate as the body to introduce the first legislative budget. This biennium, it is the Senate's turn to begin the process. In a strange break from tradition, however, budget-writers in both houses released their proposals on the same day, Feb. 23. Both budgets propose to solve the state's \$2.8 billion budget problem with program reductions, use of federal funds, budget transfers and new revenue. Each budget is very different. The level and target for cuts are different; assumed federal relief is different; the amount of transfers (and the size of the ending fund balance) is different; and the estimated new revenue (and sources of that revenue) is different.

Both the Senate and House proposals make budget reductions in all areas of state government, including K-12 education. The Senate budget would cut \$838 million from the current biennial budget, including a \$214 million reduction to K-12. The House budget includes \$653 million in program reductions or eliminations, with a \$112 million cut to K-12. The House budget also includes some key funding enhancements in education.

In this issue of *Impact*, we attempt to explain the major K-12 education provisions in the Senate and House proposed budgets.

### Local Effort Assistance

Both budgets protect funding for LEA. The Senate assumes the implementation of SB 6502 (levy bases) and SB 6601 (nonresident online students), resulting in a net increase of \$1.5 million in LEA funding. The House assumes the implementation of HB 2893 (levy lids/LEA) and HB 2670 (levy bases), resulting in a \$25.3 million increase in LEA funding. Additionally, the House includes another \$7.2 million to fund the "per pupil inflator" at

four percent, rather than the current one percent. This will increase LEA funding for some districts and will allow some districts to collect additional local funds previously approved by voters.

### Basic education/education reform

The House and Senate proposals provide funding to implement legislation replacing current K-12 funding formulas with the new prototypical school funding formulas. The House includes \$2.8 million to implement HB 2776; the Senate includes \$1.7 million to implement SB 6760. Additionally, the Senate includes another \$3.6 million to implement the Race to the Top legislation, SB 6696, which would make changes to teacher and principal evaluations; change teacher tenure provisions; make changes to educator certification; and implement a new statewide education accountability system.

### Initiative 728

The final 2009-11 budget reduced the per student allocations required by Initiative 728 from \$458 per student to \$131 per student in the 2009-10 school year and \$99 per student in the 2010-11 school year. Both supplemental budget proposals eliminate the second-year funding of \$99 per student, saving \$78.5 million statewide.

### Staffing ratios

State law requires certain levels of staffing per FTE student. Currently, the law requires 49 certificated instructional staff (CIS) to 1,000 annual average FTE students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three; 46 CIS to 1,000 annual average FTE students in grades four through twelve; four certificated administrative staff to 1,000 annual average FTE students in grades

kindergarten through twelve; and 16.67 classified personnel to 1,000 average FTE students (or 60 students per one classified staff) enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve. The 2009-11 budget provides enhancements over these levels to reduce class sizes, funding 53.17 CIS per 1,000 average annual FTE students in grades kindergarten through four. Additionally, the classified staff ratio is enhanced to 58.75 students per classified staff.

The Senate budget decreases these enhancements from the current ratios of 53.17 staff per 1,000 student FTEs to 49.5 staff per 1,000 student FTEs in grades kindergarten through three and returns to the statutorily-required level of 46 staff per 1,000 student FTEs in grade four, saving \$102.9 million. The Senate budget also eliminates the classified staffing ratio enhancement, saving another \$15.3 million.

The House budget includes an \$11.1 million savings by reducing the state allocation for certificated instructional staff in grades K-4 to approximately 52.7 staff per 1,000 students from the current ratio of 53.17 staff per 1,000 students. The House makes no changes to the current classified staffing ratio enhancement.

### **Learning Improvement Day**

Both budget plans discontinue the final state-funded Learning Improvement Day for certificated instructional staff in the 2010-11 school year. The House budget assumes a savings of \$15.7 million; while the Senate assumes a savings of \$15.3 million.

### **Alternative Learning Experience**

The House budget saves \$22.7 million by eliminating funding, beginning in the 2010-11 school year, for Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) programs for students in grades K-6. ALE programs include online and digital learning delivered over the Internet, parent partnership programs (primarily instructional programs taking place in the home, with district responsibility for overseeing instruction), and contract-based learning programs. Students participating in ALE in grades 7-12

will continue to receive a full basic education funding allocation.

The Senate budget does not include this funding change.

### **BEST program**

Both the House and Senate proposals discontinue funding (\$2.3 million) for the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program beginning Fiscal Year 2011. The program provides early career educators with mentorship and support.

### **Alternate routes to certification**

The Professional Educator Standards Board manages the Alternative Routes to Certification program which provides assistance to individuals pursuing teacher certification through performance-based, non-traditional programs. These programs are aimed at recruiting candidates to teach in statewide subject matter and geographic shortage areas. Funding for the program is reduced by approximately 50 percent in both the House (\$2.1 million savings) and the Senate (\$1.7 million savings) budgets in Fiscal Year 2011.

### **National Board**

The House makes a number of reductions to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards bonus programs, saving approximately \$5.7 million. The base bonus is set at the pre-inflation adjusted rate of \$5,000/teacher (the 2009-11 budget assumes \$5,090/teacher). Additionally, the challenging school bonus, an amount beyond the base bonus for National Board certified teachers employed in high-poverty schools, is reduced from \$5,000 to \$2,500 beginning in the 2010-11 school year. Also, state funding for scholarships to help defray some of the up-front costs of pursuing certification from the National Board is discontinued in Fiscal Year 2011. Finally, the 2009-11 budget permits National Board certified teachers who become principals to keep their bonus as principals; this provision is discontinued beginning in the 2010-11 school year.

The Senate proposal includes no funding changes to the National Board bonus programs.

### **Career and technical education**

The Senate budget eliminates funding (\$2.5 million), beginning in Fiscal Year 2011, for grants to middle schools, high schools or skill centers, to develop or upgrade high-demand career and technical education programs. The House maintains this funding.

The House budget discontinues funding (\$1.8 million) for middle school career and technical education beginning in Fiscal Year 2011. This funding provided a funding enhancement to middle school vocational education students equivalent to that provided to high school vocational students. The Senate budget does not make this change.

### **Science education**

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2011, the Senate budget would eliminate funding (\$1.6 million) for the Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) program. These programs provide strategic planning, professional development,

## **House capital budget unveiled**

At press time, only the House version of a Capital Construction Budget had been released. The House plan includes a \$31 million reduction in the current bond appropriation and an increase of almost \$300 million in other appropriations. The following are the major K-12 education provisions in the House Capital Budget:

- The allocation to OSPI for the School Construction Assistance Grant Program would be reduced by \$110 million. This reflects revised assumptions regarding eligible K-12 public schools expected to request construction reimbursement for the remainder of the biennium. This reduction is not expected to impact any current school district projects.
- There is a \$200 million appropriation for a new Jobs Act for K-12 Public Schools. This funding would be provided to create jobs through energy efficiency im-

and advocacy, as well as assisting school districts with implementing science programs aligned with state assessments.

The House would maintain this funding.

### **Navigation 101**

In the House budget proposal, funding for Navigation 101 implementation grants would be discontinued beginning in Fiscal Year 2011. Navigation 101 is a guidance and career counseling program providing college and career readiness services and curriculum for students.

The Senate would maintain this funding.

### **Focused Assistance**

Under the House plan, funding (\$3.0 million) for Focused Assistance programs within OSPI would be discontinued beginning in Fiscal Year 2011, saving \$3.2 million. It is assumed that programs will continue with support from increasing federal revenues for school improvement programs.

The Senate does not include this change.

provements in K-12 public schools. School districts could apply to OSPI for grants for energy efficiency projects that lead to energy and operational cost savings.

- \$5 million is provided for Distressed Communities School Grants. OSPI is directed to develop a competitive grant program for school districts demonstrating the most need to renovate or replace major building systems. Grants may not exceed \$500,000. A school district must show a school facility need that directly affects the health and safety of students. School districts will receive priority based on, but not limited to, the following criteria: (1) The financial resources of the school district; (2) the inability to pass a capital bond measure; and (3) the condition of current facilities and the district's ability to maintain them.

# Impact

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