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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

Dear Governor Inslee:

It is my privilege to submit to you my 2021–23 biennial K–12 Operating Budget request. Over the past biennium, the Legislature has partnered with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to fund a future-forward vision of public education in the state of Washington.

We have an incredible opportunity right now to take on challenges of persistent opportunity gaps and systemic racism, and to capitalize on the momentum built in recent years to fund an education model that recognizes, honors, and develops the diversity and richness of our students, families, and staff.

COVID-19 has laid bare glaring systemic inequities that have long existed in K–12 education. Public safety has necessitated a more fluid and flexible education landscape, with access to broadband service and internet-connected devices at the center of student learning. Unaffordability of broadband service has become a barrier to a child’s ability to even enter a classroom, further widening existing opportunity gaps.

These crises are not new, but it is with a sense of urgency that I put forward a vision of education in the state of Washington that acknowledges the fundamental role of K–12 education in the lives of all Washingtonians, backed by the funding needed to build, maintain, and leverage such a system.

I recognize that you and the Legislature have a difficult task ahead of you, balancing a budget against a forecasted revenue shortfall and a public health emergency impacting every aspect of our lives. I come to you with this year’s budget request having considered deeply the essential needs of education and the vital role our K–12 system plays in our economy, our democracy, and our shared future.

To protect this future, we must focus most of our efforts in the coming years on five foundational concepts:

1. Dismantle systemic inequities that may disadvantage students of color, students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, and students facing economic hardship.
2. Further invest in the prototypical school funding model to support the safety and social emotional needs of all students.
3. Ensure all students have access to online learning spaces and opportunities at home, in schools, and in child care facilities.

4. Continue to develop graduation pathways that serve all students.
5. Increase supports for students with disabilities.

My budget request maps out for you and the Legislature the foundational needs of a more equitable, productive, and resilient public education system to serve Washington's 1.1 million public school students and their families.

Thank you for being a strong partner and advocate for transformative change in public education. Together we can seize the opportunity to continue this important work!

Sincerely,



Chris Reykdal
Superintendent of
Public Instruction