



2022 Legislative Agenda

AFT Washington is a state federation of 38 locals representing thousands of education workers, including Head Start educators, preK-12 classified workers in roles including bus drivers, nutrition workers, paraeducators, and more, faculty and staff at 19 community and technical colleges, and faculty at the regional 4-year public universities.

We have used a racial equity lens in crafting this 2022 Legislative Agenda and will apply it in assessing the impact of legislation we propose. We recognize the urgent need to dismantle systems of racism and the connections between economic and racial oppression.

PreK-12

- **School Employee Benefits (SEBB):** Access to healthcare is essential to our members. With the establishment of SEBB, our Head Start members in ESD 113 gained access to more affordable healthcare than they previously had. Unfortunately, this mandate went unfunded by the state, resulting in negative consequences for our members and the children and families they serve. The ESD spends approximately \$1 million annually to fill the gap created by this unfunded mandate. With funding to cover the ESD's costs for SEBB, the district will be able to increase services to children and families, increase access to transportation, and attract and retain caring, qualified staff.

Higher Education

- **Increasing Student Success by Investing in Wrap-Around Services:** By creating a robust aid program to provide resources for ancillary aid to students, including childcare, food, transportation, and medical care, Washington state will improve its wrap-around services for students, improving student outcomes and working toward the state's goal of increased educational-credential attainment for state residents.

All Constituencies

- **Cost-of-Living Adjustment:** CTC faculty and staff at technical colleges are covered by I-732, mandating a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). We will work to ensure these members get a COLA that reflects the actual increased cost of living, and we will prioritize the expansion of that COLA for our classified staff members, four-year college faculty, college staff and retirees who are not currently covered by I-732.
- **Increasing Access to Student Loan Forgiveness:** Student loan debt has been a crisis for many years. We have seen significant improvements in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program but we need clarity around calculations of work hours for eligibility for adjunct faculty and to ensure that all potential beneficiaries know about the program. We will pursue improvements that will increase our members' access to public service loan forgiveness.

Progressive Revenue

Public education and public sector jobs are critical parts of the public good that we need to invest in. The only way we can do this is through raising progressive revenue. We broadly support policies that build an economy that works for all and that update our tax code to be more equitable, including the following:

- **Asking millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share through a wealth tax (HB 1406).** The wealth tax would create a 1% tax only on intangible financial assets, such as publicly-traded options, futures contracts, and stocks and bonds. Investment of the revenue generated by the wealth tax would fund critical services, such as education, childcare, public health, housing, and public safety.
- **Tax large estates (HB 1465)** so that money is redistributed back the state rather than perpetuating intergenerational wealth. Revenue from the bill would go into the Equity Housing Account and be used to address homelessness.

Labor

The Washington State Labor Council has developed the Working Families Recovery Agenda, which includes a wide range of policy improvements. We will prioritize legislation that directly impacts our members' needs and

concerns, and we will support legislation addressing issues facing working people more generally.

Social Justice

We will support bills identified by our community partners, including the Communities for our Colleges Coalition, Racial Equity Team, and others that create equity and social justice for Washingtonians.

Healthcare for All

We continue our participation on the steering committee of the Healthcare Is a Human Right coalition and will continue to support legislation that increases access to high quality healthcare and moves us toward universal healthcare for all.