

May 28, 2015

Dear (Legislator),

Thank you for your commitment to finding a solution to fully funding K-12 education in our state.

Within schools across Washington State are students with diverse backgrounds and differing needs. Our community in Bellevue is no different. We feel that it is incredibly important that you approach funding basic education through a lens of equity.

As parents of children in the Bellevue School District we understand that our students are afforded additional opportunities and supports that are not offered in other districts. We value those supports for many reasons, but most importantly because we see those supports as necessary to allow a student every opportunity at success in their future. As parents of children residing in Washington State, we want to ensure that the needs of ALL Washington students are met. We recognize that our community goes far beyond our own city's borders. All students must have access to supports and opportunities needed to ensure their success. The success of our children, the success of youth across our state, ensures that Washington will continue to progress and thrive.

As you craft a solution to fully funding basic education, please ensure that:

- Basic education takes into account the needs of the whole child.
- Basic education is comprehensive and thorough in its supports to meet the needs of learners of differing abilities, including Highly Capable, English Language Learners and Students with Special Needs.
- There are not unintended consequences to districts that are providing additional opportunities and needed supports for their students through levy dollars.

We are confident that there is a solution that will balance the need for an equitable program of basic education with the accountability needed to ensure all students have access to the additional supports and scaffolding needed, and still maintain the flexibility for local districts to enhance the education experience of their students and to meet emerging needs within their communities. As our communities change, as students' needs change, as we learn how to better support the growth of each and every learner in our schools, basic education will need to evolve. Levy dollars should be seen as a way for communities to be responsive to their student needs and what those levy dollars are spent on could be indicative of potential gaps in our state's program of basic education.

We are committed to supporting you in your work to provide youth with equitable access to a quality education across our state. Thank you for the work you continue to do for our students.

Sincerely,

The Bellevue PTSA Council Board of Directors

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