COALITION OF WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS
LOCAL FUNDING WORKGROUP FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Funding Workgroup was established in May 2014. We represent nearly 8,000 school district leaders from all of our state's 295 school districts. We bring a front-line understanding to the issues facing the Legislature as you move forward in meeting the constitutional mandate to fully and amply fund basic education.

Local Funding Workgroup members continue their commitment to provide constructive input during the 2017 Legislative session with the most immediate task at hand to review each of the education funding plans present thus far. An in depth review of these plans has resulted in the presentation of following positions of the Local Funding Workgroup.

Per Pupil Prototypical Model - We support continued reliance on the prototypical funding model established by ESHB 2261/ESHB 2776 because it represents the highest level of transparency and two-way accountability. It establishes accountability for local communities, parents, and students to ensure the state is amply funding basic education (BE) and it provides accountability to the Legislature to ensure that districts are not spending levy dollars on BE programs. It is the bedrock of a sound state accounting system and a rule book for auditors to affirm appropriate use of levy dollars. The prototypical model **is a per pupil funding model** that is objective, research-based *(Final Report of the Joint Task Force on Basic Education Finance, January 14, 2009)* and it has the ability to be adjusted based on a multitude of factors such as high poverty, small school, class size targets and student programs such as special education, bilingual, highly capable and CTE. Such a model should be periodically reviewed and modified over time to meet changing needs.

Salary Schedule and Salary Allocation Model - We support **continuation of a state salary schedule and allocation model** to assure consistency, uniformity and equity. We are open to proposals that would simplify the current model with fewer educational, certification and/or experience steps.

Supplemental Pay - We understand that the current and future Legislatures are unable to fully fund current collective bargaining agreements associated with basic education salaries. However, compensation for these basic education duties and responsibilities is the obligation of the state and school districts should not subsidize this out of local enhancement levies. Therefore, we strongly support limiting the use of local levy resources to time worked outside of the 180-day student year and for duties and responsibilities that are clearly distinguishable from those basic education functions routinely expected of teachers, such as meeting with parents on curriculum night, grading of homework, or lesson planning in the evening or on weekends, attending staff meetings after school, etc. At a minimum, **statutory limitations must be in place, for future collective bargaining agreements, that prohibit bargaining of local levy resources for basic education duties and responsibilities.**

Expenditure Limitation for Salary and Benefits - We do not support this concept. We see this as potentially **unworkable on a statewide level** and non-responsive to the unique and varied circumstances and expenditure drivers across 295 school districts.

Salary Increments for Teachers - We support **continued salary increments for advanced degrees and years of experience, and support the continuation of state funding for advanced career staff.** We also support continued salary recognition for teachers who obtain National Board Certification. We do not support bonus or merit systems and view them as both inherently unreliable to administer and destructive to building and sustaining a collaborative district and school culture that best serves all children.

Professional Development - We support **10 days annually of professional development** outside the 180-day school year with local flexibility to schedule some or all of the equivalent professional development time within the 180-day school year (e.g. Extended work day, Saturdays, evening, etc.) as a component of basic education.

Cost of Living Adjustments - We support **regular cost of living adjustments** as a component of basic education to assure that salaries remain competitive to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.

Regionalization or Poverty Factors - We support this concept to recognize the unique challenges of attracting and retaining staff members to high cost, remote and/or high poverty districts and support a **salary allocation model that provides additional incentives to attract and retain high-quality staff** in communities so impacted.

Beginning Teacher Pay - We support a significant **increase in the minimum salary for beginning teachers to at least $45,000** annually to appropriately recognize a comparable market value for beginning teacher pay and to attract a larger pool of high-quality candidates to the teaching profession.

Health Benefits - We support a **transition to a statewide health benefits program for K-12** employees. Such a transition must thoughtfully account for any increased district costs, including the potential for a sizeable increase in benefit-eligible employees.

Grandfathered Levies and Salaries - We can support the **elimination of grandfathered levy lids and salary allocations over a 2-3 year period** but only if there is a sufficient infusion of **state resources to fully and amply fund basic education and competitive, market-rate salaries**.

Hold Harmless During Transition - Greater total funds than currently available are required to support public education in Washington. During the transition and upon completion of full funding, all districts require greater resources than currently available. **At no time during the transition can any district lose resources compared to 2016-17 funding levels due to funding formula changes.**

Local Levy Lid - With a consistent and ongoing State maintenance of full and ample funding of basic education and sufficient "guardrails" to assure that local levy funds only support locally determined enhancements to basic education, we believe **a lower local levy lid of 10-15% of total state and federal dollars is supportable.**

Fund Accounting/Audit Standards - We fully support the need to provide auditable assurance that local levy resources do not fund basic education. **We do not support accounting requirements that will significantly and unnecessarily increase operational expenses.**

"Levy Swap" - We do not support re-purposing current local levy capacity to fund the State's basic education obligation without significant new funding provided by the State.

Local Effort Assistance – We support continuation of Local Effort Assistance for qualifying districts. Even after full funding of basic education, local levies will provide for additional "enrichment" activities. In context of equity, continued Local Effort Assistance recognizes school district differences in their ability to levy local funding for important student services.

Respectfully Submitted,

WSSDA Washington State School Directors' Association

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WASBO

AWSP ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

WSPA

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