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## CAR WASH



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Kristen Wilder and Kevin Chu help wash a car June 9 at a fund raiser for the A. Philip Randolph Institute Seattle Young Adult Chapter. The group is raising money for a trip to the APRI National Education Conference in Washington DC in August.

## Schools Audit Results

### Report says the obvious: Give more money to classrooms

By Donna Gordon Blankinship  
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Washington state school districts could do a better job getting more of the \$12 billion spent each year on education into classrooms, where it will make the most difference, a new state audit said.

The performance audit released Wednesday included detailed comparisons among school districts of similar size, as well as suggestions about how some are spending more money in the classroom than others.

The audit noted that moving just one percent of school spending from administrative offices to the classroom would be enough to pay for more than 1,000 teachers statewide.

Among the cost-saving suggestions were: Buy fuel for school buses in bulk, use more USDA surplus food in the lunchroom, and look at having some services provided by the private sector.

It also suggests cutting staffing dollars by making such changes as hiring licensed practical nurses instead of registered nurses for school infirmaries, sharing costs with neighboring districts, and contracting with the state or education service districts for some things.

Although many of the cost differences among districts involve choices, some are out of their control, such as how many special education students they serve.

The state auditor decided to do this performance review because taking a closer look at education spending has been repeatedly identified by citizens and lawmakers as a high priority, said department spokeswoman Mindy Chambers. About 43 percent of the state budget is spent on K-12 education.

Auditor Brian Sonntag wanted the report to be practical for school districts and informative for lawmakers, while not trying to offer a one-size-fits-all approach, Chambers said.

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## Fuel Costs Down -- but Not Here

### Cantwell asks Trade Commission to look at high state gas prices

SEATTLE (AP) — Sen. Maria Cantwell on Thursday asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate why Washington state gas prices increased to near-record levels in May, even as world oil and national average gas prices declined.

Average Washington gas prices are only a few cents lower than the previous record high of \$4.35, set in July 2008, when oil was trading at almost \$150 per barrel, the Washington Democrat said in a letter. The

price of crude oil dropped below \$85 a barrel Thursday.

Cantwell's letter referred to a McCullough Research report that she says found Washington state gas prices should have fallen to \$3.51 per gallon if prices had followed supply costs.

On Monday, the AAA auto club reported the average price of a gallon of gasoline in Washington State was \$4.28. That's up a penny in a week and 20 cents in a month. It was 69 cents higher than the national average.

The national average price of gasoline dropped 17 cents per gallon over the month of May, Cantwell wrote.

In late May, Gov. Chris Gregoire told the state Department of Commerce to monitor rising gas prices in the state and asked the agency to recommend what actions can be taken to help reduce costs to drivers.

The governor sent letters to every refinery in Washington, asking them to take all prudent measures to increase production and supplies sufficiently to

reduce costs for West Coast consumers. She said she planned to send similar letters to refineries in California.

Repairs and maintenance to a BP refinery at Cherry Point near Blaine, Wash., were completed in May and that refinery has resumed normal operations after a three-month outage blamed on a Feb. 17 fire.

The outage has been cited as one reason that gasoline prices have been higher on the West Coast than the rest of the nation.

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## Port, Unions Fight Against NBA Arena

### Longshore workers call Sodo plans gentrification, a 'land grab'

By Manuel Valdes  
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — The Port of Seattle, a business association and the longshoremen union characterized a proposed new events arena in Seattle's industrial district as a "land grab" that threatens jobs because it could increase traffic and land value.

"This is just not about a basketball arena.

This is about a land grab in the Sodo area and changing it," Herald Ugles of the longshoremen union told the Seattle City Council on Thursday. "You can build a basketball arena anywhere. But you cannot build a world class deep water port anywhere. And that's what we have in Seattle right now."

The group's comments came as the city traffic study funded by the private investor

concluded that additional traffic brought by events at the arena would not have a major impact on port and freight operations.

Hedge-fund manager Chris Hansen has proposed building a nearly \$500 million arena just south of Safeco and CenturyLink fields. The plan calls for nearly \$300 million in private investment from Hansen's

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