



April 14, 2017



The Honorable Members of the Washington State House of Representatives
The Honorable Members of the Washington State Senate
Washington Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



Dear legislators,



A group of school district superintendents recently submitted state budget recommendations to legislators, the governor, OSPI and others.



These superintendents claimed to be representing the thousands of public school employees working in their school districts. As leaders of the unions representing most K-12 public school employees in Washington, and the working families whose children are educated by those employees, we want you to know many of the superintendents' recommendations do not reflect the interests of the school employees we represent, especially as they relate to our members' longstanding collective bargaining rights.



Collective bargaining in Washington's school districts has worked well for more than 40 years. It is the collaborative, two-way process administrators and employees use to make decisions that meet the unique needs of the students in each school district. Collective bargaining works best when there is mutual trust, respect and open communication.



Unfortunately, these superintendents failed to observe those principles. The superintendents *never informed* their local unions about the recommendations either before or after they submitted them.



Under the circumstances, we believe it is important to reiterate our strong support for the collective bargaining rights of public sector employees.

We oppose any limits or restrictions on existing collective bargaining rights for K-12 certificated and classified school employees, whether through budget language or by directly changing the existing bargaining laws.

Contrary to superintendents' inaccurate claims, the Supreme Court's





Washington State Council of Fire Fighters



WEA WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



WPEA WASHINGTON PUBLIC EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION



McCleary decision does not require “reforming” school employees’ collective bargaining rights.

We oppose the following recommendations made by the school superintendents:

- Limiting TRI pay for teachers
- Eliminating local health care insurance choices by moving all K-12 employees into a state-run system
- Limiting how much school districts can invest in their teachers and support staff
- Limiting how local levy funding is spent.
- Reductions in the total amount of levy funding districts can raise with voter approval

Except for the health care proposal, all of these restrictions on collective bargaining are embodied in the Republican budget passed by the Senate, which we oppose.

We encourage you to pass a final state budget that amply funds public schools, fully funds state employee contracts and protects the collective bargaining rights of all public workers.

Thank you for your consideration,

- American Federation of Teachers, Washington
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, Washington State Legislative Board
- International Association of Machinists, 751
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Joint Council 28
- International Union of Operating Engineers, 609
- Service Employees International Union, 6
- Service Employees International Union, 775
- Service Employees International Union, 925
- United Food and Commercial Workers, 367
- Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council
- Washington State Council of City and County Employees, AFSCME Council 2
- Washington State Council of Fire Fighters
- Washington Education Association
- Washington Public Employees Association, UFCW 365
- Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

cc: The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington