

## **It's Basic: A resource list for education funding**

### **What to do:**

NOW: Help educate fellow PTA members and your community; pass on "It's Basic" materials

DURING LEG SESSION: Contact your legislator; attend the rally for basic education funding on Feb. 26

### **The easiest way to get involved:**

- Sign up for **Grassroots Connection** and **Action Alerts**. Just send an email to [support@wastatepta.org](mailto:support@wastatepta.org).
  - Grassroots Connection gives you a weekly recap when the Legislature is in session.
  - Action Alerts let you know when to contact your representatives, give you background info, and even provide a sample message to use. Speaking up can be as easy as a few clicks.

### **Critical reading (telling graphics)**

- OSPI's "Looming Crisis" report:  
[http://fundingwaschools.org/BEFWAL/OSPI\\_K12\\_Finance\\_Outlook\\_BEF\\_6\\_Key\\_Recs\\_2008Oct08.ppt](http://fundingwaschools.org/BEFWAL/OSPI_K12_Finance_Outlook_BEF_6_Key_Recs_2008Oct08.ppt)

### **Want to influence the task force?**

- Send comments on the preliminary proposals to: [bef@wsipp.wa.gov](mailto:bef@wsipp.wa.gov)
- A summary of the proposals:  
[http://www.wastatepta.org/leg/FUNDING\\_COMMITTEE/BEF\\_proposal\\_sum.pdf](http://www.wastatepta.org/leg/FUNDING_COMMITTEE/BEF_proposal_sum.pdf)

### **Discuss Basic Education Finance proposals:**

- [www.WhatItTakesForKids.com](http://www.WhatItTakesForKids.com) (web site created by a group within Basic Education Finance task force)

### **Contact your legislator:**

- Find them at: <http://capwiz.com/npta2/wa/home/>

### **Read "It's Basic" materials:**

- [www.wastatepta.org/leg/funding.htm](http://www.wastatepta.org/leg/funding.htm)

### **Learn more about the work in Olympia:**

- BEF task force: [www.leg.wa.gov/Joint/Committees/BEF](http://www.leg.wa.gov/Joint/Committees/BEF)
- The Washington Learns report: [www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/](http://www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/)

### **Learn more about funding education in Washington:**

- Funding Washington Schools: [www.fundingwaschools.org/](http://www.fundingwaschools.org/) (check out the slideshows)
- League of Education Voters: [www.educationvoters.org/](http://www.educationvoters.org/)
- Network for Excellence in Washington Schools: [www.waschoolexcellence.org](http://www.waschoolexcellence.org)

### **Rally to support basic education:**

- Noon, February 26, on the steps to the Capital Building

### **Background info:**

- The state hasn't addressed the school-funding model in 30 years, and many assumptions about basic education aren't necessarily financed by the state, i.e. the sixth class period.
- The state took a major role in financing education following a lawsuit in 1977. Local levy revenues (extra property taxes) were to be capped and the state was to fully fund basic education through the state sales tax and the state property tax.
- Today, more than 90 percent of students in Washington are being educated in districts that tap local levy funds to pay basic costs. The concern: Costs keep going up, but districts are already maximizing levy authority. Many can't ask property owners for more money.
- **We don't have a clear definition of basic education, and without it we can't tell legislators how much schools need.** This process is not just about asking for more money. It's about defining what kids need; pricing it; and making sure the money comes through. Staffing, operating and maintenance costs need to be accounted for.