

Weekly Legislative Update: **Education**

Issue Team Chair: Catherine Ahl

Contact: cahl@lwwwa.org

January 16, 2022

Bills Seeing Action This Week

[SB 5568](#) Concerning preemption of municipal laws restricting the open carry of weapons.

Provides that cities, towns, counties, and other municipalities may enact laws and ordinances restricting the open carry of firearms or other weapons at any public meeting; any building or facility owned or operated by a city, town, county, or other municipality; or any permitted demonstration within their respective jurisdictions. This allows jurisdictions to prohibit open carry rather than outlaws them across the state as does HB 1630, but this may be the compromise that can pass both houses

⚠️ The bill will be heard in the Senate Law & Justice Committee on Monday, Jan. 17 at 9:30 am. To express your opinion, go to:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=Senate&mld=29463&ald=143860&ald=18610&tld=3>

[HB 1630](#) Establishing restrictions on the possession of weapons in certain locations. Makes it unlawful to carry a firearm onto facilities being used for official meetings of a school district board of directors. This would also apply to city, town, county and other municipality buildings being used for public meetings. Public meetings need to be safe for elected officials, community members and students

⚠️ This bill was heard in the House Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee, and an Executive Session is scheduled on Friday, Jan. 21 at 8 am. *You may watch the Executive Session where a vote will be taken, but no public comments are accepted.*

[HB 1664](#) Concerning prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support in schools Adds additional nurses to the prototypical school funding model. This will help somewhat with students' mental and emotional needs.

⚠️ This bill was heard in the House Education Committee, and an Executive Session is scheduled on Thursday, Jan. 20 at 1:30 pm.

[SB 5595](#) Concerning prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support in schools Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support staff, plus increases the number of school nurses. This seems to cover more support staff than HB 1664.

⚠ This bill was heard in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee, and an Executive Session is scheduled on Monday, Jan.17 at 1:30 pm.

[SB 5537](#) Changing compulsory school attendance requirements for children five, six, and seven years of age Changes compulsory school attendance to include children five, six, and seven years of age. Washington is the only state that requires school attendance beginning with children who are eight years of age. LWVWA has supported this change for many years. This bill was heard in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee on Jan. 14. Many more people, homeschool advocates mainly, signed in Con as did those Pro.

You may express support for bills in hearings with the [online process](#). Select House or Senate then the committee and the date and time of the meeting, then follow the menus. Detailed instructions are in this week's Legislative Newsletter. Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

Bills We Support

[HB 1590](#) / [SB 5563](#) Enrollment stabilization funding for local school levies to address enrollment declines due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[HB 1630](#) Makes it unlawful to carry a firearm onto facilities being used for official meetings of a school district board of directors. This would also apply to city, town, county and other municipality buildings being used for public meetings.

[HB 1664](#) Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support in schools by increasing the number of school nurses.

[HB 1723](#) Closes the digital equity divide by increasing the accessibility and affordability of telecommunication services, devices, and training.

[SB 5497](#) Extends voting authority to student members on the state board of education.

[SB 5537](#) Changes compulsory school attendance to include children five, six, and seven years of age. Washington is the only state that requires school attendance beginning with children who are eight years of age. LWVWA has supported this change for many years.

[SB 5595](#) Increases prototypical school formulas for physical, social, and emotional support staff, plus additional increases of the number of school nurses.

[SB 5630](#) Expands the program of basic education to include early learning. Early learning would be phased in for three and four year-olds starting in the 2026-27 school year and making it an entitlement by the 2029-30 school year. LWVWA has had a position that basic education should include birth to five years. This is a start.

[SB 5568](#) Provides that cities, towns, counties, and other municipalities may enact laws and ordinances restricting the open carry of firearms or other weapons at any public meeting; any building or facility owned or operated by a city, town, county, or other municipality; or any permitted demonstration within their respective jurisdictions.

Bills we're Watching

[SB 5820](#)- Rather than the people electing the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the governor would appoint that official. This would require a constitutional amendment. This bill will be heard in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee on Friday, Jan. 21 at 8:00 am. LWVWA has no position on this issue, but individuals may express their opinions by going to <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=Senate&mId=29474&aId=144375&cald=18863&tId=3>

[HJR 4200](#) - Amending the Constitution to allow a simple majority of voters voting to authorize school district bonds. LWVWA has no position on school bonds, only levies, but I know a lot of our members are interested in this issue. A hearing will be held by the House Education Committee on Tuesday, Jan. 18 at 8 am. To express your opinion go to <https://app.leg.wa.gov/csi/Testifier/Add?chamber=House&mId=29536&aId=144142&cald=18774&tId=3>

Bills We Oppose

[HB 1591](#) Provides access to local enrichment funding for charter schools. Funding for school districts is provided through levies approved by the voters, which doesn't include extra state funding for charter schools.

[HB 1633](#) Family Empowerment Scholarship Program would provide vouchers for homeschooling or private schools. Public funding should go to the public schools as the Constitution requires.

How You Can Be Involved

- During the legislative session we will send Action Alerts in the [Legislative Newsletter](#). Please respond to these, which will direct you to an application to facilitate communicating with your legislators on an important vote in committees or on the chamber floor.

- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have education teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under considerations as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Catherine Ahl, Education Issue Chair, cahl@lwwa.org.