

## 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](http://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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