

2020 WSBA Delegate Assembly – Items Approved

The 2020 WSBA Delegate Assembly considered five resolutions during the virtual assembly. Resolutions adopted by the 2020 Delegate Assembly will become the guiding principles for the 2021 Legislative session and will be referred to the Board of Directors as possible Legislative Goals for the 2022 Legislative Session. The Board of Directors will determine the Legislative Goals for the 2022 Legislative Session at their Summer 2021 meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

2022.1 Mandatory Attendance Ages – Upper End

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Boards Association supports the learning and growth of Wyoming’s children, as well as lowering the dropout rate and improving the graduation rate for students in Wyoming. Therefore, the Wyoming School Boards Association supports expanding the public school mandatory attendance age to 18 or graduation, whichever comes first. It is recommended that homeschooled students be excluded.

Rationale: Reducing the dropout rate is the rationale behind the proposal to increase the compulsory attendance age to 18.

Submitted by Sheridan County School District #2

Delegate Assembly Action: **Affirm**

2022.2 Mandatory Attendance Ages – Lower End

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming School Boards Association supports the learning and growth of Wyoming’s young children. Therefore, the Wyoming School Boards Association supports expanding the public school mandatory attendance age from 7 for first grade to 6 for students to begin Kindergarten with dates established according to state statute. It is recommended that homeschooled students be excluded.

Rationale: All Wyoming children should be enrolled in school by the age of 6 to ensure a healthy and accelerated start to their education.

Submitted by Sheridan County School District #2

Delegate Assembly Action: **Affirm**

2022.3 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 identified 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 sessions, but it is desirable to provide a clear authority for the school board to have confidential discussions about matters of school safety and security in an executive session. Any action taken by the board as a result of the

2020 WSBA Delegate Assembly – Items Approved

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

2022.5 A Proposal for a One Penny Sales Tax for the School Foundation Program Account

WHEREAS, the State of Wyoming faces a chronic budget crisis impacting the ability of school districts to provide an adequate and proper education for students.

WHEREAS, the Wyoming Legislature is required to fund and maintain a thorough and efficient system of public schools, adequate to the proper instruction of all youth of the state.

WHEREAS, the financial projections for essential sources of revenue for public education generated through ad valorem taxes are insufficient to address the funding deficit in the School Foundation Program Account.

WHEREAS, funding the budget deficit solely by a reduction to school district funding would result in a significant fiscal impact on school district operations that would severely compromise school districts' ability to provide the required level of education.

WHEREAS, the tax capacity calculated by the Legislative Service Office comparing median tax rates of regional states to Wyoming illustrates an opportunity to generate additional sales tax revenue while remaining below the median rate of regional states.

WHEREAS, regularly assessing an additional one penny sales tax would generate approximately \$150 million in additional revenue for public education in Wyoming.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wyoming School Boards Association supports the addition of a one penny sales tax for the School Foundation Program Account. This increase in revenue for education will allow the State of Wyoming to decrease the deficit for education, while allowing the State to maintain a quality education program as required by the Wyoming Constitution.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wyoming School Boards Association will communicate this position to the elected representatives of the Wyoming Legislature.

Rationale: Both the Governor and Select Committee on School Finance Recalibration have asked local school boards to have community conversations about the impact of potential cuts to district budgets and potential solutions to the budget deficit. With revenue enhancements being the primarily alternative to cuts, it is important for local school boards to have conversations about both cuts and revenue enhancements. In fact, these are two of the pieces identified by a subcommittee of the Joint Education Committee in 2016 as solutions for the K-12 Education Funding Deficit. The WSBA Delegate Assembly has endorsed the White Paper authored by that subcommittee and endorse by the Joint Education Committee. While few desire more taxes, limited measures that are specifically designated for school funding may be preferable to the

2020 WSBA Delegate Assembly – Items Approved

severe cuts that would be warranted as the sole solution to the budget deficit. A recent study by the Wyoming Legislative Service Office illustrated how Wyoming compared with its surrounding states in a variety of taxes. It is obvious from the data provided that an increase in the statewide sales tax will generate the most revenue of the other taxing options. A portion of that revenue would be generated from non-Wyoming residents, sharing the burden with out-of-state visitors. Additionally, increases to property/ad valorem taxes would take 18 months before they generate revenue to the School Foundation Program Account, while revenue from sales and use tax would be available within 30 days. This tax option could also be limited to be discontinued when no longer needed.

The additional one penny sales tax should be directed to the State’s School Foundation Program Account, not the State’s General Fund.

Submitted by WSBA Board of Directors

Delegate Assembly Action: Affirm
