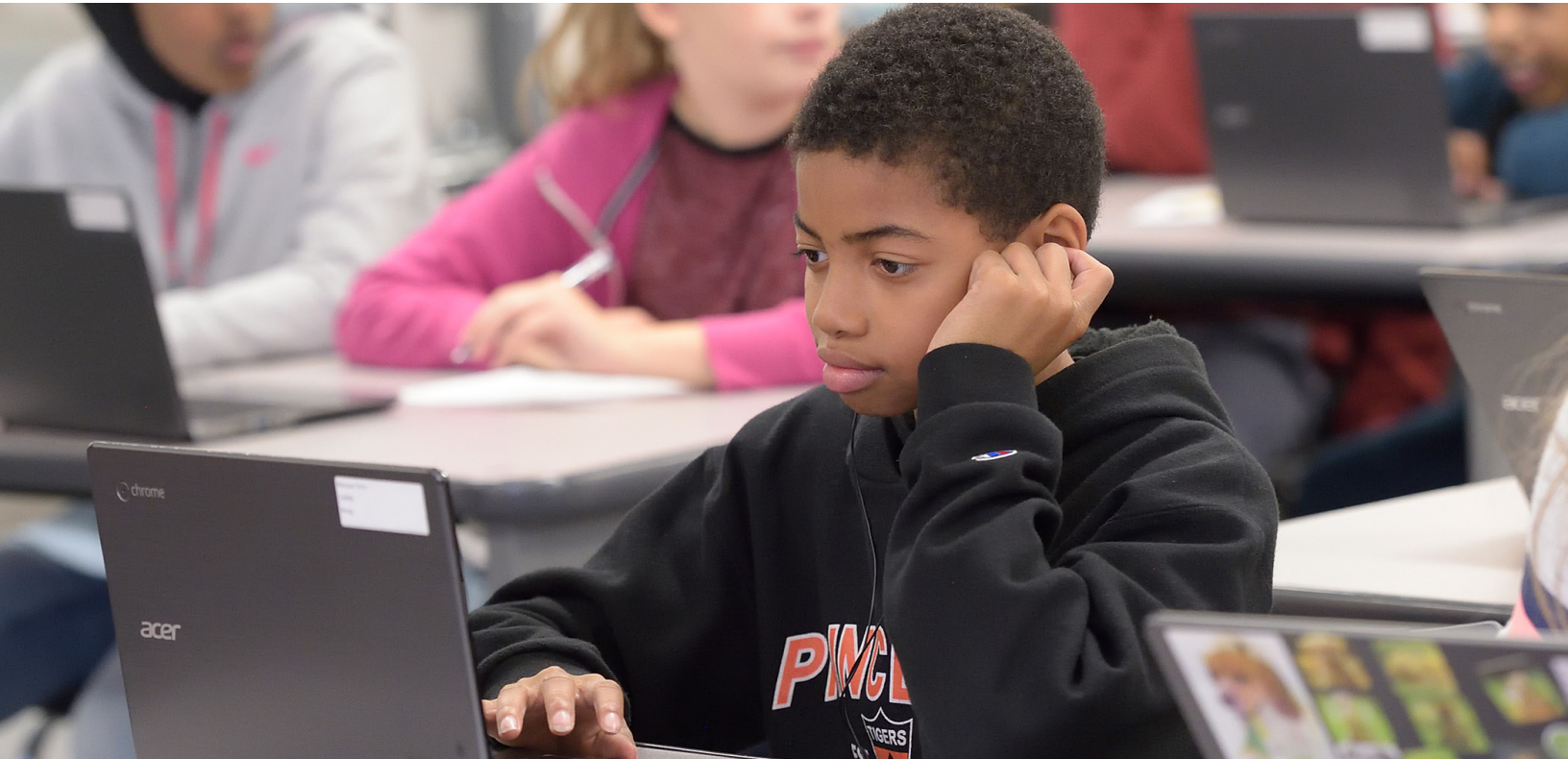


2025

# LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



## FIELD REPORT



*Students at Summit Atlas Public School*

In 2024, the League of Education Voters (LEV) Field Team took a different approach to our Field Interviews, which inform our [legislative platform](#). Influenced by the work and progress we have seen over the last four years, we decided to focus on the intersectionality of education by engaging community members who may not be directly connected to education, as well as engaging with teachers, parents, students, district administrators, and regional education partners.

**Throughout the state, we listened to over 75 parents, students, teachers, and community members in industries including healthcare, law enforcement, and various community organizations adjacent to education. Most of our conversations took place around Puget Sound, Yakima Valley, and Greater Spokane.**

See the interview format, key findings, and the list of participants. »

## FORMAT

Community members shared their professional and lived expertise around several issues impacting education in Washington state. Key areas included mental health and social emotional learning (SEL), school funding, and access to student supports.

The interview process typically lasted about an hour, consisting of 10 minutes of background and expectations, 30-45 minutes of dialogue following the questions below, and concluding with a recap of the participants' feedback and answers.

## KEY FINDINGS

### School Funding

- Community members highlighted a reliance on grants and federal funding to support student programs.
- Special education programs remain underfunded, creating stress on students, parents, and teachers.
- “We aren’t paying paraeducators, intervention and support staff enough to keep them in the schools, and teachers (those who may feel they are being paid enough) are not being supported in other ways like with their own mental health.”  
– Elementary Teacher, Spokane Region
- Extracurricular programs are being cut due to lack of funding.
- Community organizations are filling gaps left by inadequate school funding.
- Budget shortfalls continue to impact teacher retention and hiring.
- “I feel trapped by the PTA fundraising happening at my kid’s school. On the one hand, I know it is furthering inequities in the system because my neighborhood in Seattle is affluent and can host big fundraisers. On the other hand, if my family doesn’t contribute, the school will lose 2 FTEs and certain school supplies.”  
– School PTA member, Puget Sound Region

## KEY FINDINGS, CONTINUED

### School Safety and Mental Health

- “We expect students from other states and countries to understand what ‘school safety’ means to us. However, we don’t always take the time to actually explain what we mean when we talk about being safe in schools. At my school, we have over 100 students who are immigrants or refugees and were never given any structured time to talk with them or their families about school safety.”
  - English Language Development Teacher, Spokane Region
- Students and families are experiencing increased anxiety due to political and policy changes.
- “We need support from the Legislature around restorative justice and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Right now, many districts do not have the funding to implement these programs in meaningful ways. These students we have now are still recovering from the pandemic and we need more funding to support them.”
  - Superintendent, Yakima Valley Region
- Immigrant and refugee students require additional structured safety education.
- Schools rely on external security measures, but community engagement remains crucial.
- Inequities in school safety measures persist across districts.

### Advocacy and School Climate

- “We need more support for tribes and tribal education, especially in their own language. We cannot expect to fully support tribal neighbors if we are expecting them to engage only in English.”
  - Community Partner, Spokane Region
- Expanding student-led advocacy initiatives would strengthen engagement.
- Increased efforts are required to support immigrant and refugee students.

## THEMES AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

### Access and Equity

- Concerns regarding disparities in access to resources across districts.
- Calls for increased funding for historically underserved communities.
- The need for more inclusive curriculum development.

### Educator Workforce and Staffing

- Teachers and school staff require increased pay and professional development opportunities.
- Retention issues linked to underfunding and lack of resources.
- Calls for expanded hiring of diverse educators and support staff.

### Policy and Implementation

- Community members expressed concerns about the gap between policy creation and real-world implementation.
- The need for more accountability in funding allocations.
- Support for student-led policy advocacy programs.

## CONCLUSION

The process of conducting Field Interviews and developing our legislative agenda relies on community engagement. By incorporating voices from across various sectors, we strengthen our ability to advocate for an equitable public education system. The insights gained through this process reinforce the importance of continued collaboration and investment in education policies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The [2025 Legislative Platform](#) is the product of our 2024-25 Field Interviews, policy work, and input from community partners statewide. We extend our gratitude to all participants who contributed to this effort.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Community Partner, Statewide
- Advocacy Organization, Statewide
- Special Education Advocacy Organization, Statewide
- Immigrant Advocacy Group, Statewide
- Student Advocacy Coalition, Statewide
- Washington State Board of Education
- Elementary Teacher, Spokane
- Middle School Teacher, Spokane
- High School Student, Spokane
- High School Student, Spokane
- Support Staff, Spokane
- Charter Public School staff, Spokane
- University Partner, Spokane
- Community Member, Spokane
- Parent, Spokane
- Parent, Spokane
- Advocacy Group, Statewide
- Principal, Seattle
- Assistant Principal, Seattle
- School Counselor, Seattle
- Support Staff, Seattle
- Support Staff, Seattle
- Special Education Teacher, Seattle
- Library Staff, Seattle
- Superintendent, Seattle
- Community Partner, Yakima Valley
- Superintendent, Yakima Valley
- Superintendent, Yakima Valley
- Principal, Yakima Valley

## **PARTICIPANTS, CONTINUED**

- Community Partner, Yakima Valley
- Community Partner, Yakima Valley
- Principal, Yakima Valley
- Community Partner, Yakima Valley
- Education Partner Yakima Valley
- Eight Puget Sound School & District PTAs
- Special Education Advocacy Group, Statewide
- Youth Legal Representative, Statewide

The names of the groups and participants are anonymous in order to allow participants to give unfiltered responses to our prompts and legislative issues.