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# ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICTS

## LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS 2007

AESD's top priority for the 2007 legislative session was an increase in the core funding provided to ESDs by the legislature and to have the formula for funding be recognized.

The legislature provided an increase of \$3.176 million, short from the \$10.4 million requested and in the process did not establish the formula we requested. However, in their deliberations to support school improvement in mathematics and science they provided \$5.4 million for staffing and placed this funding in the core allocation. This is noteworthy as it provides us with the opportunity to increase the core by funding the formula and a precedent to fund specific programs in the core. This is a start to providing more stable funding inside the core.

AESD's second priority was recognition of the ESDs as a regional delivery system. This was evident in several bills and in the budget, especially in **2SSB 5955**. This bill provided \$39 million for schools and districts to train math and science teachers. The ESD and OSPI are directed to form a partnership to develop and offer training to math teachers in 2007-08 and science teachers in 2008-09. Funds to develop and operate this program will come from fees to districts and the \$5.4 million in core dollars.

In addition to the above ESD's activities defined in new legislation, there were a number of issues which are a product of increased awareness by the legislature that the ESDs are poised to provide a regional delivery system for the children of the state.

One bill, **2SHB 1573** addresses dropout prevention and intervention. This bill creates a "building bridges" program featuring a grant program for dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval for students. The ESDs can play several roles in this program depending on the identified needs of the region. The ESD can provide the program, facilitate the development of a program, or provide the training necessary to operate the program. At the very least, the ESDs are expected to provide technical assistance to the partners developing the program. The budget provides five million dollars for this bill.

**E2SSB 5828** creates an early learning council. This bill will require the coordination of existing ESD programs with newly created programs in early learning.

**E2SSB 5841** phases in funding for all-day kindergarten by providing support for students in high poverty schools. This provides \$50,000 to each ESD for technical support plus another \$100,000 to be divided among the ESDs for regional training.

**SHB 1906** provides funding to establish math and science coaches. ESDs will be expected to be partners in this operation.

**Section 1 of 2SSB 5955** provides \$1.3 million with expectations of private match money for administrator leadership training. The ESDs are poised to become the delivery system for the **Leadership Academy**.

As several of you are already involved in the Laser Program deployment, budget has been provided to expand the Laser Program and could provide increased opportunity for all ESDs in the area.

**HB 1051** establishes a pilot program at two community colleges for students who have completed all graduation requirements except for the CAA or CIA.

**HB 2154** changes ESD board elections to odd numbered years. This brings the law into step with current practice.

Finally, some money may be available for work in school safety via language in **SB 5097**, the safety bill, and **HB 1088** provides that ESDs may respond to an RFP for operation of wrap-around mental health service for students through involvement with DSHS.

Details on any of the legislative bills or budget can be obtained by e-mailing Jim Shoemake at [jshoe@harbournet.com](mailto:jshoe@harbournet.com) or Norm Wisner at [wisnern@comcast.net](mailto:wisnern@comcast.net).

A list of the bills can be accessed at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo>.

As you can see, it was a very good year for us in the legislature. Of greatest importance was recognition that we have an ESD system in place to give the state the consistent, regional delivery system that the legislature was looking for. Your testimony and contact with key legislators was paramount to our success this year and sets the stage for more opportunity for improved funding in the 2008 session.