

Policy & Legal News

HELPING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TRANSLATE LAW INTO ACTION

PLUS:

Protecting the Whistleblower

Credit for Work Experience

Jurassic Parliament: Can we Amend the Motion?

...AND MORE

Districts Can Offer a New Graduation Requirement Option that Lets Students Follow Their Interests and Goals

WSSDA
100 Years of Leadership

DECEMBER 2023

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL
DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION

Policy Classifications

ESSENTIAL

- Policy is required by state or federal law; or
- A specific program requires a policy in order to receive special funding.

ENCOURAGED

- While not required by law, policy is intended to reflect the spirit of existing state or federal law thus inuring districts to potential litigation;
- While not required by law, policy has potential to benefit the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, employees, directors, and/or the local community.

DISCRETIONARY

- Policy addresses an action likely deemed important by the board; or
- Policy would likely be deemed appropriate due to special circumstances of the board; or
- Policy communicates district philosophy that a board may want to promote to employees and/or the community.

Editor's Note

It's fun to get stuff. But the happiest people seem to be not those who get more, but those who give more, particularly giving of themselves. Winston Churchill is attributed as saying, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." I understand that to mean that we can make another's life better by giving AND we can transform our own life by leading a life built on giving. Giving lifts, enriches, and ennobles our lives, infusing them with purpose and inter-connection. Plus, we frankly need each other. At present, the days are short and often dark with clouds, and the times we live in can feel dark with trouble on the horizon.

As you heard at the 2023 Law Conference, bad scary stuff with legal consequences might and likely will happen at your school district during your service as a school director. Although it can be stressful to think about, it's also crucial to be alerted to possible improper circumstances so that you can respond to or prevent them. This edition of Policy & Legal News dives into the importance of this idea in Protecting the Whistleblower (**see page 8**).

But it isn't all bad news. We're also excited that as we end the year, we can bring you some good news about new options for students. This includes offering students the opportunity to earn elective credit for their paid work experience (**see page 6**) as well as the ability to follow their own interests and goals for their graduation pathway requirement (**see page 3**).

The work of school directors has been notably challenging in 2023. I wish I could promise that in 2024 the work will be easier. What I can promise is that the work of school directors will be significant to the students you serve. Thank you, school directors, for giving your heart, head, effort, and time to your school district. You could have understandably focused on making your own living. Instead, you are making a life, that of each of your students and your own.

Wishing you Happy Holidays,

Abigail Westbrook, J.D., Editor



The editor (at right) with Sonja Trainor, Director of Legal Advocacy for NSBA, at the 2023 WSSDA Annual Conference.

Policy & Legal News

HELPING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TRANSLATE LAW INTO ACTION

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★ UPDATES TO MODEL POLICY

WSSDA has developed, revised, or retired the following model policies and procedures. Subscribers can find marked-up and clean versions of these documents (as applicable) in their subscriber portal on the WSSDA website by visiting wssda.org/login

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ESSENTIAL

- 2410/2410P – High School Graduation Requirements
- 2413 – Equivalency Credit Opportunities
- 2415/2415P – Performance-based Pathway for High School Graduation (NEW)
- 5005 – Employment and Volunteers: Disclosures, Certification Requirements, Assurances, and Approval
- 5271/5271P – Reporting Improper Governmental Action (Whistleblower Protection)

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ENCOURAGED

- 2401/2401P – Financial Education Mastery-Based Learning and Credit
- 6500 – Capitalization Threshold for Leases and Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements

LIST OF SERIES INCLUDED IN UPDATES

- 2000 Series – Instruction
- 5000 Series – Personnel
- 6000 Series – Management Support



DECEMBER 2023

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION

Districts Can Offer a New Graduation Requirement Option that Lets Students Follow Their Interests and Goals

By Linda Drake, Director of Career and College-readiness Initiatives, State Board of Education

A ballet performance, a study of marine life in Puget Sound, a canoe journey, an internship with a manufacturing company: these are examples of learning experiences high school students could use toward meeting a graduation requirement. Legislation passed in 2023 allows districts to offer a new performance-based pathway option as a way for students to show what they know and can do in a “real-world context” related to their own goals and interests, all while making progress in meeting requirements and earning a high school diploma.

“Real-world context” means learning experiences that provide students the opportunity to carry out activities and solve problems in a way that reflects the complex nature of such tasks in the world outside of the classroom.

With the performance-based pathway option, students use an experience that aligns with the student’s interests and goals in their High School and Beyond Plan. Based on this experience, students would reflect on the learning they gained and create a product, such as a report, presentation, video, or performance, that demonstrates the student’s learning in English Language Arts (ELA) or math. The student’s experience and product could be about any topic but would need to incorporate ELA or math learning standards. The product would be evaluated locally to determine if the student meets the graduation requirement.

Background

The graduation pathway requirement is one of three parts of the Washington high school diploma, along with credit and subject area requirements, and the



High School and Beyond Plan. The three parts are intended to work together to prepare students for success in their life after high school.

The Legislature added graduation pathway options as a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2020.

Similar to the six other options, the new performance-based option focuses on students demonstrating knowledge and skills in ELA or math. For these options, students may “mix and match” options; for example, a student could use the state tests to meet the pathway requirement in ELA and the new performance-based option to meet the requirement in math. If designed carefully, a student’s performance-based pathway could meet both the ELA and math

**MODEL POLICY
2415
Performance-based
Pathway for High School
Graduation**

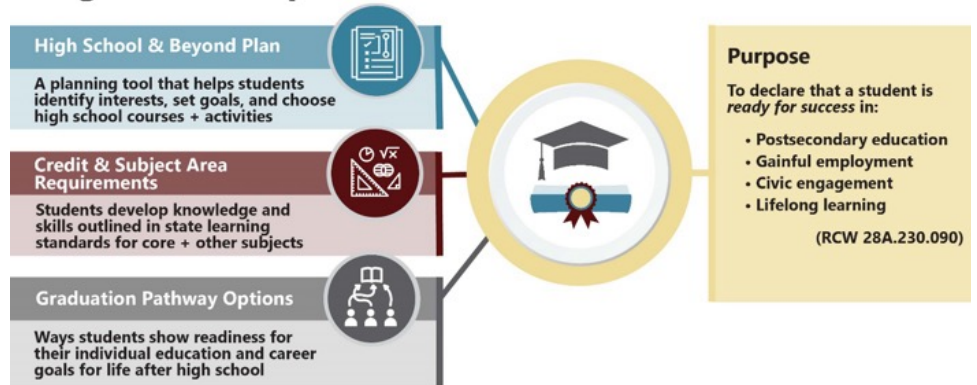
**MODEL POLICY &
PROCEDURE
2410/2410P
High School Graduation
Requirements**

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requirements. Still, the student's project would need to address both sets of learning standards and meet all requirements of the performance-based pathway for both subject areas. Two additional options, the military option (the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery or ASVAB) and the Career and Technical Education option, allow students to meet the requirement without meeting English and math pathway requirements separately.

Washington State's High School Diploma



SOME QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What is the first step for districts to offer this new graduation pathway to students?

Districts that choose to offer the performance-based graduation pathway option must first adopt a local policy and procedure to implement the new pathway option. The State Board of Education collaborated with the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) to develop a new model policy to support districts.

How will students choose what to do for a performance-based pathway?

The student may either pursue an individual interest and create a proposal that the school or district approves, or schools or districts may create opportunities that the student would opt into through a learning contract. For example, if a school has a relationship with a local business that offers internships to high school students, the school may develop the internship experience into a performance-based pathway.

How will students complete the work for a performance-based pathway?

Students may complete a performance-based pathway through independent work, or schools may incorporate completing a performance-based pathway within a course or courses. Educators or community partners may support students in completing the pathway.

How will the student's product be evaluated?

Whether or not a student has met the graduation requirement will be a local decision. The evaluation of the student's product must involve at least one educator with an endorsement in the relevant subject area (ELA or math). Districts may coordinate panels of evaluators within a district or in cooperation with other districts, and the evaluation may involve community members.

What tools will be available to help with the evaluation?

The State Board of Education (SBE), in consultation with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), will identify proficiency targets and associated rubrics (scoring guides) for the performance-based pathway option. These tools will help educators understand what to look for in evaluating the student's performance. The learning standards that will be addressed will include a combination of required state-identified standards, using a uniform state rubric, and locally determined standards. The rubrics developed by SBE and OSPI will describe the proficiency targets for the state-identified learning standards. The target date for publication is February 2024. Later this spring, training videos will be developed to help educators use the rubric and support statewide consistency in evaluating student products.

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Can students in the Class of 2024 use the performance-based pathway?

Most students graduating in 2024 should have already met a graduation pathway requirement or be working on meeting one of the previously established graduation pathway options. In certain circumstances, it may be possible for some students to use the new pathway option in the 2023-2024 school year. Schools that offer mastery-based learning options, project-based learning, or culminating projects that are well-aligned to learning standards may be able to adapt some student learning experiences to the new performance-based pathway option. But as noted above, before offering the option, districts must adopt a local policy and procedure for the performance-based pathway option.

More Information

Additional information on the performance-based pathway is available on the State Board of Education website: www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work/performance-based-pathway

Based on House Bill 1308

High School Graduation Pathway Options

WSSDA has developed NEW model policy and procedure **2415 – Performance-based Pathway for High School Graduation**. This is an Essential model policy for school districts that choose to offer the performance-based graduation pathway but unnecessary for school districts that choose not to do so. Additionally, WSSDA has revised model policy and procedure **2410 – High School Graduation Requirements**, which is an Essential policy. Because the revisions to policy 2410 are limited to legal references, board approval is not necessary.





Credit for Work Experience

Last session, our Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1658 - High School Credit for Paid Work Experience, which authorizes public high school students to earn elective credit for their paid work experience. Within that legislation, our Legislature found that a student's paid work experience could demonstrate that the student:

- set personally meaningful goals
- applied learning in new contexts,
- mastered an essential life skill,
- exercised self-agency by developing competence in personal finance, and
- took initiative

However, school districts were restrained from implementing the new legislation until the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) adopted the necessary new provisions to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and updated relevant existing WACs. These new and updated rules are now in place and OSPI has issued implementation guidance and other

supportive tools for school districts. Here are the key takeaways about offering students credit for their work experience as provided for under the statute and new and revised rules.

[Elective Credit for Paid Work Experience FAQ](#)

[Elective Credit for Paid Work Experience Guidance](#)

[Sample Student Narrative & Financial Standards Assessment Form](#)

[Sample Student Request and Credit Approval Form](#)

To be eligible to participate, students must be at least 16 years old and legally eligible for paid employment. The school counselor, principal, or other school designee must approve the student's paid work experience in advance and in writing. The student must provide district staff with documentation identifying the employer and the employment. Additionally, the student must provide a narrative describing how the paid work

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experience will develop skills to meet their education goals, understanding of work and finance, and how their performance, effort, and decisions will affect their future career and educational opportunities.

It is possible for students to schedule their paid work hours during the school day or outside of the regular school calendar. School districts may claim the paid work experience that is scheduled as part of the student's school day for basic education apportionment in alignment with WAC 392-121-139. Students may earn a maximum of two credits and only elective credit. To earn one elective credit, students must work no less than 360 hours of paid work. To earn half an elective credit, students must work no less than 180 hours of paid work.

To receive credit, students must demonstrate or be assessed on the grade-level proficiency of Washington State High School Financial Education Standards. Additionally, receiving credit requires that the designated school staff (school counselor, principal, or other school designee) verifies and reports the student's paid work experience to OSPI no less than

once per term. School staff must also update the student's High School and Beyond Plan to reflect the paid work experience.

Fundamental to the opportunity for students to receive elective credit for their paid work experience under HB 1658 is that your school board must first adopt a written policy that satisfies the requirements. The only identified mechanism for awarding this credit is through mastery-based learning of the state financial education learning standards found in [RCW 28A.300.469](#). WSSDA has revised model policy and procedure **2401 – Financial Education Mastery-Based Learning and Credit** to address the policy requirements. This policy is classified as Encouraged, because your district is not required to provide students with credit for their work experience, but if your district would like to offer this opportunity to students, the policy is required. WSSDA has also revised model policy **2413 – Equivalency Credit Opportunities** based both on HB 1658 and Senate Bill 5617 – Skill Centers – School District Course Equivalencies. Model policy 2413 is an Essential model policy.

**MODEL POLICY &
PROCEDURE
2401**
**Financial Education
Mastery-Based Learning
and Credit**

**MODEL POLICY
2413**
**Equivalency Credit
Opportunities**





Protecting the Whistleblower

**MODEL POLICY &
PROCEDURE
5271
Reporting Improper
Governmental Action
(Whistleblower Protection)**

We all must obey the law, including persons who hold positions of power and authority. Adhering to legal requirements not only keeps school districts out of legal trouble, but it also helps maintain the public's trust. What happens if someone in your district is unprincipled, dishonest, or skirting the law? How would you know? Being alerted to possible improper circumstances is crucial. School districts cannot investigate or correct what they don't even know about. The consequences of being in the dark might mean keeping an unethical or incompetent supervisor in a position of authority. It might also prevent addressing dangerous circumstances that could lead to a cascade of negative legal consequences down the road.

Masking problems or tolerating others suppressing concerns in the name of "loyalty" can be disastrous. School districts need to encourage rather than dissuade their employees from reporting matters of concern for both practical and legal reasons. Yet some organizations have a culture of allegiance to individuals in the organization rather than allegiance to the adopted policies and best practices. In these cultures, bringing problems to light is "snitching" or "ratting." In the 1960s and 1970s, the call for consumer protection became elevated, and Ralph Nader, a prominent activist of the movement, coined the term "whistleblower."

The term refers to any individual who reports illegal, unsafe, or unethical practices committed by a company, organization, or governmental entity. It is derived from the welcome whistle of a referee to stop foul play in a sporting event.

Employees need to be encouraged to report concerns and then not fear retaliation from their coworkers or supervisors for reporting them. Retaliation certainly harms the employee who reported a concern. It also can have a chilling effect on other employees' willingness to report concerns and lowers overall morale about working for the organization. Retaliation can occur in several forms and can be overt or subtle. Various laws prohibit employers from retaliating against employees for reporting potential violations and provide other important protections for whistleblowers. It is important to be familiar with the applicable law and make employees aware of it as well.

Washington has different laws governing whistleblower protections at the state and local government levels. The Local Government Whistleblower Protection Act, [Ch. 42.41 RCW](#), is the chapter that governs local governments, such as school districts. The intent of

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the statute is to encourage disclosure of improper actions by local government officials and employees. The statute protects employees from retaliation and provides remedies if retaliation occurs.

Two definitions of note from the statute include “improper governmental action” and “retaliatory action.” Improper governmental action means any action by a local government officer or employee, whether or not it’s within the scope of their employment, that is undertaken in the performance of their official duties in violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule; is an abuse of authority; is of substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety; or is a gross waste of public funds. However, the statute goes on to clarify that improper governmental action does not include legitimate personnel actions such as hiring, firing, promotions, reassignment, complaints, grievances, etc. See [RCW 42.41.020](#). Also, employees are not free to disclose matters that would affect a person’s right to legally protected confidential communications.

The other definition of note is retaliatory action, which means:

Any adverse change in the employee’s employment status, or the terms and conditions of employment, including denial of adequate staff to perform duties, frequent staff changes, frequent and undesirable office changes, refusal to assign meaningful work, unwarranted and unsubstantiated letters of reprimand or unsatisfactory performance evaluations, demotion, transfer, reassignment, reduction in pay, denial of promotion, suspension, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action; or hostile actions by another employee towards a local government employee that were encouraged by a supervisor or senior manager or official.

As you may have guessed, when the issue of whether retaliation occurred arises, there is a question of fact about whether personnel actions were based on legitimate human resource purposes. The key here is for school districts to keep sufficient documentation and follow their policy and procedures.

[RCW 42.42.030\(2\)](#) mandates that local governments, including school boards, adopt a policy accompanied by appropriate procedures for employees to report improper governmental action. The statute specifies certain aspects that must be included in the policy and

procedure, including meeting the intent of the statute. By adopting such a policy and procedure, school districts are accountable under their own program and the process for hearing complaints follows a known structure. This allows school districts to receive the initial complaint and address it appropriately. If the employee objects to the district’s response, the complaint then goes to the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Given the importance of this statute, WSSDA recently reviewed and updated model policy and procedure **5271 – Reporting Improper Governmental Action (Whistleblower Protection)** to ensure it aligns with Washington’s Local Government Whistleblower Protection Act. The revisions include re-categorizing this policy to accurately reflect that it is an Essential policy. Additionally, we’ve revised the definition of retaliatory action and added a prohibition against intimidation to reflect the statute more fully and accurately. The revisions also update contact information reflecting federal, state, and local entities that enforce potential improper governmental actions.



OTHER UPDATES

Policy and Procedure **5005** – Employment and Volunteers: Disclosures, Certification Requirements, Assurances, and Approval

Category: **ESSENTIAL**

WSSDA reviewed and revised this model policy based on Senate Bill (SB) 5123 – Use of Cannabis – Employment Discrimination. This new law prohibits employers from discriminating against hiring or retaining an employee based on a positive drug test for past cannabis use.

Washington has allowed qualifying patients to use limited amounts of cannabis for medicinal purposes since 1998 and has legalized adult recreational cannabis since 2012. Effective on January 1, 2024, **SB 5123 prohibits employers from discriminating against a person in hiring based on:**

- the person's use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace; or
- an employer-required drug screening test that identifies non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites in the person's hair, blood, urine, or other bodily fluids.

The bill does not:

- prohibit an employer from basing initial hiring decisions on scientifically valid drug screening conducted through methods that do not screen for non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites;
- apply to testing for controlled substances other than pre-employment, such as post-accident testing or testing because of suspicion of impairment or being under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, medications, or other substances; or
- affect the rights or obligation of an employer to maintain a drug and alcohol-free workplace, or any other right or obligation of an employer required under federal law or regulation.

Please note that cannabis is still illegal at the federal level. Therefore, this new law will not impact drug testing of federally regulated employees, such as Department of Transportation employees.



Policy and Procedure **6550** – Capitalization Threshold for Leases and Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements

Category: **ENCOURAGED**

WSSDA revised this policy based on recent guidance from the State Auditor's Office (SAO) to use a fixed number for establishing a capitalization threshold, rather than a percentage-based threshold. This policy is classified as Encouraged.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued statements regarding leases and subscription-based information technology arrangements (SBITAs) with the goal of establishing a single model for lease accounting. The Accounting Manual for Public School Districts does not prescribe a specific dollar amount for what would be an insignificant lease because districts of all sizes must be able to use the guidance. Rather, school districts establish a lease liability threshold that is clearly insignificant individually and in the aggregate.

According to the SAO, school districts have implemented this well overall. After several audits, however, the SAO determined that school districts needed more clarity on establishing a capitalization threshold. The SAO identified that school districts needed to determine a threshold that is both insignificant and a fixed number based on the number and size of leases they have. Therefore, based on the SAO guidance, WSSDA has revised the model policy to prompt school districts to identify a fixed number rather than a percentage-based number.

K-12 Education During and After the Pandemic:

opportunities to learn from changes made in K-12 educational methods

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

By Emily Cimber, Senior Performance Auditor, Office of the Washington State Auditor

The coronavirus pandemic closed Washington's public schools and forced them to find new ways to teach students. In March 2020, the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus prompted Gov. Jay Inslee to close all public schools in the state for the next six weeks—ultimately extending this for the next six months. The decision to close schools prompted a cascade of change and upheaval in the education system.

During the months schools were closed to in-person learning, the state gave school districts great flexibility in how they decided to ensure students had access to instruction. Funding sources and calculations changed significantly during the pandemic, and many districts took advantage of the stop-gap change in funding to develop new or expand existing online schools. As the first summer of the pandemic ended, calls mounted for children to return to in-person learning. However, some districts found nontraditional practices, including online classes, that they introduced during the pandemic worked better for some students and have

The Office of the Washington State Auditor recently concluded an audit report of creative approaches to education in K-12 Education during and after the pandemic. The report identified five broad categories of innovation and a list of 25 creative and nontraditional teaching practices applied in schools across the state over the past three years. Auditors also considered how other schools might incorporate similar practices. A two-page summary of the report is reprinted with permission below.

The full report is available [here](#).

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retained them. This audit crafted a list of creative and nontraditional teaching practices applied over the past three years that might be useful for other educators. It also considered how other schools might incorporate similar practices and the benefits of doing so.

Districts used creative practices to deliver instruction outside traditional classroom, which can be useful beyond a pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic prompted districts to find new ways for their students to learn outside a classroom. Some districts added or expanded online schools or alternative learning experience (ALE) programs to provide increased flexibility for students and families. When buildings were closed, some school districts ensured students had access to online classes by providing both internet service and IT equipment. Others took steps to tailor instructional methods to students' needs and engage students and families to ensure new practices succeeded. They also taught teachers how to use the technology they needed to teach remotely. Additionally, some school districts increased their efforts to meet students' social and emotional needs.

Systemic barriers to sustaining these innovations exist independent of the pandemic

School districts described barriers Washington would need to overcome to implement new practices or continue practices put in place during the pandemic. These include resistance to change and restrictions due to state requirements. Smaller school districts in particular struggle to innovate with fewer staff. In some cases, the return to pre-pandemic funding structures has become a barrier to some practices. Opportunities to address some of these barriers exist, both locally and at the state level.

State Auditor's Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic was a very difficult time across the nation. Washington was not alone in making emergency changes to its educational system, including shifting most instruction online and changing school funding models to support that transition. The pandemic's effect on the delivery of educational services cannot be overstated; it was dramatic for all concerned. Students, their families and their teachers

were all challenged by a sudden switch to online education.

During this major disruption, however, many Washington school districts developed innovative ways to continue learning through a period when so many aspects of daily life were upended. Recognizing the frustrating situation, many of the schools highlighted in this report focused on communication and training, helping parents and teachers work together to deliver the best possible learning experience.



Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

As this report explains, these innovations addressed many different aspects of learning, from individualized instruction and co-teaching to helping students with internet access and holding virtual town halls. They were used in a range of urban, suburban and rural communities, reflecting the diversity of Washington school districts.

It is important to note that, while most students and families welcomed the return of in-person instruction, online learning worked well for some students. Because of those positive experiences, schools have sought to preserve options that only became available to them in the pandemic.

Not all the innovative approaches we identify are necessarily appropriate for every school district or every student, but each is worthy of more examination. Giving these novel approaches more consideration and study

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ensures that Washington will gain the most benefit from positive advances made in a very challenging time.

Recommendations

We did not make any recommendations specific to the school districts we audited. Nonetheless, we consider the audit results so broadly applicable that it is in the state's best interest for all districts to consider implementing the practices highlighted in this report. In doing so, districts will also need to take into consideration current and future needs, available resources, and potential effects on students and educators.

THE AUDIT IDENTIFIED 25 PRACTICES IN FIVE BROAD CATEGORIES:

1. Individualized instructions

- Individualized instruction Creating or expanding online schools
- Creating or expanding Alternative Learning Experience schools
- Partnering with other districts to get students access to more online courses
- Offering around-the-clock online tutoring
- Using co-teachers to segment the classroom into different level groups
- Using standards- or mastery-based learning Small reading groups and remedial tutoring groups

2. Access

- Providing devices and/or wireless internet hotspots to students
- Wireless internet network covering the entire school district
- Arranged for internet provider to supply service for only \$9 a month to families eligible for free and reduced-price meals

3. Student & Family Engagement

- Conducting or allowing access to board meetings and meetings with families via video
- Posting information to the district website in languages spoken at students' homes
- Conducting virtual town hall meetings for families in four languages
- Setting up "help desks" during key changes to ensure students and families got immediate technical support
- Calling families to inform them about upcoming key changes
- Modifying bell schedules to offer students more credits, greater schedule flexibility

4. Teacher Training

- Training educators for teaching in an online learning environment
- Offering virtual and asynchronous training opportunities for educators
- Districts training other districts on how to provide remote instruction

5. Social-emotional needs

- Greeting students at the school building door
- Providing opportunities for students to talk about issues
- Providing telemedicine and remote counseling for students who could not be at school
- Setting up a school-based clinic to provide health care to students
- Incorporating social-emotional learning curriculum
- Providing student behavioral and mental health interventions through the Statewide Behavioral Health COVID Response Project



WSSDA has partnered with Jurassic Parliament to support school board members' knowledge of parliamentary procedures. One of Jurassic Parliament's offerings is an advice column called "Dear Dinosaur," which provides simple, practical answers to questions about Robert's Rules and parliamentary procedure. Answers are based on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12th edition. As always, nothing in this post constitutes legal or business advice and you should seek your own qualified authority for specific issues. You can learn more about Jurassic Parliament [here](#).

Can We Amend a Land Acknowledgement Motion To Include the National Anthem and State Song?

By Ann Macfarlane, PRP, CAE

Dear Dinosaur: Our school board will be passing a resolution to institute a protocol for a Native Land Acknowledgement at school events. A board member plans to move to amend the motion to have it apply to our national anthem and state song. Can they do this?

Answer: According to Robert's Rules of Order, amendments that change the intent of the original motion are allowable, as long as they are germane (relevant). The chair rules on whether an amendment may be entertained, but their decision is subject to appeal to the group (here the school board).

The question of germaneness is a subjective one If one considers that the intent of the motion is to establish a land acknowledgement, then the other two items are not germane. If one considers that the intent is to establish a ceremonial opening to the meeting, then the other two items are germane. Ultimately it is the board that will decide.

Note that Jurassic Parliament recommends that boards adopt a special rule limiting which amendments can be made. Our suggested language:

No amendment to any motion will be allowed which changes the intent of the original motion.

You can read more about this in our blog post, [Extra rules to add to Robert's Rules](#).

Ann Macfarlane is the principal trainer for Jurassic Parliament. After many years of holding the credential of Professional Registered Parliamentarian, she now advises public and nonprofit boards.



Policy & Legal News

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VISION

All Washington School Directors effectively govern to ensure each and every student has what they need to be successful within our state's public education system.

MISSION

WSSDA builds leaders by empowering its members with tools, knowledge and skills to govern with excellence and advocate for public education.

BELIEFS

WSSDA believes:

- Public education is the foundation to the creation of our citizenry, and locally elected school boards are the foundation to the success of public education.
- High-functioning, locally elected school boards are essential to create the foundation for successfully impacting the learning, development and achievement of each and every student.
- Ethical, effective and knowledgeable school directors are essential for quality public schools.
- Focusing on and addressing educational equity is paramount to assure the achievement of each and every student.
- Public school directors are best served through an innovative, responsive, and flexible organization that provides exceptional leadership, professional learning, and services in governance, policy, and advocacy.



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★ SPECIAL THANKS

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Conversation"**

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**Legislative
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JANUARY 28

Day on the Hill
JANUARY 29

AT THE **South Puget Sound
Community College**

Register for
**VIRTUAL OR
IN-PERSON!**

VISIT WASA-OLY.ORG FOR MORE INFO