APPROVED 1/21/2025

2025 Seattle Special Education PTSA Legislative Priorities

Inclusionary Practices

- Acceptance of disability as part of everyday life - Implementation of inclusive practices including Universal Design for Learning, accessibility of instruction, learning environment, improving racial, disability, and LGBTQ+ diversity of educator workforce
- Fully funding basic education and removing the 16% student enrollment special education funding cap to meet the true needs of students in Washington State
- Update the state expectations for preservice teachers to include special education required courses that incorporate a disability justice lens, for all teachers
- Certified educators prepared to support students with disabilities as part of their preservice and include instruction on the social model of disability
- Simplifying the safety net reimbursement process to school districts.
- Staff retention, including competitive and rewarding benefits
- Smaller class sizes and caseloads for special education service providers to ensure the quality and effectiveness of services

Addressing the Student Mental Health Crisis

- Trauma-informed practices - addressing discipline practices that disproportionately impact BIPOC and disabled students.
- Access to mental health services for students with disabilities and their families, providing wraparound support and resources.
- Diversifying Behavioral Health workforce in schools around race, disability, and LGBTQ+ status
- **End Isolation and chemical and mechanical restraint in Washington schools**

Appropriate and Timely Identification of Students with Disabilities

- Focus on BIPOC, Twice Exceptional (2e), highly mobile, low-income, multilingual students, and particularly those affected by the intersection of two or more factors
- Racial and gender analysis of special education programs to ensure that groups are not being over or under-identified for specific support needs
- Quality Independent Educational Evaluations to avoid conflict of interest and bias

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Equitable Access to Education and Resources for All Students with Disabilities to Ensure a Safe and Inclusive School Environment

- Accessibility - Including assistive technology, auxiliary aids, and services - ASL interpreters/classes, curriculum tools, quiet/sensory rooms, smaller class sizes
- High expectations and quality instruction
- Meaningful and effective preparation of students for life after high school, higher education, and/or career
- Recruitment and representation of a diverse and effective workforce of educators, therapists, nurses - including those with disabilities, BIPOC, LGBTQIA+
- Equitable access to preparation and certificate programs
- Quality literacy training/science of reading
- Improve the quality of continued education for staff
- Access to the learning spaces, and safety plans and protocols for all people with disabilities who use those spaces.
- Healthy food choices
- Transportation

Increasing Equitable Family Engagement

- Family education on how to support their students at home and in the community
- Access to advocacy support for their students' rights such as educational advocate services
- Accountability and accurate record keeping, including the right for parents to record meetings about their students to ensure transparent decisions.
  (This may require a change to RCW9.73.030)
- Expand the ratio of family engagement coordinators in middle and high schools
- Reduce barriers for caregivers to participate in workgroups, committees, and other engagement opportunities to increase representation that is reflective of the community
- Fund family engagement professional learning and continuing education for all educators