

The Washington State PTA recently held its 2023 Legislative Assembly, the annual event where PTA representatives from schools around the state meet to discuss the year's broad priorities for the WSPTA's legislative platform.

At the end of the weekend, we passed eight recommendations covering multilingual education, gun violence, educator diversity, effective pre-3 learning, k-12 funding, traumatic brain injuries, social emotional learning and substance abuse disorder. You can [read them here](#).

State Superintendent of Public Education Chris Reykdal opened the conference with an hour-long talk about his office's priorities for the coming year. While his office tackles broader issues with an eye on fixing more systemic and endemic problems in the state's public school system, a lot of what SPI is working on will cascade down to local schools in Seattle.

Reykdal outlined the following priorities for the year:

- **Investing in more and better mental health resources** for schools and students, and making sure that care gets equitably distributed regionally and locally.
- **Investing in kids with disabilities.** His office is pushing hard to get the cap on special ed funding for districts that enroll more than a certain percentage of disabled children. [Read more about that here](#).
- **Inclusionary training practices.** Making sure that teachers and staff have the training to teach kids with different needs in the same setting instead of having to further separate students.
- **Improving conditions for paraeducators.** Paraeducators have a turnover rate of 40 percent in the state. SPI is proposing a "paraeducator living wage" starting with a \$7 per hour increase.
- **Equitable, accessible school buildings.** Reykdal emphasized that plans to update schools are working, but the budgets the state legislature is giving his office aren't sufficient. He mentioned that the recent [Wahkiakum decision](#) is a huge barricade forgetting schools updated in small and rural districts, and he's focusing on working with those districts to figure out how to deal with the decision.

There are more WSPTA legislative events upcoming. Stay tuned here for updates.