



# EQUITY IN EDUCATION

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C O A L I T I O N

From: Sharonne Navas, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Equity in Education Coalition

Date: February 6, 2017

Re: House Bill 1843

The **Equity In Education Coalition** is Washington State's largest coalition of stakeholders from communities of color and white allies who are striving to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children of color.

The Equity in Education Coalition is supportive of the fact that HB 1843 addresses the funding and compensation systems in state education. Also, that it increases Highly Capable and CTE allocations and will increase LAP allocations albeit over time. As well, the state commitment to pay the full cost of salaries, while providing regional cost of living enhancements and funding for professional development. We applaud the sponsors for significantly increasing state funding for teacher compensation and targeted programs for students who need additional resources. McCleary requires that the state make significant new investments in basic education and HB 1843 is an important step toward meeting that goal.

We are encouraged by:

1. The school district transparency and accounting technical working group being tasked to develop recommendations on how to distinguish between basic education and local enhancement expenditures;
2. Adding to the formula for TBIP students in middle and high school starting 2019-20;
3. Increases the beginning teacher pay to \$45,000 in 2019-2020;
4. Reduction funded CTE class size, to be phased in beginning in 2019;
5. The bill enhances the Highly Capable funding formula by 27%, to be phased in;
6. Under the bill, the state will cover the full cost of salaries.

## **Areas of Concern:**

### **I. Funding:**

- The bill adds to the formula for TBIP students in middle and high school starting 2019-20, however, the bill itself does not include additional funding for students who recently exited TBIP, which has been included in the budget bill for the last two biennia, and so could result in smaller enhancements to TBIP than what the bill language implies.
- The bill reduces funded CTE class size, to be phased in beginning in 2019;
- Provides additional staffing allocations, elementary family engagement coordinators, and middle and high school guidance counselors, however, however, without restrictions in how this allocation will supplement, not supplant existing funding, the intent of the allocation may be lost

on districts which prioritize other needs. There is no guarantee that the districts will use the monies for their intended purposes;

- The weekly hours of instruction in the LAP formula decline from current levels of 2.3975 hours per week in 2016-17 to 1.5156 hours per week in 2017-19, before increasing in 2019-21. We are concerned that there aren't any assurances that there will be no decline in supports for struggling students in the upcoming biennium within the legislation proposed.
- Several districts have high concentrations of poverty in their student population and schools. We recommend providing a supplemental funding allocation to districts for schools with high concentrations of poverty.
- The current funding allocation system does not provide additional funding specifically for students that are homeless or in the foster system. We recommend providing additional funding for "mobile students" that includes homeless, foster, migrant, and military youth.
- Enhancements for family engagement and guidance counselors are for allocations purposes only, still do not provide enough resources to meet the counseling needs of K-12 students, and don't direct more support to higher need schools.
- No additional restrictions are placed on how local levies funds may be spent. While the state is supposed to be covering the full cost of salary under the enhanced salary structure, there are no mechanisms that would prevent the current practices of districts enhancing basic education salaries with local dollars.
- Requirements that K-3 class size funding be used to reduce K-3 class size were included in previous budget provisos, but not in state law. Changes to RCW should be made to ensure that if facility constraints prevent districts from lowering K-3 class size, funds may be spent on other purposes focused on yielding better student outcomes. Thus, if not specifically noted, they can be used for other purposes where there are insufficient facilities.

## **II. Teacher Compensation and Benefits:**

- Increases the beginning teacher pay to \$45,000 in 2019-2020. The model does not provide for continuation of using the staff mix, but it does not explicitly eliminate the staff mix. We need to determine whether staff mix will continue to be used for allocation purposes.
- The EEC recommends that the bill be amended to focus, not only on increasing base compensation for educators, but also looking at compensation structures that incentivize teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools, communities, and endorsement areas.

## **III. Data and Transparency**

- The bill requires districts to report to OSPI on their TRI contracts. OSPI must report to the education committees in the House and Senate annually.
- More detailed programmatic accounting is need beyond distinguishing between basic and non-basic education such as for LAP, TBIP, special education, MSOC, and other major program areas.
- Transparency in spending can help to build trust in communities and strengthen a case for future educational enhancements. The community needs to be able to easily access and understand school-by-school spending information to see how districts are allocating their resources.
- Accountability—the bill does not address how the state will monitor the effectiveness of its investments and whether the enhanced funding is impacting student outcomes. Also it does not include any enhancements or changes to the structure for how the state supports struggling schools.