



Fully funding public education

House Democrats are working to ensure equity and excellence for every child and to ensure all students have an opportunity to learn. That means investing in our kids from birth to graduation.

EARLY LEARNING

Early learning for vulnerable children / HB 2716

The Legislature made historic investments in early learning in the 2015 legislative session. Too many kids in our state show up to kindergarten on the first day of school behind – and they rarely catch up. The passage of the Early Start Act last year is improving access to high-quality early learning and increasing school readiness for kids all across the state.



Providing stability for Washington’s most vulnerable children is the intent of HB 2716, which fixed a flaw in current law which denies access to subsidized child care for vulnerable children. Currently, children that receive child care under Child Protective Services or Child Welfare Services are ineligible for in-state subsidized child care programs once the case is closed. HB 2716 would allow these children the opportunity to continue in these programs for 12 months following the case closure.

K-12

Fully funding basic education / HB 2366 – Under the state Supreme Court’s McCleary ruling, the Legislature MUST put a plan in place toward a solution on teacher compensation. The current practice is unconstitutional and it must be fixed in our next two-year budget.

House Democrats have a plan allowing the state to collect the data we need to take action, and requires the Legislature to adopt a solution by 2017. It is the only path forward that allows us to meet our goal of a funding fix by the 2018 school year.

McCleary Update

What we’ve done

\$3.2 Billion in new K-12 investments for:

- ✓ Student transportation
- ✓ Materials & supplies
- ✓ All-day kindergarten
- ✓ K-3 class size reduction
- ✓ Other enhancements

What we’re doing

Fulfilling our paramount duty

HB 2366: Forces the Legislature to adopt a fix to teacher compensation by 2017 – the final piece of McCleary.

Teacher shortage

HB 2573: Implements several changes to get more teachers into our classrooms.

This bill would ramp up teacher recruitment efforts, encourage retired teachers to return to the classroom as mentors and advisors, and offer additional financial aid for new educators.

HB 1983: Helps new educators with the costs associated with their certifications.

K-3 class size

HB 2968: Invests \$1 billion over the next 10 years for K-3 class size reduction.



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Closing the opportunity gap / HB 1541 – We must ensure ALL students have opportunities to learn. The current public education system puts the state’s nearly half a million students of color at a huge learning disadvantage. The system is failing them. It does not, and should not, have to be this way. We must hold the public education system accountable for providing education opportunities for every student. Closing the opportunity gap is the most important action we can take to provide opportunity for every child.

Breakfast after the bell / HB 1295 – Nearly half of Washington students, whose families’ incomes are close enough to the federal poverty level, are eligible for free and reduced meals at school. Students have one job when they enter the classroom: learn. Hungry children can’t learn. HB 1295 creates a “Breakfast after the Bell” program to increase the number of students receiving adequate nutrition in the morning. Ensuring students are fed and ready to learn will lead to greater academic achievement.

Addressing the teacher shortage / HB 2573 – Washington state has a teacher shortage crisis. It’s not a problem. It’s not a dilemma. It’s a 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.

Common-sense assessment reform / HB 2214 – Our high school students are required to pass several state tests to graduate from high school. Several bills, including HB 2214, 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.

Reducing youth homelessness / HB 1682 – Washington’s youth homeless problem is getting worse. We now have over 35,000 students that don’t have a secure place to sleep at night. Most adults would find it difficult, if not impossible, to do their jobs well if they were homeless. How can we expect kids to learn when they’re cold and hungry? We can build brighter futures for these students. HB 1682 creates grant programs designed to connect homeless youth with stable housing and help school districts collect better information on the homeless student population.

