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## Special Edition: Governor Releases 2016 Supplemental Budget

The 2015 Legislative Session, a grueling, record-breaking 176-day affair, ended with the adoption of a \$38 billion 2015–17 Operation Budget. That two-year budget made major investments in early learning, and reduced student tuition at Washington's public colleges and universities, while also restoring funding for many health and human services programs that were reduced during the recession. The budget also provided cost-of-living adjustments to teachers and a general wage increase to state employees. For K–12 education, \$2.9 billion was appropriated, including \$1.3 billion that was funneled directly into basic education to inch towards fully funding the state's constitutional paramount duty. This was another positive step, but still well-short of the Legislature's own Task Force recommendations, tremendously short of the promises the State made to the Supreme Court and far less than needed to address school districts' financial obligations.

Since the current two-year budget was adopted, revenues have increased moderately beyond forecasted expectations, about \$245 million more than predicted in June. That is another sign that our economy is stabilizing positive, which is positive. Unfortunately, increases in State expenses continue to outpace growth in revenue. Since June, State costs (mandatory maintenance level increases and unanticipated expenses) have grown more than \$700 million. Washington's four-year "balanced budget" is now on track to be almost \$500 million in the hole in **2017–19**. Given these circumstances, legislators will have no appetite for a large Supplemental Budget—and, similar to two years ago, there may be serious discussions about not even adopting a full Supplemental Budget. Regardless of those legislative discussions, by law the governor is required to release a budget proposal in December each year. This morning, Governor Inslee released his **2016 Supplemental Budget** request.

In opening his **press conference**, Gov. Inslee reminded everyone of the "great budget" that was adopted last session and said his Supplemental Budget package makes "modest and responsible adjustments so we can continue to follow through on commitments" made in the two-year Operating Budget. His budget request provides funding to: maintain current services that have increased since the 2015–17 Budget was adopted; address emergencies and unanticipated costs; and meet a "handful of very high priority" mental health care needs.

For K–12 education, Inslee requests approximately \$2.0 million for a series of targeted programs, described below. Another approximately \$7.0 million would be provided for increases in K–12 maintenance level spending. In addition, the governor proposes funding for an initial step to address the growing **teacher shortage problem**. He proposes to raise the minimum teacher salary to \$40,000 per year—a raise of \$4,300 in the 2016–17 school year from the currently budgeted 4.8 percent cost-of-living adjustment provided in the underlying two-year budget. While beginning teachers would receive a larger raise, Inslee proposes that all teacher salaries become more competitive. In addition to the increase in the base salary, his proposal would provide a minimum one percent salary adjustment for all other teachers beginning in the 2016–17 school year. As part of the plan, classified and administrative staff allocations would also receive one percent salary adjustments. **Proposed**

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**base salary allocations** for all school districts in 2016–17 are available from the Office of Financial Management. **Total base salaries for CIS** and **staff mix factors** are also available.

As part of the solution to the teacher shortage, Inslee’s package would also invest \$5 million to expand the Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) mentoring program at OSPI. This funding would double the BEST resources available to pair new teachers with qualified mentors, help them develop a professional growth plan and provide time for beginning teachers to work with mentors and observe high-performing peers.

The proposed salary increases and expansion of the BEST program would cost \$85 million in the 2016–17 school year, increasing to approximately \$114 million per year in the next biennium. To cover the costs of this plan, Inslee proposes closing or limiting four outdated “tax loopholes.” He proposes to: repeal the use tax exemption for extracted fuel; repeal the current sales tax exemption for nonresidents and implement a refund program; repeal the sales tax exemption on bottled water; and limit the current Real Estate Excise Tax exemption for banks. Making these changes would raise about \$101 million in the next fiscal year.

### **K–12 Education Enhancements**

#### **Jobs for Washington Graduates – \$500,000**

Jobs for Washington Graduates (JWG) is an intervention program that provides supports for traditionally vulnerable youth (e.g., foster care, juvenile justice, and homeless) and those students struggling to stay on track to graduation. The program includes graduation coaches who assist students in applying for jobs, exploring colleges and accessing other post-secondary options; support continues for one year after graduation. This budget provides funding to expand the JWG program to 25 more schools, districts, or consortiums from the current total of 43.

#### **Core-Plus – \$500,000**

Core-Plus, now operating in 45 schools statewide, is a direct school-to-career program that aligns school curriculum with the skills employers need while engaging students and motivating them to graduate. Schools partner with businesses in high demand industries including aerospace manufacturing, maritime, construction and agricultural mechanics to develop courses that will lead to employment for their students. This budget provides additional funding is to expand the program to 20 new sites.

#### **Healthiest Next Generation – \$264,000**

OSPI, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Early Learning (DEL) partner together to coordinate effective policies and programs, and encourage school, community and family involvement through shared information and communication. Funding is provided to OSPI to continue these efforts that focus on nutrition services, physical education, and health services. Additional funding is provided for the program within the DOH and DEL budgets.

#### **CTE Course Equivalencies – \$250,000**

Support is expanded for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) math and science course equivalency frameworks authorized in law. This support includes development of additional equivalency course frameworks, course performance assessments, and professional development for districts implementing the new frameworks. These frameworks are guides that align national and industry standards to state core content standards, performance assessments, and other elements. This would expand the options students have to meet the 24-credit graduation requirement.

#### **Language Access for Parents – \$201,000**

OSPI is required to translate essential information about educational services into the major languages spoken by Washington families. This includes translating new materials required under a 2015–17 budget proviso for families regarding their rights to language assistance services. Funding is provided for ongoing translation needs.

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### **Equity in Student Discipline – \$170,000**

Across the state, students of color and students with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by the use of suspensions and expulsions, giving rise to concerns about equitable treatment, equal opportunities, and discrimination. Funding is provided for a program supervisor to assist districts and communities to implement evidence-based practices to eliminate these disparities, reduce the overall use of exclusionary discipline, and maintain safe and positive school climates. OSPI is directed to work with an external advisory committee to keep apprised of school and community needs, offer feedback and policy recommendations, and coordinate efforts.

### **Other Details**

#### **MESA Community College Program – \$450,000**

Funding is provided, via the Community and Technical College System budget, to bring six Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) program community college pilot sites to scale. MESA improves students' math outcomes, degree completion, and attainment, resulting in more underrepresented students entering science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. With these resources, the program would reach an additional 350 community college students.

#### **MESA Pre-College Program – \$250,000**

Funding is provided in the Higher Education Budget (University of Washington) to expand the Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) pre-college program to reach more than 1,000 high school juniors and seniors in six regional centers with college readiness services to help with the critical transition to college. MESA has been proven to increase the number of underrepresented students entering careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Funds would also sustain MESA services at the First Nations Center in the Yakima Valley.

#### **STEM Alliance – \$200,000**

The Governor's STEM Education Innovation Alliance was created in 2013 to increase awareness and expand opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. Work to support the Alliance has been funded through a National Governors Association grant which ends in June 2016. This budget provides funding to support the continued development of a STEM talent supply and demand dashboard, which will give state government, business leaders, and regional network partners the ability to track the impacts of STEM education and workforce initiatives with a common set of indicators.



**Dan Steele, Government Relations** [dstele@wasa-oly.org](mailto:dstele@wasa-oly.org)  
**Washington Association of School Administrators** 825 Fifth Ave SE | Olympia, WA 98501  
 P: 800.859.9272 360.489.3642 | F: 360.352.2043 | [www.wasa-oly.org](http://www.wasa-oly.org)