

State Senate adds education money to budget; no teacher raises

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By [LISA BAUMANN](#)

The Associated Press
The Seattle Times

OLYMPIA — The Washington state Senate passed a supplemental budget Thursday that adds some money for education.

Senate Bill 6002 passed on a 41-8 vote. Under the spending plan, the State Need Grant Program would receive an additional \$5 million related to the immigrant financial aid bill known as the Dream Act or Real Hope Act. Gov. Jay Inslee signed the related bill into law Wednesday.

The measure also includes \$25 million for college scholarships for those pursuing a four-year degree in a field of study that's in high demand and extends a ban on increasing resident undergraduate tuition for the 2014-15 school year.

For K-12 education, just over \$38 million would go toward technology-related materials and supplies for the classroom.

Sen. Andy Hill, a Republican from Redmond who is the main budget writer, said the budget is balanced and focused on education.

“It sets us up for next year,” he said.

The proposed supplemental budget makes adjustments to the \$33.6 billion, two-year state operating budget approved by the Legislature last year.

The Senate budget seeks about \$96 million in additional spending. Some senators didn't think that went far enough toward meeting the 2012 McCleary decision requirements. In that decision, the Washington Supreme Court said the state is not meeting its constitutional duty to amply pay for the cost of basic education and that the state depends too much on local dollars.

Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D-Bothell, proposed an amendment that would have restored teachers' voter-approved cost-of-living raises, which have been suspended in the last few budget cycles. Her amendment failed and she voted against the measure.

"I look forward to the other body bringing us other dollars to invest in education," she said.

The Senate proposal also provides \$2 million toward the creation of a medical-marijuana registry, \$5 million for a new 265-bed prison unit at the Washington State Penitentiary for men and nearly \$7 million for wildfire suppression. It also creates or expands several tax exemptions.

The budget will need to be reconciled with a budget package proposed in the House, part of which includes cost-of-living raises for teachers.