

## **Governor Gregoire's budget proposals are now available:**

[Operating Budget](#)

[Capital Budget](#)

[Transportation Budget](#)

On how to [pay for the operating proposals](#).

### **Here is a very general overview on K-12 funding:**

On education, she essentially went with a focus on early learning and evaluations:

- Increase ECAEP's preschool slots by about 5,000 (not funded from K-12 money, but part of the K-12 strategy)
- Lower K-2 class sizes in high poverty schools to 20 students ("high poverty" is at least 50% Free and Reduced Price Lunch)
- Pay for full-day kindergarten at all high poverty schools – has the effect of paying for all-day K for half of all kindergartners in the state (yep, our kids-in-poverty rates are WAY higher these days --- 46 percent overall, with higher rates for younger kids)
- Support evaluations with professional development funds and more funding for principals so they can better take on the instructional leadership role.
- She also fully funds transportation, as defined by the new allocation formula (some districts would get a lot more; some nothing) and she sends a lot more to cover maintenance, operating and supply costs.

Generally, the state only allocates funds and then districts decide how to actually spend them. In her proposal, the governor would seek to put spending restrictions into the budget bill. That is, districts would have to show they are spending the new money in the manner the state intended. Those restrictions would only last for that 2-year budget, unless they were written into the next budget. Essentially, this would mean a district couldn't use the funds for central administration or to increase its compensation packages.

There is policy support for this preK-to-grade 2 intensive approach.

- Significantly smaller class sizes have a solidly positive effect in K-2 (not off the charts, but important); class size is negligible beyond that. "Significant" by the way is in the 15 to 17 student range. Essentially you are creating an environment to facilitate differentiated learning.
- High quality preschool brings down K-12 costs – especially in special education. (Estimates range upwards from an \$8 payoff in K-12 for every dollar invested in pre-K learning.)

· There solid longitudinal data that shows all-day K – IF followed by high quality instruction in grades 1 and 2 – has a tremendous benefit to student success/graduation/etc. The big factor is the quality of follow up in grades 1 and 2. (Kindergarten by the way is always voluntary and so would be full-day kindergarten. Kids don't have to start school in Washington until age 8. Some districts that offer half-day programs, however, might be inclined to go to only offering all full-day programs. If that is a concern, you need to engage at the district level to preserve some half-day programs/options.)

In all, \$1 billion in funding would be added to current K-12 allocations. Keep in mind, though, that more than a billion was cut during the downturn. So we're still not improving on where we were when the McCleary funding lawsuit was filed and when we helped pass HB 2261/basic education funding reform. This essentially restores I-728 funding, but limits it to the K-2 years (the news media often called I-728 "class size reduction" but it was actually titled "student achievement." It could be used for lowering class sizes, mainly in K-4; all-day K; other early learning; and professional development. There were a few other allowable expenditures – like capital costs to support smaller class sizes.)

Funds to implement the 24-credit degree (6-period day) are not included. College and career support would remain something funded by local levies. Compensation differences would also continue to be paid by local levies.

Gov.-elect Inslee will craft his own budget; it is likely to come in February but could be released any time after he takes office. Actual budget writing and voting is done by the legislature, however. Governor proposals simply start the talks. After I read through the budget materials I will post something onto Grassroots Connection for wider distribution. I just wanted to give you all a preview.

Best,

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Washington State PTA

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