

OUR VISION:

Every individual thrives in a learning-friendly environment where they feel safe, supported, and challenged.



Investing in
Student Potential



2023 Legislative Platform

The Investing in Student Potential Coalition envisions an education system where every student thrives in a learning-friendly environment where they feel safe, supported, and challenged. The following legislative priorities will help to ensure access and equity:

Meaningful Family Engagement and Partnership

Authentic partnership with families and communities is the foundation of all equitable and inclusive school communities. Schools should make families feel like part of a team that works with school staff and not against them. They should also feel like schools are working to be accountable to them and their child's needs as a part of this partnership. Schools must do more to prioritize accessibility, cultural responsiveness, and trust-based relationships with families as they work as an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team and as a community.

2023 Action Priorities:

- Support new and ongoing efforts, such as the implementation of [House Bill 1153](#) (2022), to ensure families have access to qualified interpreters in their home language and translated materials to enable meaningful family engagement and two-way communication with school staff.
- Ensure timely accommodations and support for families during the IEP meeting process, including sending IEP materials well in advance of meetings, allowing recordings of meetings, and ensuring that content is clear and understandable to all before critical decision points.
- Support more family engagement training, resources, and capacity at schools so that educators can be more intentional and culturally responsive while working with families.

Professional development, training, and technical assistance for school staff

All students, but especially students with disabilities, need school staff who are trained to provide inclusion and access to their learning and their school community. But not all districts are equipped to provide that to their staff, which leaves many students with disabilities, especially those from multicultural backgrounds, without access. We must do more to support additional resources, training, and development of school staff so that students get what they need.

2023 Action Priorities:

- Ensure every educator has access to ongoing technical assistance and training around inclusive practices and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) so that they can better understand, accommodate, and support all kinds of learners and thinkers.
- Resource and support diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racist trainings for school staff to become more responsive to racism in school settings, especially as it intersects with ableism.
- Build capacity in schools through high-quality training to support the elimination of isolation as a practice in schools.

Supporting the mental health, behavior supports, and social-emotional learning needs of students

To meaningfully engage students in learning we must first support their social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs. Students receiving special education services are too often made to feel isolated, like they don't belong while at school, and unfairly punished compared to their peers. Moreover, as we continue to navigate the impacts of the pandemic, we must ensure our education system is taking steps to support students with disabilities as they re-engage in learning, especially Black, Indigenous, and other students of color who have been most impacted through the pandemic.

2023 Action Priorities:

- Provide students and staff access to the mental health supports and services they need to access their education and be well. Support the responsible implementation of new funding from [House Bill 1664](#) (2022) to ensure it supports expanded access to counselors and trauma-informed behavioral supports, and does not work to reinforce the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Support districts in effectively using the results of school climate surveys so they can create positive school and classroom climates where all students and families feel they are welcomed, cared about, and belong.
- Eliminate the practice of isolating students in schools.

Establishing funding structures centered on student need

To create an education system that values and supports all students we must establish funding structures that are rooted in equity and designed to address barriers that marginalize students. Our funding system should fully resource what every student needs to access their education. Additional funding is critical, and with any new funds, we must also change culture and practice in school so that we move towards a truly inclusive and accessible school system. Only then can we meaningfully support students with disabilities and address the most significant barriers students face.

2023 Action Priorities:

- Ensure schools have sufficient resources to meet access and learning needs for Washington's diverse K-12 students.
- Remove the funded enrollment cap for special education to better enable districts to provide inclusive education and the supports and services identified in a student's IEP.
- Ensure that all students have access to free meals at school.