

# IS OUR WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM TO BIG TO FAIL?



## SCHOOL BOND GROUND HOG DAY!

**This legislative session beginning on January 8th is not the first attempt that has been made to reduce the bond passage from 60% to a simple majority of 50.1%. They are persistent in efforts to make things as simple and easy as possible for all school districts, particularly those that for a multitude of reasons cannot pass their bonds. Sort of like how Washington decided that no students would fail during or after COVID, and now they are still using that standard for student performance.**

# SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON EDUCATION (K-12)

"Education is the kindling of a flame, not  
the filling of a vessel." – Socrates

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By Admin1 / [Leave a Comment](#)

## House Bill 1353 – Reducing school bond approval from 60% to 50% +1: A Constitutional Amendment

**House Bill 1353**  
**School bond approval**  
**From**  
**60% to 50% +1**

*Back in 2007 the legislature reduced the approval requirement for levy's to 50% +1 from the historical 50% supermajority. The change was made at the request of school districts around the state who complained levy's failed too often and needed to be easier to pass. Left in place was the requirement that capital*

*bonds require a 60% approval to pass.*

Fast forward to 2023. A new House Bill #1353 attempts to reduce the 60% to 50% plus one. Why? Because school districts across the state complain it's too hard to get voter approval so they need a lower threshold to get bonds passed. Teachers unions want the newest and best facilities. Votes who support schools no matter the cost want easier passage.

Here's the summary paragraph for the proposed bill: **HB 1353 Feb 2023**

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. This act takes effect if the proposed 25 amendment to Article VII, section 2 and Article VIII, section 6 of 26 the state Constitution (H-0414/23) providing for a simple majority of 27 voters voting to authorize school district bonds is validly submitted 28 to and is approved and ratified by the voters at the next general 29 election and certified by the secretary of state.

Should the bond approval stay at 60% rather than shrink to 50% + 1?

**YES.** *Why?*

Levy's are run for 3 or 4 years (in most cases) so voters have the opportunity to make changes in a relatively short period of time. Bonds are generally 25-30 years in duration and address the spending of hundreds of millions of dollars (locally the Vancouver SD got nearly \$1 billion a few years ago). By approving bonds future voters and generations are being bound to pay the bill. That SHOULD require a greater need to validate and justify bonds. School boards and school districts should need to work VERY hard to convince voters and taxpayers to agree to take on the property tax burden that comes with the bond approval. Getting a 50% approval reduces the effort to sell the need. [Note: It's common for less than 1/3rd of voters to turn out. Do you want a simple majority of 1/3rd or less of voters to pass the massive tax increases?]

This bill has already been "read" and passed on to the Education Committee in the House:

**Education (wa.gov)** You can email each of the Ed Committee members with your thoughts.

You can also comment by going to: **Washington State Legislature** and clicking "Comment on the Bill" on the button on the upper right side of your screen. That will direct you to your Legislative District Reps.

If you don't take a stand and be heard NOW prepare to suffer the consequences.

Here is the link to this article: <https://tinyurl.com/bdmenfmj>