

LAWMAKERS: FOLLOW THIS RECIPE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Invest in a continuum of equity and excellence from early learning through higher education

To: Governor Jay Inslee, House Speaker Frank Chopp, Senate Majority Leader Mark Schoesler, Senate Democratic Leader Sharon Nelson, & House Minority Leader Dan Kristiansen

Cc: All Washington legislators

We appreciate the challenge before you to pass a state budget that puts Washington on the right path to a vibrant future economy with homegrown talent. Our state's economic future depends on the success of Washington students. That success requires a strong foundation in early childhood, a chance to grow and learn in an equitable K-12 system, and the opportunity to further specialize and access training, certification, and degrees in our highly-regarded system of two- and four-year postsecondary institutions.

To this end, the Cradle Through College Coalition urges you to include the following priorities in your budget proposals:

• **Expand Access to High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten (ECEAP)**

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a proven program that helps low-income children improve school readiness and long term outcomes. Open the ECEAP door for 2,700 more children in low-income families to get off to a strong start. Sustain high-quality programs and teachers by investing \$26 million in facilities and increasing the provider rate by 16% per child.

• **Increase Access for Postsecondary Success**

Provide two- and four-year institutions with the funding necessary to keep tuition costs stable for students and offer the financial aid, advising, and support necessary for student success. Last year, 24,000 low-income students qualified for the State Need Grant, but funds were not available to serve them. Fully fund the State Need Grant so that lack of financial aid does not cut Washington students off from the opportunity for postsecondary success.

• **End the K-12 Overreliance on Local Levies for Basic Education**

The current levy system penalizes poor and rural districts due to their low property tax bases. A new funding system should correct this inequity.

• **Make McCleary Work**

As the legislature addresses the *McCleary* mandate, it should ensure that new investments include accountability measures to close the opportunity gap, deliver results, and encourage innovation. The budget can support student outcomes by addressing the following:

- **Improve how we fund schools:** Utilize a student-centered model with enhancements for students and schools with a high concentration of poverty, foster children, and homeless youth. Ensure that funding allocated is used for these purposes and a transparent system of accountability is in place.
- **Improve how we attract and retain good teachers:** Our compensation system should include provisions that compensate educators fairly, address regional cost of living differences, increase starting pay for new teachers, and incentivize teaching high demand subjects and teaching in high poverty and rural schools. Strong professional supports for teachers, paraeducators, and principals should be an integral part of the system.
- **Increase student supports:** We must increase access to supportive, research-based programming and parent engagement efforts. This includes increasing supports for students who are behind, increasing funding for career and dual-credit pathways, bolstering non-academic supports like social-emotional learning, ensuring access to guidance counseling, and partnering with community-based organizations. Staff must be trained and available to support the needs of every student.
- **Improve innovation and accountability:** High poverty schools should be granted greater flexibility in how they use their funds to develop innovative solutions to best fit the needs of their students and communities. Information about how funds are being used should be transparent and accessible so that it is clear how every dollar invested is contributing to improved results for students. Today, it is impossible to track how investments lead to results across the continuum.

• **Increase Revenue to Invest in Washington's Future**

Washington's nonpartisan four-year budget outlook shows that projected revenue growth will be insufficient to cover increased K-12 education spending needs. With additional resources also needed in early learning and higher education, increased state revenue is a necessary ingredient to achieve the outcomes we desire.

As you do this important work, please recognize that health and human services are essential to meeting the basic needs of children and their families so that they can be healthy and ready to learn. The education continuum cannot be funded by cutting or compromising health and human services. The above priorities align with the Cradle Through College Coalition's principles, which are available on our website:

C2CCoalition.org.

Thank you for your leadership and continued efforts on the budget. Including these priorities in the final 2017-19 budgets will help advance equity, close opportunity gaps, and improve outcomes for all children in Washington.

Sincerely,

Cradle Through College Coalition

Want to learn more and get involved? You can sign up at <http://c2ccoalition.org>



LIKE THE RECIPE? TAKE ACTION TODAY!

Call your legislators and encourage them to support the full education continuum: 1-800-562-6000

Signed by:

Steering Committee

Children's Alliance
College Success Foundation
Community Center for Education Results
League of Education Voters
Rural Alliance for College Success
Solid Ground
Statewide Poverty Action Network

Educational Institutions

Auburn School District
Bates Technical College
Bellevue College
Bellingham Technical College
Big Bend Community College
Cascadia College
Centralia College
Children's Home Society of WA
Clark College
Clover Park Technical College
Columbia Basin College
Community Colleges of Spokane
Denise Louie Education Center
Edmonds Community College
Educational Service District 105
El Centro de La Raza
EPIC – Enterprise for Progress In the Community
Everett Community College
Federal Way Public Schools
From Roots to Wings Early Learning
Grays Harbor College
Green River College
Hearing, Speech & Deaf Center (HSDC)
Highline College
Highline School District
Kent School District
Lake Washington Institute of Technology
Lower Columbia College
Meter Music School
North Seattle College
Olympic College
Peninsula College
Pierce College
Pierce College Fort Steilacoom
Pierce College Puyallup
Puget Sound Educational Service District
Renton School District
Renton Technical College
Seattle Central College
Seattle Colleges
Shoreline Community College
Skagit Valley College
South Puget Sound Community College
South Seattle College
Spokane Community College
Spokane Falls Community College
Tacoma Community College
Tiny Trees Preschool
Tukwila School District
University of Washington
Walla Walla Community College
Wellspring Family Services
Wenatchee Valley College
Western Washington University
Whatcom Community College
Yakima Valley College

Organizations & Coalitions

AESD - Washington State Association of Educational Service Districts
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Puget Sound
Chelan-Douglas TOGETHER for Youth
Child Care Aware of Washington
College Access Now
Columbia City Consulting
Committee for Children
Communities in Schools of Washington
Democrats for Education Reform
GRADUATE TACOMA! Foundation for Tacoma Students
Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance
Investing in Children Coalition South Central Washington
Kent Youth and Family Services
MomsRising
Nesholm Family Foundation
Office of King County Executive - Dow Constantine
Office of the City of Seattle Mayor - Ed Murray
Office of Seattle City Councilmember - Tim Burgess
Okanogan County Community Coalition
One America
Page Ahead Children's Literacy Program
Parent-Child Home Program
Partners for Our Children
Project Child Success
Reach Out and Read WA State School's Out WA
Seattle Education Access
Seattle Foundation
Seattle Housing Authority
Service Learning Seattle
SOAR
Sound Discipline
Southeast Seattle Education Coalition (SESEC)
Southwest Youth and Family Services
Sproutable, Inc.
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)
STEM Paths Innovation Network
The Child Care Action Council of Thurston County
The Renton Housing Authority
Thrive Washington
TOGETHER!
Treehouse
Visions for Early Learning/ESD 113
Voices of Tomorrow
Washington Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
WA Association of Community and Technical Colleges (WACTC)
Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP
Washington Student Association
WithinReach
Yakima Valley Community Foundation
YMCA of Greater Seattle
Youth Development Executives of King County
Youth Source
YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish

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