

2019 WSBA Delegate Assembly – Items Approved

The 2019 WSBA Delegate Assembly considered resolutions and value statements. Resolutions adopted by the 2019 Delegate Assembly will become the guiding principles for the 2020 Legislative session and will be referred to the Board of Directors as possible Legislative Goals for the 2021 Legislative Session. The Board of Directors will determine the Legislative Goals for the 2021 Legislative session at their July 2020 meeting. The Core Values will guide the decisions and directions of the Association until changed.

RESOLUTIONS

2021.1 Early Childhood Education

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Board Association supports early education for children three through five years of age to improve their long-term success as students and productive citizens in Wyoming. Therefore, the Wyoming School Boards Association supports pursuit of expanding early education opportunities through Wyoming Department of Education grants providing for funding for early childhood programs throughout the state that provide quality inclusion classrooms.

Rationale: A strong consensus has developed among experts who have studied high quality early childhood development programs that these programs have substantial and enduring payoffs. Long-term studies of early childhood development participants, especially prekindergarten participants, consistently find that investing in children has a large number of lasting, important benefits for the participants, their families, and society at large (including taxpayers). These benefits include: higher levels of verbal, mathematical, and general intellectual achievement; greater success at school, including less grade retention, less need for special education, and higher graduation rates; less welfare dependency; better health outcomes; higher employment and earnings; greater government revenues and lower government expenditures; and lower crime rates.

Submitted by Laramie County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: **Affirm**

2021.2 Access to High Quality Prekindergarten Programs

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Board Association supports expanded, high quality early childhood education opportunities throughout Wyoming, especially in rural communities. Additionally, WSBA encourages state policymakers to increase access to high quality prekindergarten programs for all 3- and 4- year old children whose parents wish to enroll them. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, as a long-term goal, WSBA supports the development of an array of service providers leading to universal, voluntary preschool throughout the state and funded under the state educational model.

Rationale: Providing a high-quality education for children before they turn five yields significant long-term benefits. Children’s learning begins well before they enter school, and the transition to school must be founded on strong school readiness. Quality early childhood education is a key predictor of a child’s future educational achievement and emotional development. Children need proper stimulation and education from birth through age six in order to ensure full development and adequate preparation for the rigors of school.

Submitted by Natrona County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: **Affirm**

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2021.3 Funding for School Safety and Security

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Board Association urges the Wyoming Legislature to prioritize the protection of students and school employees by enacting legislation with funding for the following:

- Increased access to school safety measures, including, but not limited to, School Resource Officers (SROs), school safety infrastructure, mental health services, and other security measures designed to protect students and staff on school grounds; and
- Training for school employees and enhanced coordination with law enforcement agencies and first responders to ensure appropriate responses to incidents of violence in schools.

Rationale: School violence has become an epidemic in the United States of America. The children and school employees of our nation deserve to attend school without fear of death or injury, and their families deserve to send them to school without the same fear. There is a mutual responsibility of all citizens to address this problem and the responsibility for preventing violent incidents cannot be relegated to school districts alone. Multiple studies have shown that the majority of Americans support action to eliminate violence in our schools. School board members, administrators, employees and community members should work together with lawmakers, legal counsel, law enforcement and security experts to determine how best to ensure student safety in their district. Funding for school safety and security is essential to the proper provision of best practices for safe schools.

Submitted by Natrona County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: **Amend and Affirm**

2021.4 Reduction in Statewide Assessment Monitoring

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Board Association urges the Wyoming Legislature to prioritize the protection of local control under the parameters of the District Assessment System by enacting legislation for the following:

- Less mandated federal and state requirements for assessing; and
- Autonomy in the depth and complexity of the localized District Assessment System.

Rationale: Testing takes time from learning. By supporting less federally and/or statewide-mandated testing, districts and their schools free up time and resources, diminish “teaching to the test,” and allow educators to focus on what is most important: instilling a love of learning in their students. The children of our state deserve to attend school without high stakes testing and related “accountability”. While we support an annual measure of student learning, we also believe in increased flexibility by allowing school districts to determine the quantity and quality of their locally developed assessments. Federally and/or statewide defining locally developed assessment parameters are not specific enough to be used in targeting instruction for individual students. The role for local assessments is to define what students do well, where they are having difficulty, and how the instructional program might be adjusted to address their specific needs. Locally developed assessments provide better and faster feedback that helps drive real improvements in teaching and learning.

Submitted by Natrona County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: **Affirm**

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2021.6 Confidentiality of School Safety Discussions

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Boards Association supports a change to state statute 16-4-405(a) that identifies permissible reasons for an executive session to include discussions of confidential matters of district and school safety and security.

Rationale:

School safety and security are of paramount importance to Wyoming school districts. The current reasons identified in W.S. 16-4-405(a) for going into executive session do not clearly identify discussions about school safety and security as permissible reasons for an executive session. There may be ways for a board to have such discussions in executive session, but it is desirable to provide a clear authority for the school board to have discussions about matters school safety and security in an executive session. Any action taken by the board as a result of the confidential discussion would still be conducted in the public session unless otherwise provided by law.

Submitted by Teton County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

2021.8 Transportation and Maintenance of Isolated Pupils

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Boards Association supports the transportation and maintenance of isolated pupils. Therefore, the Wyoming School Boards Association supports the historical practice of guaranteeing access to a free public education by providing isolation payment for “total round trips” in accordance with state statute 21-4-401.

Rationale:

Districts in the State of Wyoming have granted isolation payments for pupils not served by district transportation. Parents and guardians who demonstrate that the family’s residence “in an isolated location is necessary for the family’s well being” [W.S. 21-4-401(b)] are eligible for isolation payment. Historically, isolation payments have included round trip mileage to and from the bus stop or school each morning and afternoon. This practice is consistent with statutory language “total round trip miles traveled each day to and from the bus stop or the school, as applicable The total round trip miles shall be multiplied by the applicable mileage rate prescribed under W.S. 9-3-103(a)(iii) to compute the daily mileage reimbursement amount.” [W.S. 21-4-401(d)]

Payment for round trip transportation for isolated students guarantees the right of isolated students to a free, public education. The recent opinion by the Wyoming Department of Education to reimburse half of the mileage expense for transporting students is contrary to statutory language. Should the WDE opinion stand, then a legislative change must be enacted to continue making whole the parental cost of transporting isolated students to and from rural bus stops or school each morning and evening.

Submitted by Park County School District #6 and Teton County School District #1

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

CORE VALUES

Based on our Mission, everything WSBA does should focus on these Core Values. The WSBA board, staff, and members have a responsibility as leaders in education to promote these values:

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1. All Wyoming students shall have equitable access to a high-quality public education that prepares them to thrive.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

2. All Wyoming students deserve school buildings that support the delivery of the “educational basket of goods”, (including appropriate space for student activities), provide a safe and secure environment for learning, and have a positive impact on their communities.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

3. A comprehensive public education shall provide for educational needs, addressing the whole child.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

4. Wyoming public schools must have adequate, predictable, and equitable funding. The responsibility to provide such funding rests on the State of Wyoming.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

5. Strong local school boards shall have access to professional development that addresses the roles and expectations of individual school board members and the board as a whole.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

6. School boards shall be responsible for developing their local measures of accountability consistent with state and federal law.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

7. School boards must have maximum flexibility to govern their schools.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

8. School boards, as elected officials, shall be responsible to their communities to ensure student success.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

9. School boards, as stewards of public funds, shall maintain fiscal responsibility to their communities.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm

10. School boards support full funding for the “educational basket of goods” and believe all state and federal mandates shall be fully funded.

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm