

Request for Public Point of View: A Successful K-12 Public School System

As discussed during the July 13th meeting of the Education Funding Task Force (EFTF), members of the EFTF would like to request the view point of the public regarding a successful K-12 Public School System. Specifically, members would like to know what success looks like in Washington's K-12 Public School System.

Your opinion must be submitted by e-mail at EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov. Please submit a short outline or description of what you feel would define a successful Washington K-12 public school system by September 11th.

Fourteen responses were received.

Page numbers for the merged document are in the footer in blue.

1. Tamara Boynton-Howard (pg. 2)
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From: Tamara Boynton-Howard
Sent: Tuesday, August 9, 2016 8:17 AM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: A Successful K-12 Public School System

In Washington, a successful public school system ensures that students are engaged, active learners. They leave with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to navigate the workforce. I believe students get these skills mostly in CTE courses. From human service careers to business education to STEM and the arts, students create projects that not only impact their communities but they leave with the ability to communicate, collaborate, and think critically. I have seen students come up with creative solutions to community problems. This is what Washington needs more of- education that uses project based learning to influence the community.

Best,

Tamara Boynton - Howard

From: Rebecca Bratsman
Sent: Thursday, September 8, 2016 10:53 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: My Vision for Education

To Whom It May Concern,

I have four sons moving through the public education system in Washington state.

My vision for education is one that includes beautiful schools. I would like my sons to go to a safe school, with enough gym space so that they can take longer than 15 minutes to eat lunch. I would like to not spend six months of my life fundraising so that my kindergartner can have playground equipment. I would like to not worry about clean drinking water, and one toilet per 100 children, and portables that aren't heated correctly, and special education students moved from a building so that it can be condemned, and administrators' desperate efforts to squeeze in more children because they can't pass that magic 60% bond threshold.

I love this state, but I'm ashamed of it when I talk to my family----whose own states build beautiful new schools IN ANTICIPATION of student growth based on birthrates. My oldest son is halfway through middle school. The schools in my town have been overcrowded for 15 years. He will probably never experience a school that isn't crumbling, crowded, or out-of-date. So, education, for me, is no longer about curriculum, or even teachers. It is narrowed down to whether or not there is literally space in a school to educate my children. And I'm afraid that Washington is not providing that physical space at all.

My vision for education in Washington is that YOU WILL BUILD SCHOOLS.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Bratsman
Sequim, WA

From: Charles Hoff
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2016 1:55 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision Statement

What is a "real" high school graduate capable of?

Either

1. Having the grades and ACT/SAT scores needed to gain admission to a 4 year college that has admission standards. I.E. three years of mathematics including Algebra II and two years of a foreign language other than American Sign Language or if bi lingual in a language other than their native language.
2. Completion of a vocational program that is certified by employers such as NATEF, NIMS, etc. This program should be of approximately 1000 hours in duration. Eligibility for the certification should be in the hands of employers, not the school district just as ACT/SAT scores are.

We need to stop the "Juvenile Social Hall" syndrome that is so valid for a very significant portion of our high school graduates.

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Regards,

Charlie Hoff

"Getting your child a quality education is not a spectator sport." C. Hoff

From: David Iseminger
Sent: Thursday, September 1, 2016 12:06 AM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: FW: EFTF Visioning submission - education funding plan

Also submitting, with this email, to the official email channel for suggestions/perspectives.

Thanks,
-David Iseminger

From: David Iseminger
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2016 9:18 PM
Subject: EFTF Visioning submission - education funding plan

Dear Sen. Rivers and Rep. Lytton,

Thanks for the opportunity to submit an education funding model/plan as part of the EFTF “vision proposals” phase. Attached please find the following three documents, which explain and define the financial modeling associated with my proposal for funding:

- ✍ **Iseminger Funding Plan Explanation and FAQ (PDF)** – this document explains the accompanying Revenue Model sheet in detail, with an overview and explanations of called-out line items.
- ✍ **Revenue Model with Comments (PDF)** – this is the single-page summary from the (detailed and multi-page) funding model, where all calculations are organized, rolled up and summarized, and explained.
- ✍ **Revenue Model with Comments (PNG)** – this is the same document, but as an image rather than a PDF.

I also plan on attending the EFTF Hearing next week, and hope to testify about the plan and provide answers to any questions that might come up. Of course, feel free to send questions to me in email too – I’m happy to clarify anything that isn’t clear.

Thanks again, and I look forward to seeing you both next week.

Sincerely,
-David Iseminger

Iseminger Education Finance Plan

The goal of this education funding plan is to provide a **stable, sustainable, and statewide** revenue structure for Washington that works for **schools, taxpayers, and citizens**. The funding plan is designed to be passable by the Washington State Legislature, and acceptable to the Washington State Supreme Court to meet the requirements of the McCleary decision.

This plan **ends reliance on local levies, fully funds Basic Education, ensures the ongoing financial security of local school districts**, and does so without unwanted taxes, account gimmickry, or carve-outs from other state programs.

This plan also takes into consideration **the work that has occurred** since the passage of ESHB 2261 and its redefinition of Basic Education. Many workgroups have met and worked through possible solutions to various Basic Education challenges. This funding plan is based on the outcome of their work in that it considers their conclusions, addresses many of their collective concerns, and meets many of the requirements they identified for funding levels and sustainability. I was a member of the first of those work groups, the **FTWGW** (Funding Formula Technical Work Group); and as a locally elected School Board Director and WSSDA Board of Directors member, I continue to hear those concerns and am active in education issues – including local, state, and federal issues.

This funding plan isn't magic, nor does it rely on some new unpassable tax. It's based on a straightforward, stable model built on natural growth and expansion, which can adjust to unforeseen adverse economic conditions and still get us to **full state funding of Basic Education**.

And, this plan is **fully modeled** down to each individual district, including current local levy rates and state- and county-created forecasting, as well as OSPI-provided data. I didn't make this stuff up.

THE FOUR TENETS

This funding plan is based on four **TENETS**, which when taken together, moves the state to full funding and completely removes the use and reliance of local levies for Basic Education. These four tenets work as a whole – none of them can be excluded from this holistic plan. Those four **TENETS** are the following:

- **TENET 1** – Reserve **50% of NEW REVENUE** for Basic Education
- **TENET 2** – Intelligently **transition a portion of current LOCAL LEVY funding** to state collection, then still allow local levies for enhancements.
- **TENET 3** – Use and reserve Increased **STATE BONDING CAPACITY** to help fund capital facilities needs
- **TENET 4** – **HOLD DISTRICTS HARMLESS** during the transition, allowing current high water mark levy capacity until the state fully funds education

The following sections describe each of the **FOUR TENETS** in detail, and are a guide to the **Revenue Modeling** sheet. After that is a **FAQ section** that includes answers to questions like: “Does this plan retain LEA funding?” (spoiler alert: Yes, it does). If you have questions about this plan, feel free to send them my way and if lots of folks would benefit from the answer, I'll include it and the answer in the FAQ.

Understanding the REVENUE MODELING sheet

The **Revenue Modeling** sheet is the rolled-up conclusion of a few other (big) modeling worksheets that do all the math and calculations associated with the model. On the image of the **Revenue Modeling** sheet, which is attached (or available, send me email for the image), you'll see bright pink numbers that correspond to each **Tenet** and look like the following (in this case, for **Tenet 1**):



Within the sheet image are various letters too, which call out *areas of interest or further explanation*. They look like the following:



In the following explanatory sections, you'll see explanations that correspond to those **Tenets** and to lettered lines on the **Revenue Modeling** sheet.

TENET 1 – Reserve 50% of NEW REVENUE for Basic Education



This Tenet is fairly straightforward. For all new revenue the state brings in, starting in 2017, reserve 50% for funding of the K-12 definition of Basic Education. This harnesses the natural growth of the economy, using the state's own forecasts, to fund basic education.

The following letters correspond to lines or sections on the **Revenue Modeling** sheet:



Growth of annual state revenues, as a percent, based on forecasts from the Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. You can see these projections yourself at http://www.erfc.wa.gov/forecasts/documents/rev20160615_color.pdf (p.23/slide 19).



Percentage of annual state revenue to be reserved for Basic Education. Once sufficient funding for full funding of Basic Education is reached (it won't take 50% forever), this percentage is reduced to meet only the year's funding needs. For example, if \$4.0 billion in cumulative increase in education funding for 2024 meets the Basic Education funding requirement, the percentage in 2025 could be reduced to whatever is necessary to maintain full funding of education (in this example, 35%).

This flexibility makes this funding model durable; if an economic downturn occurs in 2019, the 50% reserved for basic education simply continues until the requirement is met. This provides for significant annual increases in revenue (averaging more than \$500M), without gutting other important state programs, and also sunsets the 50% level once the goal and requirement are met.



Property appreciation is based on August 2016 King County Assessed Value Forecast, but then I adjusted that growth .66 for approximate statewide growth average. You can find this at http://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/business/Forecasting/documents/August2016_forecast_pdfv2.ash

[x?la=en](#) (p.2) This conservative approach (anticipating statewide growth at .66 of the King County anticipated growth) prevents the model from being overly optimistic about property tax revenues. Property value appreciation only comes into play in **Tenet 2**, on the dark purple line, but I kept growth projections here at the top for convenience.



Actual funding dedicated to Basic Education realized from Tenet 1's 50% of revenue growth, for each year in the model. Hovers in the mid-\$400 million each year (as an *increase* over the previous year) for most of the model.

TENET 2 – Intelligently transition a portion of current LOCAL LEVY funding to state collection, then still allow local levies for enhancements.



Tenet 2 can be the most challenging to clearly articulate and to understand. It's the crux of the legal problem, and also where the most angst and polarization has occurred. And rightly so: school districts don't trust the state to fully fund education, and as such, aren't willing to relinquish their ability to pass local levies to deliver the education their communities demand. Local districts – their school boards and their community of educators – are the people who ultimately bear the brunt of anything that appears a backward step in education, regardless of circumstances.

Thus the sticky situation we find ourselves in today, with local levies paying for what the state does not... local levies that ultimately end up funding a significant portion of Basic Ed.

This tenet addresses these concerns, and gets districts out from under the burden of local levies funding basic education, without pulling the rug from under them during the transition process.

Here's how the levy transition works: School districts that have current levies (upon enactment of this plan) retain the ability to run local levies such that their current total revenue (levy + state + federal) remains consistent through any transition to state collection. For convenience, let's call that the *high water mark* of total district funding. Once the state is funding a district to that district's high water mark, the district's levy authority transitions to the new levy authority (\$1.50 / 1,000 or 10% of funding, whichever is more), which can then (and only) be used for enhancements. This levy transition is actually **Tenet 4**, but it's important to understand now because it influences the upcoming tenets and the rest of the model. Let's look at an example.

Example: Lake Stevens School District has current funding of \$100 million, \$15 million of which is local levies (leaving \$85 million from the state and other sources). Three years after this plan is enacted, in 2019, let's say the state (plus other sources) is providing \$92 million to Lake Stevens. At that point, our local levy collection authority is \$8 million (if a levy is already on the books, the difference is rolled back). Once the state provides \$100 million, Lake Stevens levy authority shifts to the enhancements levy authority (\$1.50 / 1,000 or 10% of funding, whichever is more). If an existing levy ends during this transition, Lake Stevens can run another levy at whatever the difference is, such as \$8 million from the previous example. That will be a pleasant mil-rate burn down experience for local communities.

An inflation, student growth, and cost factor will be applied to that high water mark and factored in each year, but that's too complex to explain here (many variables). Just know that districts will retain the ability to run local levies throughout the transition, at their high water mark of funding, to ensure the transition does not prevent local districts from delivering a seamless education experience for their communities, regardless of how long it takes the state to fully fund Basic Education.



This line shows the total of actual, voter approved and certified levies for all 295 districts across the state. Levies run between one and four years (and some will begin collection in 2017), which is why the totals are different for each year. 2017 becomes the *high water mark* for local levies. In Tenet 4 we'll see how this determines when the state funds what local districts are currently funding through levies.



This line shows how a *portion* of funds previously collected through local levies will transition to state collection. This is *not* a direct levy swap.

The state has taxing authority for the first \$3.60 per thousand of assessed value on property. It's currently collecting a significant chunk of that authority – an average of \$2.48 statewide, though the rate varies a bit from county to county. Due to state- and county-level funding transfers, the state's actual authority to collect is around \$3.30.

As local levies fall off the books (expire), or roll back because of state funding, the state will begin to collect that \$3.30 and dedicate that funding to education. Most local levies are more than \$.82/thousand (that's the difference between the current \$2.48 collection, and the state's \$3.30 cap), but in this plan, the state will not collect more than its (approximate) \$3.30 authority.

So what you see in the line highlighted with **e** (*Current Local Levies*) are local levies to be collected over the next year, which also sets the *high water mark*. In line **f** (*Funding from \$3.30 shift into State Authority*) you see how much the state will collect, *within its existing \$3.30 authority*, over the course of this plan and going forward.

In 2017, local levies are collecting \$2.527 billion in funding, and the state will collect \$569,123 in funding shifted to state collection within its available \$3.30 authority, mostly from the few districts that currently don't have a levy, or districts for whom their local levy, plus the current state collection (that \$2.48 average), adds up to less than the state's \$3.30 authority. For 2017 that's only 10 districts, each of which has no local levy.

As the years progress, more local levies fall off the books, and thus the state collection within that \$3.30 cap is collected and dedicated for Basic Education. But notice the difference between the high water mark (\$2.527 billion in 2017) of local levies, and the maximum state-collected property tax revenue (\$1.091 billion in 2025); that property tax levy is reducing as time goes on, leaving potential local capacity for enhancement levies, or a break for local taxpayers – whatever those local communities prefer to vote for. This model takes local levies out of basic education funding, shifts that burden to the state... at a property tax rate that will be lower than local school levies.

All of this transition, district-by-district and year-by-year, is fully modeled and forecasted through 2025 using state-provided forecasting numbers and OSPI-provided levy data.

TENET 3 – Use and reserve Increased STATE BONDING CAPACITY to help fund capital facilities needs



There's another benefit of having the state collect its full \$3.30 authority, beyond dedicating that consistent revenue stream to education: it increases the state's bonding capacity.

The state can bond (borrow, like a mortgage) up to 9% of its annual revenues. It uses the funds generated from issuing those bonds to construct and repair things like state office buildings, prisons, water infrastructure, and other capital projects. With more revenue comes more bonding capacity, and this funding plan would dedicate any increase in bonding capacity to building K-12 schools.

With Basic Education fully funded, we'll likely need more classrooms. With this plan, through 2024 there would be a total of **\$1.25 billion in bond funding to help with school capital projects**.



As the \$3.30 collection comes into effect, the bonding capacity resulting in that shift to state collection begins to add up. The *Education Bonding Capacity* line shows how much bonding capacity is created (as in, how much more than 9% does this \$3.30 collection add to the state's capacity). The *Capital Facilities Bond for Basic Ed* line, shown in bold, identifies how much bond funding would be available each year. Let's look at an explanation that clarifies the *Revenue Modeling* sheet:

Bonding Capacity Explanation: In 2020 the state's bonding capacity has increased by a total of 1.17 billion (\$1.71 billion) - \$.001 billion in 2017, \$.09 billion in 2018, \$.63 billion in 2019, and \$.46 billion in 2020. At that point if we run a bond for \$250 million, we use up \$.25 billion of our capacity (leaving a remaining \$.92 billion, shown in the line below it). In this model, we pay for that bonding out of proceeds, so that means we have \$17.5 million in bond debt service (using \$70 million in bond debt service for every \$1B in bonds).

Each year, as the state collection levels out at \$3.30 and property values modestly increase, the bonding capacity also increases. In this model, for five years (the same five years where funding for teachers, and the availability of teachers for hiring, begins to manifest) the state could run a \$250 million capital facilities bond to help districts cope with the need for more classrooms (as the prototypical school model becomes fully funded, enabling reduced student/teacher ratios). For five years in a row, that \$250 million each year would go a long way in getting districts capable of housing the students and educators that a fully funded state-provided Basic Education would enable.



In this model, the debt service for that **\$1.25 billion in school capital funding bonds** comes out before we get to the bottom line. In other words, this model pays the bonding debt out of the revenue it generates, before determining what's available for allocations to districts.

TENET 4 – HOLD DISTRICTS HARMLESS during the transition, allowing current high-watermark levy capacity until the state fully funds Basic Education



This is where local districts are protected from levies being taken away without state funding being immediately (and fully) provided, and, where we finally see local levies removed from the Basic Education funding formula. As mentioned and explained in Tenet 2, this **Hold Harmless Tenet** provides the following:

- Approved local levies that are on the books when this plan is passed get to stay.
- When the plan is passed, the *high watermark* for local funding is established (for the state, and for each individual district). Through transition to full funding, districts can run new local levies *up to the high watermark* (+ an inflation and growth factor), until the time when the state funds that district *at or above its high water mark*. Districts revenue sources are thus protected from unfulfilled state-level revenue projections.
- Once a district's existing levy expires, the state collects local property tax funding, but *only* up to its existing \$3.30 authority. As of this calculation, that's up to an additional average of \$.82 – which would only be collected *after* a local levy expires. By the time all existing levies expire, the state will have added \$1.6B to education funding, which will be allocated to districts and be increasing the state-funded school district revenues.



The *high water mark* represents current education funding (state + local levies), and is the maximum local levy collections across the state for all districts (which is reached in 2017, see 2(e) for more details).



Once the state reaches the level of strictly-state-provided funding, local levies are no longer being used to fund education. In this model, that occurs in 2021 (unless, of course, the state adds to its education funding outside of this model, in which case it would occur sooner if coupled with this model). Note that this *doesn't* mean that Basic Education is then *fully funded*; it just means the unstable, locally funded portion of the education funding used today is resolved.

LAST – THE BOTTOM LINE

And lastly, we come to the conclusion of what this funding plan can provide, and how its intelligent transition provides funding *AND* removes reliance on local levies for full funding of Basic Education.



By using this collection of **Four Tenets**, the state will add an average of \$513 million each year to education, and will also remove districts' reliance on local levies. By 2025 this plan will have added a cumulative \$4.27 Billion in funding (over today's state funding) for education.

During the transition into this plan, districts get to protect their revenue capacity until the state actually and fully replaces those local levy dollars. This plan does so *without* carving out existing funding from

other state programs, and *without* creating or relying on some new tax to pay for education. It uses the natural (and expert-provided) growth of the economy and property values, yet is elastic enough to allow for fluctuations in growth to get to full funding of Basic Education (through extending Tenet 1 until full funding is achieved).

FAQs and other Questions and Answers

Question: Does this plan affect LEA matching?

Answer: No – the LEA formula stays the same with this plan, during transition and after full implementation. Districts in property-poor districts will still, and always, have a need for LEA.

Question: But this doesn't generate as much revenue as I think education needs. What about that?

Answer: Opinions vary on how much is enough. But importantly, implementing this plan doesn't preclude the Legislature from adding to education funding (from the General Fund), in addition to implementing this model. If they add \$1B in 2017 and another \$1B in 2018, we get to a cumulative \$6.2B by 2025 (\$4.2B from this model, \$2B from the General Fund). The goal of this plan, in addition to just creating revenue dedicated to education, is to *create a sustainable funding source for education* and to *stop relying on local levies for basic education funding*. Hoping that \$1B is found occasionally out of the General Fund is not sustainable, nor does it remedy the use of local levies for basic ed.

Sincerely,

David Iseminger

e: education@iseminger.com

Iseminger Education Finance Plan

Fiscal Year:		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
TENET 1	% Revenue Growth of WA General Fund	a 7.10%	2.20%	4.20%	4.20%	4.10%	3.80%	4.03%	3.98%	3.94%	3.98%
	% Revenue Growth Reserved for Education:		b 50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	50.00%	35.00%
	Property appreciation projection	c 6.50%	5.43%	3.96%	2.93%	3.03%	3.35%	3.75%	3.64%	3.61%	3.56%
Total State Revenues (projected):		20,125,600,000	20,568,363,200	21,432,234,454	22,332,388,301	23,248,016,222	24,131,440,838	25,104,742,285	26,103,353,145	27,131,051,826	28,211,604,582
Funding from Dedicated % Increase in State Revenues for Education			d 221,381,600	431,935,627	450,076,924	457,813,960	441,712,308	486,650,724	499,305,430	513,849,341	378,193,464
TENET 2	e Current Local Levies	2,404,700,819	2,527,554,280	2,393,196,336	927,679,234						
	Funding from \$3.30 Shift into State Authority	f -	569,149	67,071,116	553,378,595	913,751,647	944,327,605	979,728,558	1,015,357,367	1,052,013,799	1,089,507,570
TENET 3	Increased Bonding Capacity (billions)		0.001	0.09	0.63	0.46	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
	Cumulative Education Bonding Capacity (billions)		g 0.001	0.09	0.71	1.17	1.21	1.26	1.31	1.35	1.40
	Capital Facilities Bond for Basic Ed (billions)					0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	
	Remaining Education Bonding Capacity (billions)			0.09	0.71	0.92	0.71	0.51	0.31	0.10	0.15
	Education revenues to fund bonds for Capital Improvements			h \$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,500,000	\$ 35,000,000	\$ 52,500,000	\$ 70,000,000	\$ 87,500,000	\$ 87,500,000
Bond Expenses (reduces funding available for Basic Education)						17,500,000	35,000,000	52,500,000	70,000,000	87,500,000	87,500,000
Annual Increase in Funding for Basic Ed (reflects bond expenses)			221,950,749	498,437,595	936,384,402	800,687,012	437,288,266	469,551,677	464,934,239	463,005,772	328,187,236
TENET 4	Hold Harmless - levy level (high water mark for district revenues)	i 2,404,700,819	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280	2,527,554,280
	Hold Harmless - burn-down to full state funding (levies no longer used at +)		(2,404,700,819)	(2,398,893,331)	(2,397,184,938)	(2,070,791,316)	(207,534,522)	\$314,693,744	\$731,745,421	\$1,126,679,660	\$1,502,185,432
Cumulative Revenue Increase for Redefined Basic Education			j \$221,950,749	\$720,388,344	\$1,656,772,746	\$2,439,959,758	\$2,842,248,024	\$3,259,299,701	\$3,654,233,940	\$4,029,739,712	\$4,270,426,948

From: Patrick Lamb
To: [EFTF Responses](#)
Subject: Vision Statement
Date: Tuesday, September 6, 2016 11:59:54 AM

Concerning fully-funding education I would like to include CTE subjects. I teach one class of Financial Algebra and notice that other schools won't allow this class. Why? It is probably the best class a high schooler can take. I have had extensive work in world banking operations and retail sales and know well what the real needs of students are. All CTE classes are needed extensively in high school and less burdens of high stakes testing. I truly wish our legislatures would work for the real needs of students and not the needs of lining the pockets of test makers. Sincerely, Patrick Lamb

From: Paul May
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2016 2:38 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision for Ed. Reform to the Leg-Exec Task Force

Having worked in manufacturing in the State of Washington my entire career, I have seen the need for highly trained young adults who are entering the workforce. In many cases within our State mid-level skill shortages exist. Employers are experiencing a shortage of skilled employees particularly as their workforce ages and many skilled employees are nearing retirement. Businesses find it difficult to maintain their employment levels much-wiser expand their business.

Too often the high schools place their emphasis on college prep rather than teach workforce readiness. Funding and emphasis must be balanced to meet the demands for mid-level skilled future employees. Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at the K-12 level need to be fully emphasized and financially supported.

Funding for CTE classes must be fully supported. A 1.4 formula multiplier for CTE Material, Supplies and Operating Costs has been proposed which would maintain CTE programs that provide skills learning to meet the demands for new workforce employees.

Thank you.

Paul H. May
Retired CEO of Wagstaff, Inc., Spokane Valley, WA
Greenacres, WA 99016

From: Robert Mueri
Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 12:09 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision Statement

To whom it may concern.

Our country is in for a hard wake up call. We will in the near future have a shortage of pilots, aircraft maintenance personal and Steward and stewardess. We also have a retiring workforce in the trades that keep this country going. Such as welders, carpenters, Pipefitters, labors ect.

In my opinion this is a natural security issue. Without CTE to train potential students to replace the workforce that is on the Brink of retiring this country's infrastructure cannot be maintained.

We need more money for CTE to buy equipment to stay up on the every changing industry . Without that we will fall Behind on the work force needed to keep this country running.

Please keep all of this in mind as you prepare to make the budget for funding K-12.

Thank You,

Robert Mueri Welding Teacher Shelton School District

From: Betty Palmer [mailto:bpalmerwa@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2016 7:41 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision Statement

Education Funding Joint Task Force

Dear Legislative Members, Gubernatorial Appointees, and Staff.

I'd like to see the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction tighten up some of the weak areas in it's own budget so to eliminate the images of misplaced priorities and impropriety (<http://whsappleleaf.com/2015/09/school-district-administrators-salaries-increasing-dramatically-official-documents-show/>). There is no excuse for such excessiveness at the expense of students and on the backs of taxpayers. Perhaps creating a policy to govern such intemperate administrative compensation would be a simple place to begin.

The monies spent on Sports may be better used for a wider range of students and taxpayers (<http://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/hello-budget-cuts-goodbye-sports-the-threat-to-athletics>). Sports can be provided through communities, leagues, boys and girls clubs, while Washington schools can refocus on art, music, academics and career and technical education, cross-age education, relevant early childhood education, attendance, and strong linkages to post-secondary decisions. Perhaps the Lottery funds can someday become refocused towards community-based youth sports.

The absence of sports in no way cuts into student health or social needs. It does cut into Booster Parents, Alumni, and others who think their school team sports are a critical element of a community. Students can play baseball, ski race, ride barrel horses, and any number of activities through Little League, Ski Area teams, 4-H, FFA, Boys and Girls Clubs, (<http://www.dsya.org/>), Row and Paddle Club, Tribal teams, Youth Sailing, bicycle clubs, etc...

Perhaps OSPI could seek a pilot district or ESD that would be willing to cease their sports program (in 3 years so to accommodate current high school athletes) but keep that funding and apply it to a revamped education structure. Perhaps they get an additional X% for the next 3 years, transition out of a sports program/staff/equipment and then operate with the same budget as if they did have sports. Even an emphasis on broad, student-friendly Physical Education (outdoor recreation, ropes courses, team/culture building, and Healthy US Schools nutrition program) may be beneficial; "the greatest good for the greatest number" (<http://www.fs.fed.us/greatestgood/press/mediakit/facts/pinshot.shtml>). Ultimately, this redistribution of funds may benefit a broader range and lifespan of students.

I am not picking on sports because I am a disgruntled couch potato, or foiled high school gymnast. I am a runner, hiker, cyclist, kayaker. My sons played T-ball, Little League, high school wrestling, football, and tennis in their public high school. Sports activities demand numbers of students to be gone from class with their team or the cheer team. It's disruptive to the student and the class, study time, sleep, and focus. I truly do not see the

long-term benefit to the student. And very few will continue on to play “their” sport beyond high school. Often, school sports teams seem to exist to serve alumni psyche, pride and memory, often at the expense of the young athlete themselves (<http://diverseeducation.com/article/10/>).

As a taxpayer, I continue to be disappointed by the costs of team sports: the time, equipment, bus drivers, fuel, overtime, training costs, clinics, legal fees (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/05/25/white-high-school-football-players-in-idaho-charged-with-raping-black-disabled-teammate-with-a-coat-hanger/>) and staff time. The school time necessary to generate and support the athletic programs would be better utilized towards education, outreach, attendance, graduation, retention, and completion. In many ways, I wonder if our economy, population increase, technology, and other needs suggest that public school sports may be as relevant as the typewriter.

We currently rank 42 in on-time high school graduation rates (<http://www.geekwire.com/2015/tech-alliance-study-washington-state-ranks-first-in-stem-jobs-but-42nd-in-on-time-high-school-graduation-rates/>). I realize that *some* state has to be 42nd but, it’s disappointing that it’s us - with an international boarder, Pacific ports, agriculture second to California, aeronautics, extensive hydropower, high technology, natural resources, and diverse peoples and economy.

As a taxpayer, I would greatly appreciate a strong commitment to high quality Head Start and Early Childhood Education, and holistic K - 12+ education. I’d like to see restraint with certain salaries and benefits. We owe accountability and integrity for the monies and to the kids and taxpayers of Washington state.

Thank you,

Betty D. Palmer
Cashmere

From: Betty Palmer
Sent: Monday, September 5, 2016 9:46 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision Statement

Education Funding Task Force,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my opinion about K-12+ funding in Washington. As a CTE instructor, a graduate student in a CTE program, and a member of the Washington Business Alliance, I fully agree with the following as one of the key solutions towards some of the opportunities that are available.

Every student in Washington State's K-12 education system should engage in a rigorous and career-connected program of learning. [High credentialed](#) high school graduates are better equipped to succeed in career and college. Washington students need individualized learning experiences, connected to future opportunities, and offered in a way that matches diverse learning styles and dreams.

- Students have access to hands-on, vocational coursework that emphasizes skillsets which are in-demand statewide and within their local communities.
- The business community provides continuous input regarding what competencies are most needed. Business need more opportunities to participate in new curriculum development, and to become engaged through comprehensive Work-Based Learning agreements.
- Students complete an occupational concentration in middle- and high-school (three or more vocational courses in a specific labor market area) which incorporate state math, science, and English standards. Students who do so are more likely to graduate (92%), compare with 82% for those who do not have CTE coursework.
- Hire more career counselors to work closely with students starting in middle school to identify career pathways that match their interests and talents, then guide them with Programs of Study towards corresponding training and educational opportunities within a specific labor market area
(https://www.sme.org/uploadedFiles/About_SME/Industry_Focus_Areas/WFD/Career_Counseling_White_Paper.pdf)
- Exposure to different career opportunities begins very early (grade school).
- Quality assurance mechanisms (Advisory Committees) ensure that vocational coursework is rigorous and aligned with current industry standards.
- Washington desperately needs high quality CTE Teacher programs at the University level
(<http://www.uwstout.edu/programs/bsctet/>), and to evaluate the qualifications of CTE Administrators. As CTE Instructors from Business and Industry must meet criteria for hiring, CTE Administrators should also need to be fully qualified so to effectively lead programs and skills centers.

Nation-wide, there are numerous examples of states pro-actively serving students, employers, and their economies. In spite of tremendous resources and talent, Washington has a long ways to go to evolve away from the College Bound / University degree mindset to one that yields more opportunity and respect for the greatest number of students. Ideally, students will learn that they may apply to University at a later time.

Two other funding issues of concern for me include 2) capping the exorbitant salaries some district administrators are able to negotiate for themselves. Perhaps only in specific districts in King county can it be justified, but I do not believe there is one district superintendent (or school board) who can justify a \$250,000+ salary, or pay increases of 66 - 90% or more. These salaries are not serving the community or taxpayer.

3) re-evaluating the Marzano and Danielson teacher evaluation systems. I do not know what the Marzano contract costs Washington taxpayers, but I do see an absurd waste of time and effort lost to this program. Due to many mistakes, one of our districts is needing to retrain all evaluators. This is costly and far beyond the value, and adversely affects teachers. The UW teacher evaluation product should be more than sufficient, and much less of a questionable expenditure. (I find it ridiculous that education is supposed to be formed by research, data, and professional standards. All of Mr. Marzano's work is formed by Mr. Marzano's work. For any state education system to buy into this is perplexing and embarrassing.) If other districts are also having problems, it should be obvious that the Marzano system itself is flawed. Ms. Danielson apparently is on record stating that her system is not being used properly.

Thank you again for being willing to ask for thoughts and opinions.

Betty Palmer
Cashmere, WA 98815

September 8, 2016

Dear Members of the Education Funding Task Force:

We appreciate your request for input from stakeholder communities on how the Education Funding Task Force can utilize its platform to better our education system in Washington State. Specifically, you ask for “a description of what you feel would define a successful Washington K-12 public school system.”

The State Board of Education has a unique role in this process. By statute, the Board is charged with “advocacy and strategic oversight of public education,” as well as a responsibility to “promote achievement of the goals” of the program of basic education ([RCW 28A.305.130](#)). We also have a unique responsibility in setting standards for high school graduation for individual students, and setting goals for our public education system on a range of student achievement indicators ([RCW.28A.150.550](#)).

Given our role, we are regularly confronted with the relationship between the standards set for our schools, and the resources deployed to help reach those standards. Our collective view is that performance and funding are connected. While minimum proficiency standards may not require difficult resource decisions, truly high college and career-ready standards for all students – such as those adopted by Washington - require commensurately high resources.

We believe that the role standards play in funding decisions is key to your work. We understand that analyzing the accounting detail of how districts spend their local levy funding is potentially useful to policymakers. We are concerned, however, that it becomes the basis for determining what ‘ample’ funding is. It seems more desirable that “full funding” be based not simply on what was included in HB 2276, or what is currently expended out of excess levies, but rather on a specially designed basic education program that broadly fulfills the ambitious statutory goal of preparing all high school graduates “for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship.” ([RCW 28A.230.090](#)). That is what we believe the [Quality Education Council](#) attempted to do, and what we ask you to consider as part of your recommendations going forward.

Despite our ambitious goals, it is worth noting that today approximately 3 out of every 10 low-income students do not graduate in 4 years, while only slightly more than half of limited English proficient students do so. Without the needed resources, these gaps will persist and may even widen as we transition to a K-12 system that is fully aligned to college and career-ready standards. While funding levels are certainly not the only reason for these unacceptable outcomes, we believe they are a meaningful contributing factor. Accordingly, we would ask the Task Force to consider the following recommendations for inclusion in its final report.

Compensation:

The current district compensation expenditure levels reflected in local excess levies may or may not have a meaningful connection to the rates necessary to attract and retain high quality teachers in a given community. We recommend relying upon competitive market rate data, either that provided to the [Compensation Technical Working Group](#) by Dr. Lori Taylor, or that which is produced through your engagement with the Institute for Public Policy. We would also ask that the Committee consider regional cost variations in the context of what it takes to actually attract teachers to the outer regions of rural Washington State. The State Board heard from a [panel of rural superintendents](#) on the issue at its May meeting. The compelling point they make is that while housing and other services may be more expensive in the Puget Sound, the cost of attracting qualified candidates to a remote location can override any “savings” a district could theoretically realize in wages (i.e. lower housing costs are not a benefit if nobody relocates to live there).

The way that the state allocates compensation also matters. The state should heed the recommendations of the Professional Educator Standards Board and others by shifting away from the state’s current salary allocation model that heavily subsidizes years of experience and graduate school credits, in favor of a [career ladder structure](#) that has a more meaningful connection to advancement in professional practice, and ultimately, student outcomes. As the Legislature addresses compensation reform sparingly, it would be unfortunate to come out of the 2017 legislative session without [meaningful movement on this topic](#).

Professional Development:

The Board has long held that [professional development should be part of the program of basic education](#). Currently, systematic professional development for teachers is treated by our funding system as a local enhancement; a non-essential add-on that practitioners must live without if their district lacks a local levy, or has a levy constrained by other costs. Yet, this is at odds with what the research tells us, and practitioners know to be true: it is impossible to deliver a high quality program of basic education without opportunities for reflection, collaboration, inquiry, and planning for teachers. As professional development funding is so interwoven with compensation policy and TRI pay, it seems appropriate for the Task Force to address this issue in its report.

Equity & Closing Opportunity Gaps:

The Board has tried to bring attention to the gaps in opportunity that exist across the state for students of color. For example, it is clear from your preliminary report that districts are having difficulty applying a uniform definition of what constitutes basic education programming, versus what constitutes compensation for “local enhancements”. My concern is that this lack of clarity leads to considerable local variation in what program of basic education is guaranteed locally. Ultimately, I believe this lack of clarity may work to short-change our traditionally underserved populations of students in poorer communities. Local levies by design provide local variety in programming, but the guaranteed program of basic education should be robust and enforceable for all students across the state.

In conclusion, while the *McCleary* court case hangs over these deliberations, we wish to reinforce that our primary goals are not to satisfy the Court’s requirements. Rather, they are to enact changes

that will advance educational opportunities for students in Washington State. For this reason, we have taken a [strong stand against a 'levy swap' plan](#), in which the state would assume some portion of what districts already pay in compensation, only to commensurately lower and cap local levies, leaving districts with approximately the same funding, but with less regulatory flexibility. Our view is that this is unlikely to improve student outcomes, and will not establish the sort of enduring alignment we seek, where funding levels are driven by the expectations we set for students, and the schools that serve them.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to working with you on these important matters.

On behalf of the Board,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isabel Muñoz-Colón". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "I".

Isabel Muñoz-Colón, Chair

State Board of Education

Our Vision: A Successful K-12 Public School System

Submitted by: Washington's Paramount Duty

September 2016

We envision a state education system where...

- Every student experiences smaller classes, allowing them to receive the individual attention they need to thrive as learners and students.
- Every student has the opportunity for classes in music, art, drama, and physical education.
- Every student's academic needs are identified and met.
- Every student is equipped with materials and technology essential in today's learning.
- Every student gains the knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century.
- Every student receives at least 45 minutes of recess each day.
- Every student has at least 30 minutes to eat his or her lunch.
- Every student has the opportunity to go on field trips.
- Every student and their family can be confident that their data will not be given away, sold, or compromised.
- Special education students and emergent bilingual students receive the extra support and opportunity they need to thrive as students.
- At risk, disadvantaged, and homeless students receive the extra support and opportunity they need to thrive as students.
- The opportunity gap for students of color and ELL students is eliminated through the provision of additional resources -- all schools will need more funding than they currently have. Some will need a lot more.
- Every high school student will have the opportunity to take AP and honors classes, advanced mathematics and science courses, and participate in IB or Running Start programs.
- A diverse cultural mix of students are encouraged and recruited to participate in AP and honors classes, advanced mathematics and science courses, and participate in IB or Running Start programs.
- Every school has a full-time nurse, a full-time librarian, ample special education services and educators, a full-time counselor, and social workers and family support professionals, as appropriate and needed by the school community.
- In-school services are available to address each student's social, emotional, intellectual, and health needs.
- Every student has access to mental health services when they need it.
- Students are provided with a culturally sensitive, non-biased, and equitable education.
- Students are provided with culturally sensitive, non-biased, and equitable testing.
- Any federally mandated statewide assessments are created by Washington State classroom educators.
- Every school will offer at least one foreign language in grades K-12.

- Regular curriculum updates and professional development are provided to support teachers' work.
- Teachers and other educators are treated as professionals and provided with living and competitive market-based wages, worthy of their work, education, and profession.
- There is a robust recruitment program to insure there are enough quality teachers and substitutes to teach Washington's students.
- Schools and children are provided with equitable resources and opportunities.
- There are fully resourced school buildings and enough classrooms, bathrooms, libraries, safe drinking water, and play space for every child.
- Schools can afford to test their drinking water and ensure a safe school environment.

If implemented, the outcomes of this vision would be:

- A significantly higher graduation rate. (Currently, over 22% of high school students do not graduate.)
- Students that are prepared to succeed as contributors and participants in the 21st century economy.
- A significant closing of the opportunity gap -- so that children who need more support, get more support.
- The capacity for excellence, learning, creativity and growth for educators and students is made possible.

We envision a public school system that is given a chance to achieve its potential – where teachers are given the support they need to teach and not expected to also serve as a part-time librarian, nurse, recess monitor, and social worker. Where every student is provided with a desk, school supplies, access to support services, individual attention, and other basic resources they need to thrive as learners. We have amazing schools that are doing their best with what they have – let's give them a chance to thrive and do what's expected of them by ensuring that they all have what they need.

We envision that our elected officials will fund basic education in our state. The legislative record shows that our elected officials are very willing to take up the hard work of developing education policy that best serves the students of Washington state, but perhaps the hardest and most-important work is still to come -- accurately quantifying and fully funding this vision.

In addition to HB 2261 (2009) and HB 2776 (2010), the following bills were passed with the vision of what our state education system is capable of:

- TPEP – Teacher & Principal Evaluation Program (SB 6696, 2010; SB 5895, 2012)
- Common Core State Standards (English Language Arts & Math)
- Next Generation Science Standards
- School Accountability for Struggling Schools (SB 6696, 2010; HB2799, 2012; SB 5329, 2013)
- Expanded Supports for English Language Learners (SB 2051, 2013)
- Online Learning Programs Accreditation (SB 5410, 2009; HB 2065, 2011)

- WaKids Kindergarten Readiness Inventory (SB 5427, 2011; HB2586, 2012)
- Career & Technical Education (CTE) Strategic Plan (HB 1710, 2011)
- Encouraging AP and IB Advanced Programs (HB 1642, 2013)
- Computer Science as Math or Science Credit (HB 1472, 2013)
- Education Health Indicators (SB 5491, 2013)
- Strengthening Outcomes / Early Literacy / Evidence Based Strategies (SB 5946, 2013)
- Open Doors Dropout Re-engagement Statewide Framework (HB 1418, 2010)
- Career and College Ready Graduation; CTE Math & Science Equivalencies (SB 6552, 2014)
- Computer Science Standards and expanding CS Education (HB 1546, 2015)
- College in High School / Advanced Academic or CTE courses with Dual Credits (HB 1546, 2015)
- Strategies to Close the Educational Opportunity Gap (HB 1541, 2016)

It is time to fully fund the unfunded mandate that is public education in our state. A successful Washington K-12 public school system would make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex. The detailed components of this have been well established by previous legislative action. At this point in time, the missing ingredient is funding.

Passing a meaningful — and fair revenue solution — is what the legislature is tasked with in the upcoming 2017 legislative session. Because of its size, the funding gap cannot be closed by routine budget growth and cuts to other essential public services — that would devastate vital state services like higher education, early learning, low-income housing, long-term care for seniors and persons with disabilities, mental health services, environmental protection, public health, legal justice, and public safety. In addition, as the Court ruled, funding basic education is a state government responsibility, so relying on local levies must not be a part of the solution.

As shared in the Washington Paramount Duty White Paper submitted July 31, 2016, we offer the following guiding principles and recommendations as this task force moves forward with bringing your colleagues together to find a common solution, on behalf of Washington’s 1.1 million public school students.

We need new revenue — but not just any revenue, particularly given our current over-reliance on local resources and the extreme regressive nature of our current state tax system. To ensure we don’t get into this funding mess again, we need revenues that are:

- Sufficient — enough to fund basic education without harming other vital state services.
- Sustainable — insulated from the ups and downs of the economy.
- Fair — everyone pays her or his fair share, unlike our current system where those with the most pay less than their fair share, while the rest pay more.
- Accountable— new revenues will be solely dedicated to funding basic education.

Washington Paramount Duty respectfully encourages this task force and Legislature to move forward with the hard and important work of figuring out how to fully fund Washington's schools. The solutions may seem daunting, but working incrementally and with deliberation will surely provide results. The Seattle Times called this the "civil rights crisis of our time" – let's do what's right by the people who are the future of our state, our children.

APPENDIX: Testimonials

Testimonial submitted to the Education Funding Task Force
September 6, 2016
Submitted by: Dirir Abdullahi

Greetings,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the African American Leadership Forum. I worked this past year at Garfield High School as a Somali Instructional Assistant, and during this time I witnessed multiple disparities in resource allocation for students depending on ethnicity. Most of the Advanced Placement courses were taken by white students, some who come from private middle schools taking up the space from students of color who attend the high school. There are also counselors who discourage our students of color from taking these honor courses or advanced placement courses. They say things such as, "you are not ready, it's too challenging reconsider look into a more basic course". We need efficient training of our counselors so their biases are not directed into the wellbeing of our students. Our student's success should be the primary concern and therefore implicit bias training, and anti-discrimination training should be mandated, along with increasing counselors of color. We need staff who fight for equity to realize true equality. Black students have been put into low resource facilities since segregation times, and now that gentrification has been pushing black folks out of their homes and replacing them with white folks, those schools now have additional resources to accommodate white students.

There have been numerous occasions in which field trips could not be completed due supposed funding deficits. For example, one of the field trips was aimed at giving the students insight on what it means to be a scientist. This pilot project was aimed to support educators provide opportunities to connect their teaching in the classroom(s) to world problems/solutions in the field of global health. In addition to visiting organizations, students will interact with staffs at Seattle based organizations that have an immense impact on world health. Everything was planned, funding was the only issue. Likewise, aside from Garfield High School there are other schools in the Highline School Districts that have old text books, and little to no lab equipment. We are done asking for services that should have already been there, we are demanding and we will do as such. My role in AALF is in the education aspect, as well as health care we have systems of oppression failing us, and our group is a group of mixed professionals in the community working to change our current conditions actively. I have just entered my first year of medical school, and as a future physician my community healing and being given the accurate allocation of resources will be my goal.

Katie Piper, Seattle, WA
Teacher at Sammamish High School
Parent of 2 Seattle Public School students

Here is my vision of fully funded education, based on my experience as both a teacher and a parent in public schools in Washington.

- I would be able to count on having fewer than 30 students in my high school classes.
- Qualified para-educators would be available in classrooms where they are needed, and they would have the resources necessary to support students.
- Teachers would have the time necessary to collaborate in order to plan high quality instruction for the diverse learners we serve every day. This would be the cornerstone of a deeper professional development for teachers, rather than one or two days of "drive-by" PD per year that is not specific to a teacher's assignment.
- Administrators would have budgets that would allow them the slightest bit of leeway, so that a small wobble in enrollment numbers doesn't have to lead to drastic and painful funding choices.
- I would have enough textbooks for every student.
- Basics like art instruction and library books would be funded and available in every school, rather than becoming an extra funded only by PTAs in wealthier communities.
- Counselors would have reasonable caseloads, so that they could help attend to children's mental health needs, as well as working on scheduling and helping students navigate college admissions.
- New teachers would be coached and supported as they navigate a profession with many competing challenges. This might reduce the burnout rate (currently 50% leave the profession in three years), which would surely turn out to be a smart investment.
- My children's would have a full-length school day, rather than one that is arbitrarily 30 minutes shorter because of a failed local levy decades ago.

Quality public education is a cornerstone of a democratic society, and our best chance at reducing inequality. We simply have to start making funding choices that are in line with our values.

Megan Dunn, 2216 Main Street, Everett WA; Everett School District

My vision for education is to amply fund education so that districts have enough money to pay all teacher, para-educators, support staff and administration. All supplies related to learning should be paid for, including extra curricular activities. All children have the right to a healthy classroom and minimum environmental standards should be enforced.

Lack of funding has resulted in districts doing what they can, a lack of achievement and school buildings that are falling into neglect. By having our buildings and structures go into disrepair, we are directly impacting achievement and development. All students and employees would benefit from a healthier school environment with reduced chemical exposure. Safe school chemical polices provide incentive, a clear framework and long-term change.

I support a state income tax or other change in the tax structure, connected to a reduction in sales tax in order to have a reliable base of funding.

Amy Knobbs
6535 Latona Ave NE
Seattle, WA 98115
School: Green Lake Elementary School

My mother was the first in her family to go to college. Education was her pathway to a better life and she became a high school teacher to help others. I grew up believing in the power of education to allow the smartest and best ideas to come forth.

I want Washington's schools to be able to brag that their students excel despite their economic background. I want Washington's schools to show the rest of the nation that it values its educators. I want Washington to fully fund education.

Fully funding education would mean that PTAs would no longer contribute to funding administrative posts or providing computers or buying books. An amply funded public school would not ask its parents to buy copy paper and scissors and pencils and glue.

If reading is important, I suggest providing a well-stocked library and a full time librarian. If STEM is important, I do not think parents should be "raising the paddle" at auctions to fund technology.

I often hear about the importance of accountability in schools, but handicapping schools by not providing the requisite tools and materials and then holding them accountable is mean and yields inaccurate results. If we want to continue to flourish as a state that is respected and envied we need to invest fully in teaching all children.

At Green Lake Elementary we have a strong PTA. There are many parent volunteers and we

raise a substantial amount of money. This time and money is used to hide how underfunded the school is. The budget at GLES does not have any room for error. I watch as our principal asks the PTA for a donation and yearly juggles positions and full-time/part-time staff percentages to maximize SPS and PTA funds. She's cheerful and resolute but it angers me that this is part of her job.

The PTA provides teachers with classroom accounts so they can purchase items for their classroom without having to use their own money or beg for funds from the PTA. I watched the PTA-funded counselor comfort confused and grieving students after a sudden tragedy. I love that our PTA helps so much, but saddened that all schools do not have equal or any PTAs or other outside funding sources. I love our school. I admire the optimism and tenacity and patience of our teachers, staff and administration despite the numerous obstacles that could be removed by adequate funding.

When Washington State commits to fully fund education it needs to deal with its extremely regressive tax system. An income tax would help rectify the inequality of our tax system. The percentage each person contributes in taxes should be equalized. We all will benefit from a public school system that is completely funded.

To: Education Funding Task Force members
From: Joan Burton, former teacher, mother and grandmother

You are tasked with coming up with solutions to the Legislative 2017 deadline to find adequate school funding for basic education.

Suppose you as legislators received only some of your compensation from the state, and a significant "supplemental" portion came from a regular levying process from the voters in each of your districts. Would the inevitably resulting pay disparities (from some districts' voting for, and others against these levies) be fair? Would they be an accurate reflection of your quality of work? Would you and others in the future be less interested in seeking Legislative jobs?

1. Across the state teacher salary schedules and available school facilities differ vastly depending on school district affluence. Proof of this wide disparity can be found in the teacher shortage in low income and rural areas. Equitable funding means fair and equal distribution to all communities.
2. Staffing ratios for reducing class size range widely. More funding must be allocated for this purpose.
3. Many school districts have poor libraries and outdated or limited textbooks for class use.

One district I taught in did not have enough of any single title for one class' use, let alone five. Surplus books donated from University of Washington libraries' discards helped fill out another rural school library. Funds must be allocated for sufficient and current text and library books.

4. Building maintenance has been postponed for years in some school districts, with the result that roofs leak, mold infests classrooms, and broken windows are not being replaced. Regular building maintenance and anticipatory replacement funding must be budgeted for by all school districts. No one should have to go to a school in such conditions.

5. Cost of living salary adjustments are deferred again and again. In some districts teachers cannot afford to live near the schools they teach in. In other districts salaries and benefits are paid for by PTA fundraisers or outright parental solicitation for funds. In Seattle language immersion programs are mostly paid for by parents of the students, and International Baccalaureate programs are also subsidized by the parents. Once introduced by the districts, I believe the State of Washington should continue to cover the entire cost of these programs.

6. Many classrooms are so crowded teachers have to request extra desks and chairs to enable all their students to be seated. Better demographic analysis and planning should make clear before school opened what enrollment will be.

It is clear that the enormous disparities in school district funding across the state are not equitable or fair. Some communities can support far superior programs to others. Washington's paramount duty is to make sure all students have equal educational opportunity.

Cristina Key, Seattle Public School parent

A successful public school system provides an adequate number of teachers in all levels of instruction--including evidence-based best practices and resources for general, gifted and special-needs learners. Schools or the district would inform parents how to access those resources and not make it difficult. Instruction would happen in modern or structurally updated facilities, including areas for play; all learning materials would be provided. Schools would provide nurses, libraries, arts instruction, ample recess time for K-5 and a social/emotional learning curriculum. That's my vision in a nutshell.

Joanne Barker Schmitt

In addition to what Cristina Key said (above), schools would have modern instructional resources such as computers for every kid or class sets of computers in most classrooms, with computer labs available at all periods for those classes which only need periodic access. If we expect every child in our state to be college or work ready when they graduate High

School, they need daily training in the use of modern and evolving technology. We can't expect that training to happen at home, not every kid has internet access or a computer at home. Schools should be able to provide a computer and internet access for those students whose families can not do so.

The importance of funding “enrichment” subjects – by Rebecca Vaux

My name is Rebecca Vaux. I’m one of the board members and founders of Washington’s Paramount Duty. I’m an immigrant and I have two children in Seattle Public Schools.

When my older child, a sixth grader, started kindergarten, I learned that she had only had art and PE as “enrichment” activities, but no music. I was aghast. Was music not part of the standard curriculum for elementary school? Was this normal in the US? My American husband assured me it hadn’t been like that when he was in school. Later we learned: our school district has a formula for funding “enrichment” classes and if the student body is too small, the school doesn’t get funding for all subjects. These are discretionary funds and the school has to decide what it wants to pay for. Our daughter was in a new school – her kindergarten year was its second year of existence; it was a start-up. Our principal, faced with the choice, had opted for art over music. Later, when my daughter was in 2nd grade, the school grew big enough to be allocated a music/drama teacher, too.

This situation encapsulates the problems with Washington’s approach to what a fully-funded basic education is – and what it ought to be. Talk to any parent, and they will tell you that they expect elementary school children to receive classes in art, music, drama, as well as PE and “academic” subjects. These should be basic subjects, offered to all. But these programs are expensive and there’s barely enough money to pay for the basic-basics. Our school district doesn’t fund all those subjects in smaller schools – some small elementaries have one multi-purpose teacher for different arts; some have no music or art instruction. Some richer schools have sufficient PTA dollars to pay for artists-in-residence, or poets-in-residence, or to make up for the shortfall in school district funding for “enrichment” activities. And this is in a relatively well-off district. And yet, my daughter and her classmates were short-changed by not receiving music classes, because at the time, our school was too small and our PTA too poor to pay for them.

To me, a fully funded basic education includes enough dollars to pay for every single child in Washington state to receive music, art, drama and other “enrichment” classes, along with PE and language arts and math and all the other academic subjects.

You’ll notice that I’ve put quotation marks around the word “enrichment”. This is because I fully believe that “enrichment” is the wrong term for these subjects. They aren’t of lesser importance than academic subjects. They are essential to the raising of well-rounded, creative, thoughtful children who go on to become well-rounded, creative, thoughtful adults. And surely that is our ultimate goal, as people who care about the future of our society?

Moreover, providing these so-called “enrichment” subjects makes good sense from an economic perspective. Music and math are complimentary subjects – the data, both anecdotal and scientific – goes way back showing that there is a correlation between music and being strong in math. Art is a fundamental component of many professions: industrial design, engineering, graphic design, website design and management, to name but four. In a region that has a strong tech economy, and a strong aerospace industry, why would we not want to provide all our kids with art classes? Where will our next generation of designers come from if they don’t get the foundations in our public schools? Regarding drama, you might consider it a niche subject – a bit of fun for kids, not really important. But as a communications professional, I regularly tell my older child that she needs to take drama because one of the most important skillsets a student needs to learn is how to present themselves: how to communicate to a group; how to hold an audience; how to tell a story. All these things are essential in the working world, and all are well learned through drama class.

In short, what you consider to be enrichment activities, I consider to be fundamental building blocks in a child’s education. Basic education needs to include them as part of its foundation, and Washington state needs to pay for it. In full.

From: Lance Stewart
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2016 3:57 PM
To: EFTF Responses <EFTFResponses@leg.wa.gov>
Subject: Vision Statement / Lance Stewart

While students need to learn basics of science / math / literature / history / art in the traditional manner. As soon as a baseline of common understanding is reached, we be completely flipping the classroom.

What do I mean by “flipping the classroom” students should be given real life problems to solve together in teams so that individual talents can be highlighted or trained.

I in Science for example, which is my expertise, I have had the privilege of working with high schools students on a volunteer basis were we present a problem that involves gathering of data from on-line resources. There are tremendous massive sets of data in life sciences that have been professionally organized from “GeneCards” to the “Protein Data Bank” to the “Human Brain Atlas” which a simple question could be asked of the students followed by their self directed investigation and classroom get together discussion with guidance from the teacher.

I firmly believe that real breakthroughs in understanding can come from this process. Example. What genes are involved in neurodegeneration in Alzheimer’s disease? Asking this simple question and giving young students the chance to “find out the answers for themselves” using available data on-line (eg. PubMed Wikiepedia etc).

Some will argue that hypothesis driven research can not be done in this way. Or that the scientific process can not be taught in this way. They are wrong. This is the modern way of learning that kids are naturally attracted to and will be the future of our societies.

It’s time to completely jump into this approach. Throw out all but the very best textbooks, work online, engage experts outside (if you ask, people are generally happy to help), and integrate teaching and learning at all levels of experience. If science isn’t a student’s natural draw then you will find out soon and then they can work to focus on the thing that they are drawn to (math / art / history/ others). For each of these categories, the same can be done.

Also let us not forget that Kahn Academy can now teach everyone the basics.

Be gone with textbooks and multiple choice tests. Lets embrace the online learning experience, to solve problems, leveraging young minds in real live impactful problem solving. Thats the way to do it.

Lance.

Lance Stewart, Ph.D. MBA
Sr. Director of Strategy
Institute for Protein Design

University of Washington
Molecular Engineering and Sciences Building, 4th Floor
Seattle, WA 98195-1655

From: Bruce Gallagher

Subject: Education Funding Proposal for Compensation and Evaluation

Proposal for Teacher Compensation and Evaluation

Bruce Gallagher

Monroe, WA 98272

This document proposes three levels of compensation based on the premise that teachers should be employed and compensated in terms of their skill level and effectiveness in learning environments with students.

Beginning Teachers

Beginning teachers are learning how to teach and need more supervision and evaluation protocols to assess their effectiveness. Interventions are appropriate to help remedy shortcomings and assist teachers in advancing to the next level of skill.

Teachers as Practitioners

This level acknowledges the establishment of a successful teacher. Proven performance has been demonstrated in all the key areas of teacher competency. Practitioners are most likely on a career path invested in the profession and dedicated to the craft of teaching and have demonstrated the ability to teach effectively. Over sight by evaluators is still needed but not at the level required for beginning teachers.

Master Teachers

This level indicates a teacher with superior skills and outcomes in the learning environment. They have demonstrated through evaluation their knowledge and execution of best practices in classroom settings. As valuable members of a teaching cadre they are highly respected, sought after and consulted for mentoring and assessing evaluative criteria for beginning teachers.

Modes of Evaluation

Existing modes of evaluation are available to guide teachers through the skill levels and they would be handled as they are now by administrative staff. Master Teachers are heavily invested in quality learning outcomes for students and would act as consultants and mentors for beginning teachers along with other appropriate duties.

Compensation

Teacher pay would be commensurate with skill level. Step raises for longevity would be replaced with pay raises for demonstrating established competencies. As teachers become more competent and skilled their pay goes up. Each skill level and increment for established competencies would be paid at the same rate throughout the state. A matrix such as the Consumer Price Index would be used to establish variance in pay between districts with higher or lower costs of living and reassess on a yearly basis. Supplemental pay schedules funded through local monies would be curtailed and teacher pay would be paid exclusively through state funding allocations.

Principals

A similar scheme of compensation and effectiveness would be appropriate and essential for the Principals of all schools with the caveat that Principals have established their bona fides by attaining the skill level of Master Teacher prior to becoming a Principal.

Collateral Impacts

This proposal acknowledges there would be changes to the status quo impacting compensation. A replacement system is needed however to address the reality that we need more competent teachers and they need to be compensated according to their skill level.

The notion that teachers attain a satisfactory level of performance and have therefore earned tenure after three years (the most common scenario in our schools) is outmoded and not supported by factual data. For the sake of the students, teachers need to prove that they are competent and able to function effectively in classroom settings. Tenure can be earned once teachers have established their abilities and it won't necessarily happen in three years. For some teachers it will take longer and in some cases won't happen at all. Provisions will need to be created to address poor performing and inadequate teachers. They can't be allowed to earn tenure and have teaching careers.

Collective bargaining would be impacted by the exclusion of compensation from negotiations. Evaluative criteria used for the basis of determining skill level will become less localized and more centralized due to state standards for performance evaluation tied to compensation (frameworks for this exist are already in use). More than likely friction between union locals and school boards would be significantly reduced and focus could be placed exclusively on what is in the best interest of the students.

Overall the skill level of teachers would improve and compensation fairly distributed to those that have earned it. Teaching would begin to regain some of the stature lost because learning outcomes at schools would improve.

About the Author

Mr. Gallagher taught for 35 years in New York and Washington State public schools at all levels from pre K through junior college. He has vast classroom and performance experience in settings of music teaching and has served on various boards, committees and in advisory roles in the education community. An advocate for education reform, he is available for further discussions.

Bruce Gallagher
Monroe, WA 98272

Washington State PTA - Vision for Washington Education System

The Washington State PTA proudly represents approximately 131,000 members from across the state through active school-based PTAs, 32 regional councils and an elected board of directors. Members adopt a two-year legislative platform and vote on resolutions that are so universally accepted they are foundational to the WSPTA's state agenda. The following resolution topics guide the WSPTA's vision for Washington's education system:

- Parents are valued as the primary influence in their children's lives and family engagement is state funded and encouraged at all levels of a child's education.
- The K-12 education system is funded through stable, adequate and sustainable revenue, including possible increases to revenue, while continuing to protect funding that supports the health, safety and welfare of children and their families.
- The legislature funds the prototypical schools formula, and allows for clear and transparent revisions to the formula so that ratios meet student and school needs. In other words, the funding formula should also ensure that children with certain needs or different learning styles receive ongoing, adequate support to meet state learning standards. In particular, this includes children with special needs, students struggling with academic and non-academic issues, non-English speaking students, and students who come from homes of poverty.
- School construction funding allows for new construction, modernization, and safety requirements, while also providing a fair and reliable square footage allocation formula which recognizes modern educational needs and alternative facility use. Local bond measures are passed by a simple majority of voters.
- In the transition to ample state funding for our K-12 public school system, a school district's total funding should be no less than the district's prior total of state and local funding, and should permit cost-based and rational differences in the maximum state Local Effort Assistance per student, such as a district's high-cost students and operating in a high-cost region.
- Smaller class sizes are an essential element for increasing student achievement, and adequate state resources are available to support both the operational and capital needs of K-12 CTE programs.
- Districts receive funding that supports the full cost of providing educational services to all students who qualify for special education, with no cap applied to the number of students.
- The system embraces local control and supports innovative, engaging and rigorous instructional programs. Research-based instructional support and funding is provided in the state's persistently lowest achieving schools and students affected by the state's opportunity and achievement gaps.
- Policies create a balanced assessment system with high standards and multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning. The system does not use a single indicator for making decisions about students, such as grade promotion, high school graduation, or entrance into specific educational programs.
- The system and Legislature recognize the importance of also supporting funding and access to services that support the social and emotional health and well being of all students. This includes supporting programs that identify, reduce or eliminate violence by or against youth; safe routes to schools; Internet safety; suicide prevention; continuation of anti-harassment and bullying programs; support for alcohol, drug and tobacco prevention programs; and children's mental health and counseling.

Many reforms have already been enacted in the past seven years since ESHB 2261 (2009). While it is the Legislature's prerogative to revise the program of basic education, it is the hope of the Washington State PTA that once ample funding is provided to our public schools that lawmakers will allow the system to adjust without additional reforms or unfunded mandates that do nothing to improve student achievement.

Every student in Washington State's K-12 education system should engage in a rigorous and career-connected program of learning. [High credentialed](#) high school graduates are better equipped to succeed in career *and* college. Washington students need individualized learning experiences, connected to future opportunities, and offered in a way that matches diverse learning styles and dreams.

- Students have access to hands-on, vocational coursework that emphasizes skillsets which are in-demand statewide and within their local communities.
- The business community provides continuous input regarding what skillsets are most needed. Business need more opportunities to participate in new curriculum development.
- Students complete an occupational concentration in middle- and high-school (three or more vocational courses in a specific labor market area) which incorporate state math, science, and English standards.
- Career counselors work closely with students starting in middle school to identify career pathways that match their interests and talents, then guide them towards corresponding training and educational opportunities within a specific labor market area.
- Exposure to different career opportunities begins very early (grade school).
- Quality assurance mechanisms ensure that vocational coursework is rigorous and aligned with current industry standards.

Career and technical education in K-12 closes both the achievement and skill gaps. Through hands-on learning, students acquire critical problem-solving skills and applied STEM knowledge. Incorporating relevant job skills into curriculum provides students the foundation to earn advanced degrees or industry credentials leading to fulfilling employment.