

Education: Cradle to Career



Funding our Paramount Duty

Every child deserves an education. The state Supreme Court reminded us in the McCleary decision that the state must fully fund public schools in order to provide that education. That means everything from textbooks to teacher salaries to classrooms.

Building classrooms for early learners

School construction / [HB 2797](#) - Kids need classrooms. Part of the Supreme Court's ruling on fully funding public schools included addressing overcrowded classrooms from kindergarten to third grade. Those are the years that researchers say are critical for smaller class sizes and personal attention from teachers. House Bill 2797 was a bipartisan effort to put up to \$700 million toward building classrooms around the state and create 7,000 jobs. School districts across the state are in need of additional classrooms to offer their students smaller class sizes, including 346 additional classrooms in Seattle, 150 in Spokane, 120 in Vancouver and 57 in Snohomish. A list of school districts and their reported classroom needs can be found [here](#). *(Died in Senate)*



Moving forward, not backward

The House worked to preserve funding for education this session by holding firm against efforts to create additional costly tax preferences. Bills to forego more than a half billion dollars in tax revenue in just the next year were introduced in the Senate in 2014.

The Senate passed a budget that assumed approval of new tax preferences that would have cost \$15.9 million in fiscal year 2015 and more \$85 million in the 15-17 biennium! That would have made it even harder to meet our paramount duty of fully funding education.

Examples:

[SSB 6237](#) – This bill would have created an arbitrary tiered of license fee exemptions and special rates for a subset of liquor stores, adding additional complexity to an already complicated and confusing liquor tax system set up by I-1183 at a cost of \$5.3 million in FY 2015 and \$10.6 million in the 15-17 biennium. *(Passed in the Senate, stopped in the House)*

[SSB 6515](#) – This legislation would give substantial B&O credits to five businesses on a first-come, first-serve basis simply for constructing new buildings for manufacturing. Those businesses would have the option to redirect their tax savings to a new account to support workforce training but be under no obligation to do so. Although initial fiscal estimate were low, this bill could have cost over \$4 million in FY 15. *(Passed in the Senate, stopped in the House)*