

Special Legislative Update – Chair Postings

by Marie Sullivan, WSSDA Director of Governmental Relations

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Session readiness report

Are you ready for the start of the 2011 legislative session? In less than three weeks 147 legislators will arrive in Olympia for the convening of the 62nd Legislature. Facing them will be one of the toughest budget shortfalls in state history and no easy answers.

Here's a quick peek at how schedules and committees are shaping up, along with a list of offices and putting faces to those new member names.

New Education Committee Members, House Chair

Earlier this month Senate Democrats announced that Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D-Bothell, will be back at the helm of the Senate Early Learning, K-12 Education Committee.

McAuliffe is joined by newcomer Sen.-elect Nick Harper, D-Everett, as Vice Chair, seasoned Senators Tracey Eide, D-Federal Way, and Rodney Tom, D-Bellevue, and Sen. Sharon Nelson, a former House member. All but McAuliffe and Tom are new to the committee.

Senate Republicans have asked for additional spots on some committees (words has it Education is one of those) and conversations are ongoing regarding how many members they will have. If numbers change for Republicans, Senate Democrats will also need to be added to committees.

At least one change is that Sen. Curtis King, R-Yakima, is stepping into the role of ranking member to the Senate Transportation Committee, leaving the Education ranking member position open. At this time Republicans have three seats on the committee – several of the newly elected Senate Republicans are interested, so stay tuned.

House Democrats announced their [lineup](#) today, combining some committees and making some key changes in chairpersons. Both the House Education and House Education Appropriations and Oversight committees show at least six new members each, but with a mix of seasoned and newly elected legislators.

The House Education Committee will be led by veteran Sharon Tomiko Santos, D-Seattle, a long-time committee member who was first elected to the state House in 1998. Former Anacortes School Board President Kris Lytton, D-Anacortes, joins Santos as committee vice chair.

The House Education Committee includes former school directors Fred Finn, D-Rural Thurston County; Kathy Haigh, D-Shelton; Sam Hunt, D-Olympia; and Marcie Maxwell, D-Renton. Other members are Reps. Marko Liias, D-Edmonds; John McCoy, D-Tulalip; and Tim Probst, D-Vancouver. Rounding out the committee are Rep.-elects Andy Billig, D-Spokane, and Connie Ladenburg, D-Tacoma.

The House Education Appropriations Committee has a new addition to the title – “Oversight.” Returning to the committee are Chair Haigh, who also serves on the House Ways & Means Committee, Vice Chair Probst and Maxwell. Santos joins the committee, as do Reps. Tina Orwall, D-Des Moines, and Mike Sells, D-Everett. Newly elected members include former Tumwater School Director Chris Reykdal, D- Tumwater; Dave Frockt, D-Seattle; and Derek Stanford, D-Bothell.

House Republicans are expected to act quickly to assign members now that the committee structure and membership lists are official.

Other changes include combining the Early Learning and Human Services committees into one committee, chaired by Rep. Ruth Kagi, D-Lake Forest Park, and the elimination of the House Finance Committee. The latter has been wrapped into the House Ways & Means Committee, with Rep. Bob Hasegawa, D-Seattle, serving as Vice Chair of Finance.

Senate Early Learning, K-12 Committee Schedule

Earlier this month we learned when the various committees would be meeting, including the Senate education committee. For planning purposes, here's what has been unofficially announced as the committee schedule:

- Mondays, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.
- Thursday, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

All hearings are in the John A. Cherberg Building, Senate Hearing Room 1.

Unofficial Cutoff Schedule Available

For the truly engaged, a draft 2011 Session Cutoff Calendar indicates the following key dates (which is not official until the Legislature convenes and passes a joint resolution to adopt the dates):

- February 23 – last day to consider bills in policy committees
- February 28 – last day to consider bills in fiscal committees
- March 10 – last day to consider bills from the chamber in which they were introduced
- March 28 – last day to consider bills from the other chamber in policy committees
- April 4 – last day to consider bills from the other chamber in fiscal committees
- April 24 – last day of “official” session, Sine Die!

New digs for Members, Putting Faces with Names

Phone numbers won't change for your legislators and newly elected members. (Remember, if your former member has left the Legislature, the new member takes that phone number.) But with a major remodel of the John L. O'Brien Building going through session, House members are camped in several portables, letters A-G. This [updated list](#) includes office locations for all current members. Hearings will still take place on the first floor of the O'Brien building.

Finally, just a quick [link](#) to all the new members in the House and Senate with some election information and contact numbers when available.

This is probably the last Legislative Update we'll send until after the New Year, so happy holidays from all of us at WSSDA. As always, if you have questions about this information or other legislative updates, please give us a call.