

Legislative Priorities

– 2023



The Edmonds School District and School Directors are committed to working with policymakers to strengthen public education in Washington state. During the 2023 Legislative Session, in alignment with the Washington State School Directors' Association 2023 Legislative Priorities, our district is emphasizing the following priorities:

FEED STUDENTS

Our district believes providing access to universal free and nutritious school meals will support students and families. "We want students to spend their energy on learning, not stressing about basic needs, which includes filling their tummies," said Megan de Vries, Director of Food & Nutrition Services at Edmonds School District.

The stigma of "school meals" dropped significantly in the 2021-22 school year when meals were free to all students. More students ate school meals. Our district served 10,000 lunches (over half our enrollment) and 3,500 breakfasts a day. **Now, after the end of universal free meals in the 2022-23 school year, we are serving just 2,000 breakfasts and 5,900 lunches each school day.**

MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our district is passionate about equitably meeting the needs of students by implementing the state and federal requirements for special education – but do not receive adequate resources from the state to do so. In our district, during the 2021-22 school year,

\$11.3 million of our special education funding came from our local levy. For the 2022-23 school year, we anticipate spending \$15.2 million local levy dollars to meet mandated special education obligations. **We ask the legislature to fully fund special education to support the needs of all students.**

PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR AMPLE, EQUITABLE AND STABLE EDUCATION

School districts are expected to implement all aspects of Washington's program of basic education including graduation requirements. In order to do so effectively, schools must have more qualified adults in classrooms and buildings. To recruit and retain the best staff, including building administrators, schools must provide compensation increases equitably across all positions.

The legislature does not fully fund the cost of compensation increases. The legislature increases state funding for compensation according to a projected implicit price deflator (IPD). For every 1% increase in the IPD, the local cost to the district was \$940,000 for 2022-23. The IPD for 2022-23 was 5.5% of which \$5,170,000 was not funded by the state.