

# Basic education funding plan approved by Senate

By [Joanna Sappenfield](#) | February 17, 2016 | 0 Comments  
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The Senate passed an education funding bill Tuesday that matches one previously approved by the House.

[Senate Bill 6195](#) passed out of the Senate on a 26-23 vote. It was amended to be identical to [House Bill 2366](#) that was approved by the House in January.

The bill requires next year's Legislature to end the state's over reliance on local school levies, collect data on teacher compensation and create a task force to continue working on the issue before the 2017 legislative session.

Nearly all the lawmakers agreed that the bill was not ideal.

Both Sen. **Ann Rivers**, R-La Center, and Sen. **Christine Rolfes**, D-Bainbridge Island, voted in support of the bill. They said the bill was not perfect, but it was a step forward.

Sen. **Bruce Dammeier**, R-Puyallup, said he was "reluctant" to support the bill but the "reality is this bill is better than no bill." He said all it does is push the solution out another year.

"Today we are teaching our children a math lesson," he said. "Unfortunately while they really need to be learning about the Pythagorean theorem, today we are teaching them about the lowest common denominator."

Sen. **Kevin Ranker**, D-Orcas Island, said the bill "does not solve the problem." While he voted in support of the bill, Ranker said it is not something lawmakers should be happy about.

"We should not celebrate this," he said. "We should not feel like we've done our work. We should not feel like we've satisfied our moral and constitutional obligation."



Sen. **Michael Baumgartner**, R-Spokane, opposed the plan, saying that the McCleary definition of basic education is flawed. He said pouring money into a broken system will not fix it.

“I think what improves educational outcomes for students is great families being more involved in their kids’ education, choice and opportunities, competition, and a shake up of a broken system of education,” he said.

Sen. **Jamie Pedersen**, D-Seattle, also voted no on the proposal. He said that this was a just a “bill for the sake of having a bill.”

“I never dreamt that in 2009 when we started making our plan that we would be here staring at the 2017-18 biennium,” he said. “With nothing better to say than that we are going to do something about this next year. I find that really, really disappointing and disturbing.”

In a statement, Gov. **Jay Insee** praised the House and Senate for passing the legislation.

“It is great news to see that both the House and Senate have passed legislation with bipartisan support to ensure we continue the necessary next steps towards fully funding our schools,” he said.

The legislation will go back to the House for approval and then to the governor for signature.

[Watch TVW video of the floor debate here.](#)