

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2022

The superintendents of the 25 public school districts in south central Washington's ESD 105 region strongly recommend the following priorities toward maintaining a continuous and equitable system of public education in our state as the Legislature works to address Washington's financial challenges during 2022.

UPDATE STAFF ALLOCATIONS

Current staff allocations, as funded by the Prototypical School Funding Model, are based on staffing levels dating back to the 1980's. These unrealistic ratios do not accurately reflect the needs of school districts which have grown exponentially since the Model was adopted in 2011. The ESD 105 urges the Legislature to fulfill its commitment to fully funding education by phasing in updated ratios to achieve more realistic state-funded staffing levels in all schools. We recommend beginning first with investments to meet students' needs for mental health and social and emotional health, as well as adjustments to provide adequate nursing staff to support all students and the growing caseload school nurses are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMPOSE NO NEW MANDATES ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Since the mandated closure of all Washington State schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the return to in-person learning, our schools have been overwhelmed by contract tracing, vaccine mandates, short staffing levels due to sick staff, meeting the growing needs of students with extreme learning loss as a result of the closure and an extremely rocky political climate. We urge the Legislature to impose NO NEW MANDATES at this time. Instead, allow our schools the time they need to focus their attention on the needs of the students they serve.

PROVIDE CONSISTENT, EQUITABLE & AMPLE RESOURCES

K-12 education is a core investment and equalizer in our state's future economy. Students in Washington's schools still need the support of the important investments the state has made in recent years toward diminishing inequities among school districts in our K-12 system. ESD 105 urges the Legislature to promptly take action on the following components:

FIX PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

Many districts experience significant funding gaps under the STARS Pupil Transportation model, resulting in allocations well below their actual transportation costs. It is time to fix this formula!

FULLY FUND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Prior to the 2019 Session, OSPI identified that special education was underfunded by \$300 million. While incremental steps have been taken since to reduce the special education funding gaps, we urge the 2022 Legislature to take more deliberate action to eliminate the barriers our schools are facing in supporting our special needs students that this underfunding has caused.

ADJUST REGIONALIZATION/EXPERIENCE FACTORS

Regionalization factors have intensified, rather than lessened, the inequities between districts in their abilities to provide equitable salaries to staff. As implemented, the experience factor only assists one-fifth of the districts in the state, further increasing inequities in districts' abilities to recruit and retain highly qualified staff, often being forced to compete with neighboring districts with more funding for salaries. The calculation and application of both factors need to be evaluated and adjusted.

PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ONLINE CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY

The COVID-19 pandemic immediately exposed clear and significant gaps on internet accessibility in students' homes, as well as in the ability and affordability of technology devices needed by every student. The Legislature must ensure there is equitable access to technology and connectivity.



ADVANCE EQUITY

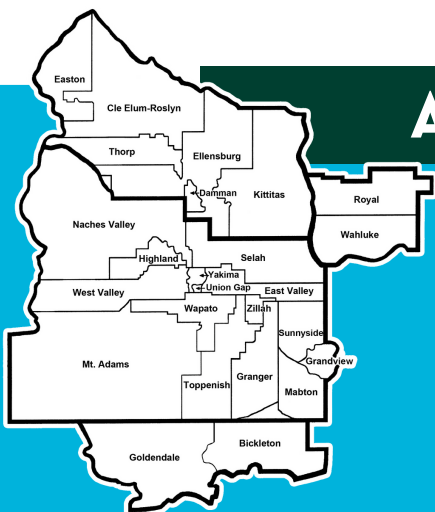
Closing the opportunity gap for students is critical. The ESD 105 urges the Legislature to provide school districts the resources, tools, and flexibility to: ensure equitable learning opportunities, and fair treatment for each student; and to recruit, support, and retain effective employees who reflect the diversity of our student populations.

INVEST IN LEARNING RECOVERY

The closure of our schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic was detrimental to many students. Although the 2021 Legislature recognized the need to address this learning loss, most of the significant investments to support learning recovery and acceleration were the result of one-time funds. Additional resources are needed to sustain and enhance learning recovery efforts and to assist students academically and with mental health and social-emotional supports when the initial funds are exhausted.

INVEST IN CAPITAL FACILITIES FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

ESD 105 urges the Legislature to give Washington's citizens the opportunity to decide whether school district bond issues should be approved with a simple majority vote. We also urge the Legislature to update the outdated funding formulas used for the Construction Cost Allowance and Student Space Allocation, as these formulas don't match the true costs of facility or educational space needs. School buildings are a priority in many communities, and this funding needs to be prioritized.



A LOOK AT OUR REGION'S SCHOOLS

Bickleton	(Supt. Tom Whitmore): 40 students • \$879,800
Cle Elum-Roslyn	(Supt. Michelle Kuss-Cybula): 849 students • \$11,241,609
Damman	(Supt. Marsha Smith): 41 students • \$559,199
East Valley	(Supt. Russell Hill): 3,182 students • \$41,884,666
Easton	(Supt. Patrick Dehuff): 88 students • \$2,537,744
Ellensburg	(Supt. Jinger Haberer): 3,205 students • \$42,578,425
Goldendale	(Supt. Ellen Perconti): 2,205 students • \$32,237,100
Grandview	(Supt. Henry Strom): 3,647 students • \$53,337,375
Granger	(Supt. Brian Hart): 1,449 students • \$22,459,500
Highland	(Supt. Mark Anderson): 1,105 students • \$18,633,615
Kittitas	(Supt. Angela Von Essen): 648 students • \$9,390,816
Mabton	(Supt. Joey Castilleja): 838 students • \$12,478,658
Mt. Adams	(Supt. Curt Guaglianone): 865 students • \$15,669,475
Naches Valley	(Supt. Robert Bowman): 1,230 students • \$16,666,500
Royal	(Supt. Roger Trail): 1,788 students • \$25,114,248
Selah	(Supt. Shane Backlund): 3,703 students • \$48,198,248
Sunnyside	(Supt. Kevin McKay): 6,724 students • \$97,020,596
Thorp	(Supt. Andrew Perkins): 226 students • \$4,048,112
Toppenish	(Supt. John Cerna): 4,533 students • \$65,973,282
Union Gap	(Supt. Lisa Gredvig): 568 students • \$7,677,656
Wahluke	(Supt. Andy Harlow): 2,560 students • \$40,458,240
Wapato	(Supt. Kelly Garza): 3,284 students • \$49,033,404
West Valley	(Supt. Peter Finch): 5,298 students • \$68,953,470
Yakima	(Supt. Trevor Greene): 15,879 students • \$219,892,392
Zillah	(Supt. Doug Burge): 1,278 students • \$16,790,364

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 105 SUPERINTENDENT - KEVIN CHASE

25 Public School Districts

66,470 Students

3,912 Teachers

3.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native
0.7% Asian/Pacific Islander
0.4% Black
66% Hispanic
27.8% White
2.1% Bi-racial
14.9% with Disabilities
72.6% Low Income
26.3% English Language Learners
11.6% Migrant Students

21 State-Approved Private & Tribal Schools

2,180 Students

206 Teachers

**Enrollment data represents the 2020-21 school year as reported by OSPI. Budget values have been calculated using the per pupil expenditure rate for the 2019-20 school year as reported by OSPI.

