

# Fairmount Park Elementary PTA

## Education Advocacy - Our kids need ALL of us to act!

Education Funding in Washington State is at a critical juncture. Due to lack of State investment and impending cuts to local levy funds, the Seattle School District is looking at a \$74 million deficit that will impact all our schools in the coming school year. At Fairmount Park, it means cutbacks in staff and programs, including counseling, vice principal support, instrumental music and other areas that make Fairmount Park such an amazing school.

We need **each** of you to take action now! We are all busy, but we really need to take a few minutes and do this for our kids, so the FPE PTA is providing the necessary information all in one place to make it easier for you to act. Legislators don't hear from enough of us; it's time to put on the pressure now. Here's what you can do:

### 1) **Attend PTA Education Focus Day this coming Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.**

Questions? Email [advocate@fpepta.org](mailto:advocate@fpepta.org)

#### **Agenda for the day:**

- **10:30am – Equitable Funding Rally** on the capitol steps
- **12:00pm (Rotunda) - Governor Inslee, SPI Chris Reykdal, & WSPTA President Barbara Martin** speak
- **12:45pm (Senate Caucus Room) – Meeting with Legislators** from the 34<sup>th</sup> District: Senator Sharon Nelson, Representative Eileen Cody, Representative Joe Fitzgibbon – meet outside the doors to the Senate floor (might be delayed getting in while floor action is going on)
- **NEWLY ADDED COMMITTEE HEARINGS!**
  - **1:30 House Education Committee** – HHR A Work session (no public testimony) on McCleary v Washington and an overview of k-12 finance
  - **1:30 – Senate Early Learning and k-12 Education Committee** – SHR 1 Work session on opportunity gaps and school districts successes and challenges

#### **Capitol Campus information:**

- General info: <http://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/ComingToTheLegislature.aspx>

### 2) **Call, email and/or write our legislators, legislative leaders and Governor right away.**

Contact information and talking points on key issues are provided below

Personalize your note – what makes our school special; what are your concerns?

- 3) **Have your children write notes and/or draw pictures for you to send to State elected officials.**
- 4) **Ask friends and family to contact their state elected officials.**
  - This is especially useful if you family and friends in other parts of Washington. Legislators really need to hear from their constituents all over the state. Bonus if they are in Eastern WA or SW WA!
  - If someone doesn't know who their legislators are, send them this link: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>
- 5) **Post information and requests for action on social media. Help raise awareness.**
- 6) **Visit Olympia on another day to advocate for education funding**
  - Set up meetings with our legislators
  - Testify at a hearing
  - The regular session goes through late April.
- 7) **Send thank you notes – always!**
  - After a meeting
  - If you're tracking action or a vote and they've taken action to support education funding
- 8) **Keep up to speed on what is going on – educate yourself and others on these issues.**

### **Contact Information:**



**Senator Sharon Nelson (D), Democratic Leader**

**Contact info:** Phone: (360) 786 – 7667, Email: [Sharon.nelson@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Sharon.nelson@leg.wa.gov)

316 Legislative Building  
PO Box 4034  
Olympia, WA 98504



**Representative Eileen Cody (D) – Chair, House Health Care & Wellness Committee**

**Contact Info:** Email: Phone: (360) 786 – 7978 [eileen.cody@leg.wa.gov](mailto:eileen.cody@leg.wa.gov)

303 John L. O'Brien Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504



**Representative Joe Fitzgibbon (D) – Chair, House Environment Committee**

**Contact Info:** Phone: (360) 786 – 7952, Email: [joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov](mailto:joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov)

305 John L. O’Brien Building  
PO Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

**Speaker of the House Frank Chopp**

**Contact info:** [frank.chopp@leg.wa.gov](mailto:frank.chopp@leg.wa.gov) 360 786-7920  
339C Legislative Building, PO Box 40600 Olympia, WA 98504

Representative Tim Ormsby, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

**Contact Info:** [tim.ormsby@leg.wa.gov](mailto:tim.ormsby@leg.wa.gov) (360) 786-7946

Senator Hans Zeigner, Chair, Senate Early Learning and Education Committee

**Contact Info:** [hans.zeigner@leg.wa.gov](mailto:hans.zeigner@leg.wa.gov) (360) 786-7648

**Senate Majority Leader Mark Schoesler**

**Contact info:** [mark.schoesler@leg.wa.gov](mailto:mark.schoesler@leg.wa.gov) (360) 786-7620

**Governor Jay Inslee**

**Contact Info:** <https://fortress.wa.gov/es/governor/> (360) 902-4111

**Office of the Governor**

PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

**Fairmount Park Elementary Priorities**

**Protect the 2017 -2018 School Year and Extend the Levy Cliff**

The Levy Cliff is a legislature-made problem, requiring that districts cut back on the amount of funding they can raise at the local level. This problem can be addressed by passing HB 1059 or SB 5023. The Legislature must provide ample funding, but we still need local levy funds for the 2017 -2018 school year.

**Talking points:**

- Work quickly to pass HB 1059 (referred to the House Appropriations Committee) and SB 5023 (referred to the Senate Early Learning and k-12 Education Committee) , which would extend the levy authority through 1/1//2019.
- Levies are voter approved funds that provide critical education services for our kids.

- Seattle Public School District is contractually obligated to tell teachers their assignments by May. That means finalizing school budgets by March. If the Levy Extension is not fixed by March, SPS estimates lay-offs of 440 people, increased class sizes, eliminate school counselors in elementary schools, reduce school nurses...the list goes on.
- Fairmount Park would certainly lose positions – our counselor, our vice principal, teaching staff. These people are critical parts of our school community and we want to keep them at Fairmount Park! If funding is returned later, this means hiring new people, loses in efficiency, cohesion, and stability for our community.

### **Amplify Fund Basic Education and Close the Opportunity & Achievement Gaps**

Washington State currently funds schools at about 70%. Seattle was recently identified among 200 of the largest school districts in the U.S., as having the 5th worst achievement gap between white and African American students. Fully fund education and close the achievement gaps.

#### **Talking points:**

- We need to amplify fund education with sources that are sustainable, fair, dedicated, and don't cut services that support the whole child.
- Close the gap by supporting funding for programs like Family Engagement Coordinators, and equitable discipline and restorative justice. Fund programs that will lead to improved graduation rates for students of all races and backgrounds.

### **A Counselor in Every School**

#### **Talking points:**

- In Seattle Public Schools, currently only Middle Schools and High Schools are guaranteed counselors.
- Ensure Elementary School Counselors are also in the baseline for the fully basic education funding package.
- School Counselors support the entire school community:
  - Entire school support –supporting staff with the implementation of the social/emotional RULER program, and by working at the school level to support an environment where every child feels a sense of belonging
  - Classroom level support –The counselor works at the classroom level on behalf of a positive and respectful learning environment for all and works to overcome obstacles that challenge that environment.
  - Individual support - Supporting students in crisis, consults with and provides resource information to families, addresses concerns about friendship and bullying.

**Questions or suggestions? Contact [advocate@fpepta.org](mailto:advocate@fpepta.org)**