



The COVID-19 public health crisis continues to illuminate long-standing inequities in our education system. The impacts of the coronavirus are amplified by our nation’s long history of institutional racism. Rather than returning to normal, this dual pandemic presents an opportunity to transform the education system into one that serves all students equitably. The time is now to reimagine and build a better education system for recovery and beyond with students and educational equity at the center.

To this end, the Board’s 2022 legislative priorities center on creating an equitable education system that is responsive to the individual needs of students.

Center student, family, and community voices in policymaking

- Create more authentic and meaningful opportunities to engage students, families, and community members as essential partners in policymaking
- Support student-led advocacy efforts and promote student representation on local school boards and work groups
- \$ Invest in strengthening the State Board of Education’s capacity for community engagement (SBE budget request)**
- ☞ Extend voting authority to student members on the State Board of Education (SBE request legislation)**

Prioritize student and educator social, emotional, and mental health

- Modernize the school funding model to invest in more social emotional health and safety staff
- Enable schools to create environments where teacher-student relationships are prioritized, and where educators are given the time and capacity to foster these relationships
- \$ Invest in developing recommendations for a statewide approach to assessing school climate (SBE budget request)**

Advance educational equity, diversity, inclusion, and antiracism

- Bolster efforts to embed ethnic studies throughout K-12 state learning standards and curricula, and to increase ethnic studies offerings in our schools
- Incentivize recruiting and retaining a diverse educator workforce

Provide equitable access to relevant and engaging learning opportunities

- Help school districts expand access to mastery-based learning opportunities for students by addressing barriers and providing incentives and supports
- Expand graduation pathway offerings so every student can access a pathway that aligns to their High School and Beyond Plan and meaningfully prepares them for their post high school goals
- Continue to explore making credit requirements more flexible so students can better personalize their learning experience
- Fully fund dual credit programs so students can participate and earn college credit for free
- Ensure equitable access to high quality elementary science learning opportunities

“Student voice must be woven into every matter in education.”
 – Association of WA Student Leaders

“All adults on campus need to have mental health awareness because it is one of the most critical issues facing young people.”
 – The Root of Our Youth

“Our curriculum and the stories we tell through them should be both a mirror and a window. We should be able to see our own experiences mirrored in our education, but also have a window into the experiences of other students unlike ourselves.”
 – Student Panelist, Modern Day Racism in Education

“Young people in general learn better when their learning is personalized and when it is relevant to their post high school plans.”
 – Student Representative, Mastery-based Learning Work Group



2022 Agency Requests

Strengthen the State Board of Education's capacity for community engagement

Budget request for \$236,000 in FY 2023 and \$230,000 annually ongoing

The State Board of Education seeks to strengthen its engagement of students, families, and communities statewide in the development of policies and practices by employing an Engagement Coordinator and contracting with partner organizations. These resources would enable the Board to better engage with communities throughout Washington, especially those furthest from educational justice. This new position would focus on centering the voices of those who have historically been excluded in the state policy-making process. By strengthening how we engage those we serve as our partners in designing policy, we will be more responsive to student and family needs, thereby closing opportunity gaps.



Legislative Platform priority: Center student, family, and community voices in policymaking

Develop recommendations for a statewide approach to assessing school climate

Budget request for \$100,000 in FY 2023 and \$25,000 in FY 2024

Improving school climate is essential for COVID-19 recovery and beyond, but the state lacks data for understanding where improvements are needed and to focus supports. This proposal seeks funding for the State Board of Education to engage external expertise and convene partners to explore options and develop recommendations for a statewide approach to assessing school climate. The study will include evaluation of different survey tools and options for state-level implementation and analysis. A report with recommendations will be submitted to the Legislature by November 1, 2023.



Legislative Platform priority: Prioritize student and educator social, emotional, and mental health

Extend voting authority to student members on the State Board of Education

Agency request legislation

The State Board of Education is a 16-member board, including two student members. Under current law, all the board members can vote except for the student members. This request legislation would extend voting authority to the student members on the Board, allowing them to vote in the same manner as other board members. Granting student members an official vote will make the Board more student-centered and responsive to the people most directly impacted by the Board's policy decisions.



Legislative Platform priority: Center student, family, and community voices in policymaking