



# EQUITY IN EDUCATION

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C O A L I T I O N

## **Fighting for Fair Funding, Equity Rally Brings 1,000 to Olympia**

On Monday, February 20, over 1,000 participants from all sectors, across Washington state, gathered on the Capitol steps in Olympia with the unified ask to the legislature to fully fund education and critical state services. Participants linked arms connecting the temple of justice to the Capitol building, symbolizing their vision of justice in the legislature, held a rally on the capitol steps and met with legislators throughout the day.

“We must fully fund education and state services, but not at the expense of one another. We are all connected in this fight,” Sharonne Navas, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Equity in Education Coalition said in her welcome address to the crowd.

Throughout the day speakers addressed the rain boot, umbrella clad crowd. Legislators who took the podium included: Sharon Tomiko Santos, Lillian Ortiz-Self, Rebecca Saldaña and Gerry Pollet.

Chris Reykdal took the podium and talked about what a vision of justice and equity would look like in Washington state.

“From our attorney general to our governor to our superintendent of public schools to 1,000 people standing in the rain, [the other] Washington will not determine our love for our children no matter their immigration status,” Reykdal said.

While the crowd stood in the chain formation, advocates, students and community members shared their personal stories of experience in a system that is underfunding critical state services.

Organizations sponsoring the rally included: Equal Rights Washington, Washington Environmental Council, NARAL Pro-Choice Washington, Washington Conservation Voters, Campaign for Student Success, Washington State Labor Council, Washington CAN, Equity in Education Coalition, Win Win Action, AFT Washington, Teamsters Local 117, Working Washington, WA BATs, Latino Educational Training Institute, Vietnamese Friendship Association, Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest & Hawaii, Statewide Poverty Action Network, Schools Out Washington, AFSCME Council 28 - Washington Federation of State Employees, Teachers Who Tech, Seattle Alliance of Black School Educators and many other individual advocates and community members.

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*The EEC was founded out of a concern that *McCleary v Washington* would justify even deeper cuts to the state's safety net. As Washington's largest coalition of stakeholders from communities of color, EEC is dedicated to changing the way decision makers on a local and state level view education funding and the opportunity gap.*