



March 16, 2010

Dear Legislator:

On behalf of parents, teachers, classified employees, community activists, school administrators and school board directors, we thank you for your hard work and commitment to public education during the regular 2010 legislative session. The package of pro-education bills passed on the final day of the regular session will help ensure all of our students receive the best possible public education.

Now in special session, you have the difficult task of approving a 2009-11 supplemental state budget that balances our state's values with the need to reduce state expenditures.

Even with substantial new state revenue, which we all support, we realize no part of the state budget will escape from this economic crisis unscathed. Yet, protecting our students in the classroom is essential to our children's future and Washington's economy. As you make tough budget decisions, our organizations agree on these student and classroom-focused funding priorities:

- K-4 class-size reduction.
 - Small class sizes are crucial to a quality education. This program funds more than 1,500 teachers. The typical K-4 class size will increase by as many as five students if this funding is eliminated.
- Maintain the enhanced classified employee staffing ratio.
 - Elementary school students struggling to attain grade level in reading and math will lose hundreds of instructional assistants if this funding is reduced. Other critical school support services would also be lost.
- All-day kindergarten.
 - In this time of higher academic standards and expectations, students benefit tremendously from all-day kindergarten. All-day K is especially beneficial for low-income students.
- Levy equalization.
 - Levy equalization funding (local effort assistance) benefits 220 school districts throughout the state and helps fund teachers, classified employees and student programs to help provide a high-quality education for all of Washington's children.

We respectfully urge you to do everything possible to protect programs that have such a proven and positive impact on student achievement. Please contact any of us if you would like more information regarding the importance of smaller K-4 class sizes, all-day kindergarten, classified staffing or levy equalization.

Again, we wish to thank you for your dedication to our state's paramount duty — public education.

Sincerely,

Association of Washington School Principals - *Executive Director Gary Kipp*

League of Education Voters - *Executive Director Chris Korsmo*

Public School Employees of Washington - *Executive Director George Dockins*

Seattle Public Schools Superintendent - *Maria Goodloe-Johnson*

Washington Association of School Administrators - *Executive Director Paul Rosier*

Washington Education Association - *President Mary Lindquist*

Washington State PTA Executive - *Director Bill Williams*

Washington State School Directors' Association - *Interim Executive Director Harry Frost*