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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

September 10, 2024

The Honorable Jay Inslee,
Governor of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee:

I am pleased to submit to you my 2025–27 Biennial K–12 Capital Budget proposal. Providing our students with a high-quality public education is not possible without safe and effective classrooms and support space for learning. All of Washington’s students should have the opportunity to learn in a facility that is healthy, safe, and provides an environment for the best educational outcomes for every child, regardless of a school district’s ability to raise local capital project funds.

The state’s primary school facility funding program, the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP), is designed to serve school districts that can raise local funding for their capital facilities through the passage of a capital bond or levy. The SCAP’s funding drivers have been significantly underfunded for several decades. The market rate per square foot of construction in Washington is currently around \$700 and the current SCAP construction cost allocation provided to school districts is \$375 per square foot. This difference causes disparities between school districts, with wealthy school districts able to provide newer, high-quality learning environments, while students in school districts without significant local resources often attend classes in unsatisfactory environments, many of which do not meet modern health, energy, or seismic codes.

We commend you for your leadership, and thank the Legislature, for increasing the SCAP’s construction cost allocation by \$100 per square foot in the 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget, providing students and public schools with the first substantial increase to the program’s funding drivers in over 20 years. While we made significant progress, we still have a funding gap that must be closed to remedy inequities statewide.

My 2025–27 Biennial Capital Budget proposal focuses on improving immediate health and safety concerns, as well as addressing longstanding facility concerns. The key priorities included in my proposal are:

- A modest increase to the School Construction Assistance Program’s construction

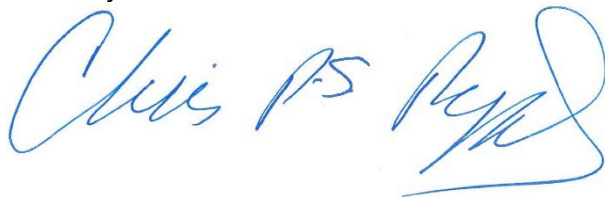
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cost allocation, to continue building on the progress made in the supplemental budget.

- Continued funding for the Small District Modernization Grant Program to complete outstanding projects and fund planning grants for future projects.
- Continued funding for the School Seismic Safety Program to complete seismic retrofits, school building relocations, and tsunami tower installations for our most vulnerable school buildings on the coast.

Thank you for your continued commitment to providing all students, regardless of their zip code or their district's ability to pass a bond or levy, the opportunity to learn in safe, effective, and modern spaces.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Reykdal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" being the most prominent.

Chris Reykdal
Superintendent of
Public Instruction