



## **\$4.2 Billion: The new investments we've made since 2013**

*Fulfilling our paramount duty is more than ensuring our schools are fully funded. We must have the right policies in place that ensure all students have the same opportunity to learn and succeed. House Democrats have led the way on those policies.*

### **2013 – 2017 Investments**

All-day kindergarten	<b>\$377 million</b>
Student transportation	<b>\$396 million</b>
K-3 class size reductions	<b>\$636 million</b>
Other enhancements	<b>\$1.0 billion</b>
Materials supplies & operating costs	<b>\$1.8 billion</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4.2 billion</b>

### **2016 Priorities**

#### **Ending reliance on local levies** *(HB 2366 – passed Legislature)*

The Legislature approved a bipartisan plan to collect the information needed to ensure schools are fully funded. The state will collect the necessary data in 2016 and must adopt a solution to this final “McCleary” piece by the end of the 2017 legislative session.

#### **Closing the Opportunity Gap** *(HB 1541)*

More than 400,000 of Washington’s one million public school students are students of color, and nearly 500,000 are on free and reduced-price lunch. These students face dramatic uphill learning challenges because of institutional barriers within our public education system. We must close the educational opportunity gap.

#### **Breakfast after the Bell** *(HB 1295)*

Hungry kids do not achieve the same academic success as those who eat healthy meals for breakfast. Breakfast after the Bell would provide nutritious meals, without interrupting instruction, to ensure all kids are ready to learn.

### **Addressing the teacher shortage** *(HB 2573 & 1737)*

Washington has a teacher shortage crisis. Over half of recently surveyed principals said they are in "crisis mode" and unable to find adequate subs most days. Washington state — this Legislature — **made a promise to kids**: We WILL fully fund your education. That will be a broken promise if there aren't enough teachers in our schools.

### **Homeless Student Stability Act** *(HB 1682)*

Washington has over 35,500 homeless students — up 9 percent from last year. This is a moral tragedy. No child can be expected to learn if she doesn't have a secure place to sleep at night. We must increase our efforts to reduce the number of homeless youth.

### **Common-sense assessment reform** *(HB 2214)*

Our high school students are required to pass several state tests to graduate from high school. Three bills making their way through the legislative process would streamline and improve the assessment system for high school students. This streamlining would save money and allow more flexibility for students working hard to meet the new 24-credit graduation requirement.

### **Teacher professional development** *(HB 1345)*

Every classroom deserves a high-quality teacher. It's vital that educator professional development is more focused on closing achievement gaps. This will ultimately result in improved teacher performance and better learning outcomes.

### **Student mental health** *(HB 1900)*

Students have a right to safe learning environments. We need to ensure school counselors, social workers, and psychologists focus on student mental health and work with at-risk and marginalized students.

**Fully-funded schools are only part of the solution. Sick, hungry and homeless kids can't learn. If we don't provide the right resources that allow all students an opportunity to learn, then we haven't fulfilled our paramount duty.**