



Equity in Education Coalition

Led by communities of color, the Equity in Education Coalition's mission is to eliminate the opportunity gap and promote birth through career success for all children of color in Washington.

Historically, funding education has meant severe cuts to basic need services. **These cuts, which total over \$10B since 2009, severely, and disproportionately, impact low income and communities of color.**

The EEC takes a strong stand against any budget cuts that will incapacitate state programs, like healthcare, housing, human and social services.

The State **must implement an equitable funding formula** that takes into consideration the effects of race, discrimination, homelessness, lack of health-care, and the growing opportunity gap for low income and students of color.

Students of color, ELL students and low-income students continue to be pushed to drop out at an unacceptable rate and continue to achieve at a much lower level than their white counterparts.

The EEC believes that strong and robust revenue streams will not only fully fund education, close the educational opportunity gap, and allow other basic services to be restored to their pre-recession capacity but also lead to an economically thriving Washington State.

Educational reforms must look to the well-being of a student and family, including access to high quality, culturally responsive early learning services to prevent the opportunity gap before children enter school, adequate affordable housing, living-wage jobs, and culturally responsive human and social services.

Washington State's Supreme Court decision, McCleary vs. State of Washington, requires the state to "fully fund" K-12 education so that every child has the opportunity to "succeed as active citizens in contemporary society."

The McCleary decision presents an opportunity to ensure that significant additional resources are directed at improving academic achievement in Washington's public schools and, thus, eliminating the achievement/opportunity gap and reducing the dropout rate.

A. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Significant additional resources should be appropriated to the following educational activities and services.

These activities and services **easily fall within the definition of basic education** and must be included if we, as a state, are going to close the opportunity gap:

- (1) Breakfast after the Bell programs and cultural & linguistic responsiveness in Early Achievers;
- (2) Expand learning opportunities and summer meal programs throughout the state;
- (3) Amend current dropout re-engagement and credential pathways program;
- (4) Improve Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program, emphasizing dual language instruction;
- (5) Closing the gap through student success services such as housing, mentoring programs and parent engagement;
- (6) An equitable school funding formula that is sustainable, accountable and flexible with which school districts can meet the needs of students within the opportunity gap;