

## **2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES --**

The Washington State School Retirees' Association (WSSRA) is made up of 18,000 active and retired school personnel. WSSRA's mission is to develop, propose, and support action benefiting all school retirees.

WSSRA legislative priorities:

- **TRS 1 & PERS 1 Pension Recovery.**
  - Plan 1 retirees have had one Cost of Living Adjustment since 2010. Plan 1 retirees have lost up to 33% of their purchasing power due to inflation. In 2018, the Washington State Legislature granted a one-time 1.5% COLA; however, inflation is expected to be 3.3% in 2018. Therefore, retirees continue to lose money.
- **Restore Retiree Healthcare Benefits.**
  - The Legislature lowered the Medicare Healthcare Benefit from \$183 to \$150 in 2011. In 2018 we successfully lobbied for an increase to \$168 per month. Restoring the Medical Benefit to \$183 per month will mitigate against the loss of purchasing power from increasing healthcare premiums.
- **Expand and Equalizes the Full Retirement Age in Plans 2 & 3.**
  - The current full retirement age in Plans 2 & 3 is age 65. Employees can leave at age 62 but are penalized for working part-time in schools or local governments. We are advocating for eliminating those work penalties as well as dropping the retirement age to 60 - similar to public safety employees.
- **Make the Actuarially Recommended Payment to the State Pension Funds.**
  - TRS 1 & PERS 1 are underfunded due to past skipped payments by the State. Plans 2 & 3 are fully funded. Making the recommended payments will keep all three plans on track.
- **Protect Retirees in Transition to New Health Providers.**
  - The State has created a School Employee Benefits Board (SEBB) and is studying the possibility of removing school retirees from the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) and putting them in new plans under the SEBB. Any changes must maintain or improve current benefits.