



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Select Committee on the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy 6-Yr. Implementation and Evaluation Plan

Agenda

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

9:30 AM

Council Chamber, City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Maritza Rivera, Chair
Joy Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair
Dionne Foster, Member
Debora Juarez, Member
Robert Kettle, Member
Eddie Lin, Member
Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Member
Rob Saka, Member
Dan Strauss, Member

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June 30, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Meeting Location:

Council Chamber, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Committee Website:

<https://www.seattle.gov/council/meetings/committees-and-agendas/fepp-levy>

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

Members of the public may register for remote or in-person Public Comment to address the Council. Please register in advance in order to be recognized by the Chair. Details on how to register for Public Comment are listed below:

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Please submit written comments no later than four business hours prior to the start of the meeting to ensure that they are distributed to Councilmembers prior to the meeting. Comments may be submitted at Council@seattle.gov or at Seattle City Hall, Attn: Council Public Comment, 600 4th Ave., Floor 2, Seattle, WA 98104. Business hours are considered 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Comments received after that time will be distributed after the meeting to Councilmembers and included as part of the public record.

Please Note: Times listed are estimated

A. Call To Order

B. Approval of the Agenda

C. Public Comment

Members of the public may address items on the agenda and matters within the purview of the committee. Please register in advance to be recognized by the Chair.

D. Items of Business

1. **Overview of an ordinance relating to the 2025 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy; approving an implementation and evaluation plan as required by Ordinance 127238; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.**

Supporting
Documents:

[Overview of CB 121240](#)

[Att 1 - FEPP Levy Implementation and Evaluation Plan](#)

[Summary and Fiscal Note](#)

[Summary Att 1 - Racial Equity Toolkit - Childcare Workforce
Payments](#)

[Summary Att 2 - Racial Equity Toolkit - Safety](#)

[Summary Att 3 - Racial Equity Toolkit - Path to Trades](#)

[Summary Att 4 - Stakeholder Engagement Summary](#)

[Central Staff Memo](#)

[Central Staff Presentation](#)

Briefing and Discussion

Presenters: Jasmine Marwaha and Traci Ratzliff, Council Central Staff

E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: Inf 2918, **Version:** 1

Overview of an ordinance relating to the 2025 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy; approving an implementation and evaluation plan as required by Ordinance 127238; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

The City of Seattle

Ordinance _____

Council Bill _____

..title

An ordinance relating to the 2025 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy; approving an implementation and evaluation plan as required by Ordinance 127238; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

..body

Recitals:

By Ordinance 127238, The City of Seattle (City) placed before voters "a proposition to lift the limit on regular property taxes under chapter 84.55 RCW and to authorize the City to levy additional taxes for up to six years for the purpose of providing education support services designed to improve access to early learning, including childcare and preschool; academic, health, and safety supports for K-12 students; and college and career pathways for Seattle students; applying the exemption for low income seniors, disabled veterans, and others authorized by RCW 84.36.381; authorizing a creation of a designated fund; directing the application of levy proceeds; establishing eligibility requirements for partners; establishing accountability and reporting structures; requiring a forthcoming Implementation and Evaluation Plan; proposing a ballot title; authorizing the implementation of agreements for this levy lid lift which will be commonly known

as the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts."

On November 4, 2025, 79.97 percent of the City's voters approved the proposition.

Section 7 of Ordinance 127238 states that proceeds from the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy (FEPP Levy) shall be spent in accordance with the terms of Implementation and Evaluation Plan (Plan) approved by ordinance.

Section 7 of Ordinance 127238 also states that the Plan will set forth the criteria, measurable outcomes, and methodology by which programs funded by FEPP Levy proceeds will be selected and evaluated.

The Department of Education and Early Learning has developed plans for investments of FEPP Levy proceeds that achieve specific, measurable outcomes for access to and utilization of services across a continuum; providing families, children, and youth access to affordable childcare and preschool services that prepare children for success in kindergarten; academic, health, and safety supports for K-12 students that support learning and well-being; and college and career supports that promote high school graduation, and post-secondary opportunities that promote attainment of a certificate, credential, or degree. Therefore,

Be it ordained by The City of Seattle as follows:

Section 1. The Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy Implementation and Evaluation Plan, included as Attachment 1 to this ordinance, is approved as required by Section 7 of Ordinance 127238.

Section 2. Any act consistent with the authority of this ordinance taken after its passage and prior to its effective date is ratified and confirmed.

DEEL FEPP Implementation and Evaluation Plan ORD

Amanda Stoddard

D1a

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – FEPP Implementation and Evaluation Plan

This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by the City Council and signed in open session in authentication of its passage on _____.

President _____ of the City Council

_____ on _____.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Attested on _____.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

Seal



FAMILIES, EDUCATION, PRESCHOOL AND PROMISE LEVY

Implementation and Evaluation Plan
2026-2031



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I. Introduction

On November 4, 2025, Seattle voters approved the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy – a 6-year, \$1.3 billion dollar investment in Seattle children and youth. Its passage reflects a renewal of communitywide commitment that helped pass similar levies dating back to 1990. The FEPP levy reflects Seattle’s commitment to investing in children, youth, and families, including investments prioritized to increase access to services for historically excluded communities, and achieve levy outcomes that advance educational equity. The programs and services financed with levy proceeds are supplemental to State-financed basic education funding and are not intended to serve as a basis for the reduction of State funding for the Seattle Public School District’s education programs.

Consistent with [Ordinance 127238](#), the FEPP Levy Implementation and Evaluation Plan (“The Plan” or “I&E Plan”) outlines the City of Seattle’s commitment to helping children and youth succeed through a continuum of investments organized around four education-support services: (1) Early Childhood, (2) K-12 Student Supports, (3) K-12 Health and Safety, and (4) College and Career Supports.

The City’s Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) holds primary oversight for FEPP Levy agreements with implementation efforts taking place in multiple departments. Additionally, as provided under Section 6 of Ordinance 127238, “in the annual City budget or by separate ordinance, the City shall determine from year-to-year the education-support services and funding allocations that will most effectively achieve levy priorities and outcomes.”

Under this Plan, the Human Services Department (HSD), Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE), Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) and other City departments or offices may also administer and enter agreements using FEPP levy funds if proceeds are allocated to those departments in the annual budget process. All departments must expend FEPP Levy funds in accordance with the current approved Plan and Ordinance 127238.

DEEL investments provide birth to post-secondary support for the whole child, supporting academic achievement. Investments stewarded by the Human Services Department have a strong emphasis on community-based youth development and behavioral health support in helping youth meet educational goals, which include students whose connections to schools are more likely to experience interruption. The Office of Sustainability and Environment investment helps ensure all students at Seattle Public Schools have access to school meals. SPR investments focus on environmental and expanded learning enrichment supports for students. Together, FEPP-funded investments and collaboration across City departments support the City’s Every Child Ready Initiative.

The success of FEPP Levy investments in meeting intended goals and outcomes depends on the strength of partnerships between the City, childcare and preschool providers, public agencies such as Public Health—Seattle & King County (PHSKC), Seattle Colleges, Seattle Public Schools (SPS), the University of Washington, King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), and community-based partners. The City will establish agreements with public agencies to ensure coordinated implementation and data-driven decision making.

Theory of Change

The FEPP Levy Theory of Change (ToC) is an articulation of how Levy-funded strategies will help achieve the goals outlined above and why change will occur as a result of birth to post-secondary investments (Figure 1).

The ToC articulates the overall vision of the Every Child Ready Initiative and the FEPP Levy domains. The theory articulates the City's belief that:

- *If* we invest across the education continuum from birth to post-secondary in three domains: Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch...
- *By* partnering with families and communities to increase access to high-quality programs and supports for children and youth with an emphasis on historically excluded students...
- *Then* positive child, youth, family, program, and system-level outcomes that promote a better economic future for Seattle families and youth will be achieved.

Goals and Indicators

Each domain has a universal goal and one or more outcome indicators designed to facilitate progress monitoring and continuous improvement efforts toward educational achievement (Table 1). These universal goals and outcomes are designed to measure progress for all children and youth in Seattle—this is our population accountability. Population indicators tell us how the entire community is doing, regardless of who participates in FEPP funded programs. To ensure that these indicators reflect meaningful, actionable trends, they were selected for their communication value (easy for the public to understand), proxy power (aligned with what we aim to influence and reflective of harder to measure factors), and data power (supported by reliable, consistently available, or publicly accessible data).

FEPP universal goals will be assessed annually to monitor citywide academic outcomes for all children and youth. Universal outcome indicators help quantify the impact of FEPP investments over time and will be assessed for citywide impact.

Table 1. FEPP Universal Goals and Outcome Indicators

Domain	Investment Area	Universal Goal	Universal Outcome Indicators
Ready to Start	Early Childhood	All Seattle children will enter Kindergarten ready for school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of SPS students ready for kindergarten in six WaKIDS assessment domains
Ready to Learn	K-12 Student Academic Supports; K-12 Student Health and Safety	All Seattle students graduate high school ready for college and career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of SPS students attending school 90% of the time • % of SPS students with on-track academic progress in 3rd, 6th, and 9th grade • % of SPS graduates starting a college or credential pathway within one year of graduation
Ready to Launch	College and Career Supports	All Seattle youth have access to and utilize postsecondary opportunities that promote attainment of a certificate, credential or degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of students who complete a degree, certificate or apprenticeship by age 26*

*Ready to Launch investments are intended to serve youth up to age 24, but outcome indicators will track youth up to age 26.

In contrast to universal goals and indicators, **performance accountability** measures how FEPP-funded programs and investments contribute to these broader universal goals. While population indicators show whether conditions for Seattle’s children and youth are improving overall, performance measures assess how well our specific strategies, services, and interventions are working toward meeting educational goals. Together, these two forms of accountability help us understand not only whether the city is moving in the right direction, but also the extent to which FEPP investments are driving that progress.

Table 2. Investment-Specific Goals and Outcomes for FEPP-Funded Services*

Investment Area	Strategies	Strategy Outcomes	Strategy Goals
Ready to Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Visiting • Health • Childcare • Preschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development • Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are ready for kindergarten • Students achieve academically throughout elementary school
Ready to Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded Learning Opportunities • Health • Safety • Basic Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students develop social-emotional & workplace skills • Students are healthy and ready to learn • Students feel safe at schools • Students meet academic growth targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students attend school regularly • Children and Students demonstrate academic progress toward HS graduation at 3rd, 6th, and 9th grade milestones • Students start a college or credential pathway within one year of graduation
Ready to Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Pathways • Career Pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program • Students develop social-emotional & workplace skills Students achieve academic student milestones toward transfer, degree or credential pathways • Increase in number of young adults with living-wage careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students earn a degree or credential before age 26

*The reporting indicators for each strategy are specified further in the Plan, within the Implementation Standards for each investment.

Levy Oversight

[Ordinance 127238](#) establishes a FEPP Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) to advise the Mayor and City Council on the levy-supported programs and monitor for transparency and accountability. The committee composition will include the Mayor, the Chair of the City Council’s committee with oversight of education programs, the Superintendent of the Seattle School District, a member of the Seattle School Board, the Chancellor of Seattle Colleges, and 12 appointed members who bring a range of perspectives, professional expertise, and lived experience. Collectively, the committee will include representatives from Seattle’s seven City Council districts and individuals with experience in topics such as childcare, Pre-K to 12 education, youth development, child and adolescent health, and college and career pathways. At all times no more than five Committee members shall be an officer, director, board member, trustee, partner, or employee of an entity that receives or competes for funding under this ordinance; or be an immediate family member of, or an individual residing with, an officer, director, board member, trustee, partner, or employee of an entity that receives or competes for funding under this ordinance; or be a person seeking or having an arrangement concerning future employment with an entity that receives or competes for funding under this ordinance. For the purposes of this ordinance an individual’s “immediate family” means an individual’s spouse or domestic partner, child, child of a spouse or domestic partner, sibling, sibling of a domestic partner, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, parent, parent of a spouse or domestic partner, a person for whom the individual is a legal guardian, or a person claimed as a dependent on the individual’s most recently filed federal income tax return. Subject to the preceding sentence and applicable law, an individual serving as an officer, director, board member, trustee, partner or employee of an entity that receives or competes for funding under this ordinance, or who has an interest in such an entity, shall not thereby be disqualified from serving on the Committee, but shall fully disclose any such relationships and shall not vote on any matter that directly involves the interests of such entity. For purposes of this section, “entity” does not include a City department or office. The provisions of this section are in addition to the requirements of Chapter 4.16 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

The Mayor and the Chair of the City Council’s committee with oversight of education programs, or their respective designees, will co-chair the Committee. The Oversight Committee may adopt rules for its own procedures, covering topics such as quorum requirements, and the frequency of meetings.

Commitment to Race and Social Justice

The City of Seattle launched the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) in 2004 to eliminate racial disparities and achieve racial equity in Seattle. RSJI directs City departments to implement racial equity toolkits (RET) in budget, program, and policy decisions, including review of existing programs and policies. Departments funded by the FEPP Levy may complete RETs pertaining to FEPP investments as part of their department’s standard work. RETs completed as part of development of the Plan are attached to the legislation Fiscal Note and Summary.

RSJI recognizes that targeting support towards those who have been historically under resourced, and are experiencing disparities in outcomes, creates cascading impacts that ultimately allow everyone to benefit. [Ordinance 127238](#) further specifies an implementation principle that the City “Prioritize investments to reach children, youth, and families, increase access to services for historically excluded communities, and achieve levy outcomes that advance educational equity.”

Spending Plan

FEPP Levy proceeds may be used to make strategic cradle-to-career investments in three domains over six years:

- Ready to Start (\$656.8M)
- Ready to Learn (\$478.1M)
- Ready to Launch (\$113.0M)

When combined with Operations (Leadership & Administration) costs (\$82.2M, 6%), the levy totals \$1.3 billion. A detailed spending plan is found in Appendix I.

Operations costs include:

- Operations labor with personnel supporting areas such as the leadership, policy, finance, and evaluation functions.
- Administrative costs which are charges for services by other City departments for such as facilities and information technology.
- Evaluation which includes external contracts to assess program performance for the investments outlined in this plan.
- Cost and risk reserve which is a contingency for unanticipated cost increases.

FEPP Levy investments may leverage funding from other sources, including private, local, state resources, such as Washington State's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) tuition, as well as federal resources such as Head Start.

Additionally, the spending plan in each domain includes a cost and risk reserve to help manage risk and uncertainty. The reserve was established to absorb moderate financial risks while maintaining a high proportion of funds for direct services. These funds serve as a financial buffer for unanticipated events, such as:

- Higher-than-expected inflation or cost increases (e.g. negotiated contract escalations, cost of living adjustments, etc.);
- Reductions in external funding sources (e.g., state funding, investment income, program revenue);
- Increases in baseline delivery costs that are higher than forecasted; and
- Transition costs related to reducing or discontinuing programs (e.g., contract terminations or employee separation costs).

The cost and risk reserve may be allocated annually during the budget process for uses consistent with this Plan. Any unused risk reserve becomes part of year-end underspend and may be reallocated in accordance with the levy's underspend policies, as described below.

Council Oversight Over Plan Modifications and Underspend

According to [Ordinance 127238](#), funds collected by the FEPP Levy shall be spent in accordance with the terms of the Implementation and Evaluation Plan, which shall be approved by Council. City departments may modify policies outlined in this Plan relating to participant eligibility, enrollment prioritization, and implementation standards, if necessary to maintain or create alignment with equivalent County, State, and Federal programs. All other policies and funding allocations contained in this Plan may be modified with Council approval, and in consultation with Chair of the Council Committee overseeing the Department of Education and Early Learning, unless otherwise specified in the plan. Any changes made will be documented in the FEPP Levy annual report and quarterly status updates to Council.

Proposed uses of annual underspend will be reviewed by the FEPP LOC and must be approved by Council. Throughout the year, City departments will monitor investment spending. Annual underspend should be used for programmatic course corrections, program modifications/expansions, or new programs. Unspent funds will be prioritized for evidence-based services supporting positive impacts on levy goals. Underspend may only be used to fund new or expanded programming if it can be sustained for the remaining life of the levy. The DEEL Department Director will prepare a recommendation for the LOC and Council on how to reallocate resources. Final determination of fund allocation will be made by Council as part of the annual City budget process or other legislation.

Methodology and Timeline to Identify Qualified Contracted Partners

Consistent with Ordinance 127238, the City will establish agreements with public and non-public entities to provide education-support services via competitive funding processes or direct agreement. City departments that receive levy funding allocations in the annual budget process are authorized to enter agreements for education support services outlined in this Plan, provided that the departments must use competitive funding processes when entering into agreements with non-public entities, except in case of emergency as determined by the Executive or when the department director determines that a process is not feasible because the services are only available from one source or are impracticable to solicit. When an exception to an advertised process is used to enter into an agreement with a non-public entity, the department director shall include a written explanation of the determination of exceptional circumstances with the agreement. Departments will continue to follow the process established under SMC Chapter 20.50 when contracting for consultant services.

Competitive funding processes, such as Request for Proposals, advance transparency and fairness in contracting while furthering the City's Levy goals by clearly defining service expectations, evaluation criteria, and decision-making processes in advance and applying them consistently across applicants. Equity-centered design features, such as standardized scoring rubrics, review panels, and clear documentation of funding decisions, serve as guardrails against bias and reduce reliance on informal networks or historical funding patterns. These processes center funding decisions on demonstrated applicant capacity, performance, and alignment with levy outcomes. Furthermore, applicants cannot participate in funding decisions. For each competitive process, the department will publish a list of panelists engaged in the evaluation process.

The City will engage with community members and service providers to design investments, as well as integrate learning from prior implementation and national best practices. Funding opportunities will be broadly communicated, with an emphasis on language access, to ensure awareness amongst a diverse group of potential qualified applicants. The City may also support prospective applicants by reviewing application requirements and best practices when applying for City funding through in-person workshops,

online webinars, or one-on-one technical assistance sessions to promote equitable and inclusive access to funding.

All departments disbursing FEPP Levy funds will use performance-based agreements that clearly describe the investment’s intended outcomes and link the investment to strategy-level service standards and performance metrics. By linking funding to demonstrated results, rather than focusing solely on compliance or outputs, performance-based contracting creates accountability, encourages innovation among providers, and helps advance meaningful, equitable results.

Timeline for Competitive Processes

As authorized under Section 7 of Ordinance 127238, FEPP revenue began paying for education-support services in January 2026. City departments also made commitments to renew existing agreements for the 2026-2027 school year under the Plan in effect for the most recently expired FEPP Levy, to minimize disruption of services to Seattle children, youth, and families. Existing FEPP funded services and contracted partners, as well as planned contract renewals are detailed in Appendix III. These investments will be expected to report on performance indicators consistent with this Plan.

Planned competitive processes are outlined in Table 3. City departments may modify the release date or announce additional competitive processes throughout the life of the levy in accordance with the Plan, annual City budget, or separate ordinance. Competitive processes will specify whether the award may result in annual extensions.

Table 3. Planned FEPP Funding Opportunities¹

Funding Opportunity	Page No	Dept	Release Date	Estimated Funding (\$M/Year) ²	Notes
Ready to Start					
Childcare Workforce Payment Program	21	DEEL	Q3 2026	\$2.9	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes. This program is to aid in retention of childcare workers.
Seattle Preschool Program	25	DEEL	Q4 2026	N/A	The RFQ selects providers for a roster; there is no funding associated with it. The RFQ is open annually to select new providers and/or classroom/site expansion for existing providers.
Ready to Learn					
Environmental Learning	31	SPR	Q2 2026	\$0.6	Estimated funding for 2026. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes. This investment funds environmental education for Seattle K-12 students.

¹ More detailed descriptions of each program are provided further in the I&E Plan. Page numbers provided for reference.

² Funding amounts reflect the first year of contracting; see spending plan in appendix for annual inflation.

Funding Opportunity	Page No	Dept	Release Date	Estimated Funding (\$M/Year) ²	Notes
Mental Health Investments	34	DEEL	Q2 2026	\$1.0	In addition to the overall mental health investments, DEEL will conduct a competitive process to award contracts for mental health service delivery for students with limited access to care. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
Summer Food Program	42	HSD	Q2 2026	\$1.0	Historically HSD has contracted with SPS for these services. The release of funds in Q2 is for 2026 summer contracting only. HSD is analyzing possible procurement plans for subsequent years. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes. This program provides summer meals to students at designated community sites.
School-Based Investments 2026-2027	30	DEEL	Q3 2026	\$0.5	This funding is for the 2026-2027 SY, to expand access to school-based supports in response to community feedback during levy engagement. Funded schools will be selected by SPS. This funding provides services to five additional schools as part of the levy renewal process. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
Restorative Practices	38	DEEL	Q4 2026	\$1.7	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes. These investments are relationship-centered strategies that build community, strengthen trust, and repair harm when conflicts occur. The focus is on taking personal responsibility rather than on punitive measures. Students are taught conflict resolution skills.
Opportunity-Based Mentoring	38	DEEL	Q3 2026	\$0.8	This is a new program that will serve students involved in, or at elevated risk of, criminal justice system involvement. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
School-Based Investments Citywide	30	DEEL	Q4 2026	\$25.0	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes. These investments provide funding for supports such as tutoring, mentoring and case management.

Funding Opportunity	Page No	Dept	Release Date	Estimated Funding (\$M/Year) ²	Notes
Community-Based Investments	31	DEEL	Q4 2026	\$3.3	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes. This investment supports student interventions toward academic progress.
School Based Health Centers	34	DEEL*	Q2 2027	\$3.5	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes..
Youth Behavioral Health	35	HSD	Q3 2027	\$1.2	This funding will support community-based behavioral health services that promote reengagement, retention and success in school with an emphasis on serving populations with the greatest need. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
Gender Based Violence Prevention	39	HSD	Q3 2028	\$0.5	This funding will support strategies to change student behaviors and norms around gender-based violence, that include in-school and after school educational programming with an emphasis on serving populations with the greatest need. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
School Safety	39	HSD	Q3 2029	\$3.1	This funding will support student safety at priority school sites around Seattle, with an emphasis on serving populations most impacted by violence. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
Ready to Launch					
Path to Trades	46	DEEL	Q3 2026	\$0.32	Estimated funding amount is for the 2027-28 SY. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes. This investment supports post-secondary opportunities in the skilled trades with state-accredited educational, apprenticeship, and/training programs.

Funding Opportunity	Page No	Dept	Release Date	Estimated Funding (\$M/Year) ²	Notes
Youth Development	52	HSD	Q3 2027	\$4.5	This funding will support community-based youth development services for Seattle youth who remain engaged in and are working toward successful completion of education or career pathways, with an emphasis on serving populations with the greatest need. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.

*PHSKC will conduct this process

In addition to the funding opportunities listed above, DEEL is currently under contract with the UW Smart Center to evaluate all Youth Mental Health investments, which are planned to continue through the 26-27 School Year. Evaluation findings are expected in Q4 2026. After reviewing the findings, DEEL will either continue existing strategies or re-bid grants/change funded activities in order to achieve desired outcomes.

Investment Management and Continuous Quality Improvement

Continuous quality improvement (CQI) is integrated into levy performance-based contracting using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework. CQI is an ongoing, evidence-based collaborative practice of setting goals, measuring progress, reflecting on results, and making adjustments. CQI efforts for the FEPP Levy will leverage data, community feedback, and equity-centered reflection to strengthen programs and achieve outcomes.

Because the FEPP Levy prioritizes serving children, youth, and families who have historically had the least access to educational and economic opportunity, the CQI process is designed to both ask whether programs are working, and also if they are reaching communities with the greatest need for educational support services.

In stewarding FEPP Levy resources, City departments will:

- Implement evidence-based strategies and best practices to improve the quality of service and/or maintain high-quality services.
 - Include clear performance expectations outlined in performance-based agreements, and if corrective action is needed, provide time-limited coaching, technical assistance, and capacity building to improve service delivery and program instruction, quality, and operations.

Use data and regular check-ins with grantees and service providers to anticipate challenges to quality service delivery early.

- Examine outcomes disaggregated by factors including demographic data to ensure services reach those with the greatest need.

City departments will work closely with funded agencies throughout the contract period. Departments will review data on participation, service quality, and outcomes quarterly. Regular meetings with contracted partners will discuss progress toward outcomes and renegotiate or terminate agreements as needed. When a program falls short of its targets, staff and partners will immediately work together to understand why and develop a path forward to determine necessary changes and best path forward, whether that means adjusting service delivery or providing additional support. Promising practices, especially those that have demonstrated success in reaching historically underserved communities, will

be documented and shared widely so that all partners can learn and improve together. Levy resources may be used to convene funded partners as part of a broader vision of birth to post-secondary ecosystem development, shared learning, and attainment of levy goals.

Evaluation and Reporting

The evaluation framework is designed to support continuous learning and improvement while ensuring transparency and accountability to Seattle residents and City Council. Evaluations will help determine whether the investments are meeting stated levy goals, and if investments are not meeting goals, what improvements need to occur in doing so. Evaluations must be performed by City departments or external entities and may include the use of levy funding.

FEPP Levy evaluation activities seek to answer central questions: *To what extent are children meeting age-appropriate academic milestones? To what extent, and in what ways, do FEPP investments improve educational equity, close opportunity gaps, and build a better economic future for Seattle children and youth?*

This question anchors the evaluation approach and ensures that evaluation efforts remain focused on whether levy-funded services are contributing to meaningful and measurable improvements for children and youth.

Evaluation Approach and Schedule

The FEPP evaluation uses a tiered framework over the six-year levy timeline. Each tier aligns to a broad question and builds progressively toward understanding the impact of levy-supported activities.

- *Monitoring and Performance Management - What did we do? (Years 1–6)*
Monitoring and performance management will occur annually throughout the six-year levy. This tier focuses on tracking services delivered, populations served, participation levels, and implementation benchmarks across the Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch investment areas. Performance data will be used to support providers through continuous quality improvement and to inform quarterly and annual reporting to the City Council.
- *Formative Evaluation - How might we improve ongoing investments? (Years 1–6)*
Formative evaluation will occur continuously throughout the levy to generate timely, actionable learning that can strengthen investments while they are still in progress or inform design of new investments. This tier synthesizes data from monitoring, process evaluation, outcome evaluations and stakeholder feedback to identify what is working, for whom, and under what conditions. It also incorporates landscape analyses and needs assessments to ensure investments remain responsive to shifting community conditions, emerging research, and gaps in the service ecosystem. Findings will be shared with providers, City staff, and the levy Oversight Committee on an ongoing basis to support mid-course adjustments, resource alignment, and continuous improvement across the Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch domains.
- *Process Evaluation - How well did we do it? (Years 2–6)*
Beginning in Year 2, process evaluations will examine the quality and fidelity of implementation. These evaluations will assess whether programs are delivered as intended, how participants experience services, and what factors support or hinder success. Particular attention will be given to the quality of childcare and preschool instruction, effectiveness of school-based health and mental health supports, and the design and accessibility of college and career pathways.
- *Outcome Evaluation - Is anyone better off? (Years 2–6)*
Outcome evaluations will assess whether levy-funded activities contribute to measurable improvements in student outcomes aligned to the levy's goals. These analyses will examine trends in kindergarten readiness, academic milestone attainment, graduation rates, credential completion, and entry into living wage careers. Where feasible, analyses may include comparison groups or longitudinal tracking to better understand the contribution of FEPP investments.

While monitoring and performance management will occur throughout the life of the levy for all programs, a subset of FEPP investments will undergo formative, process, or outcome evaluations conducted by City staff or external agencies. These planned evaluations are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 4: Planned schedule of FEPP Levy Formative, Process, and Outcome Evaluations

Domain	Investment	Eval Type	Evaluator	Evaluation Contract and/or Design Start Year					
				Y1-'26	Y2-'27	Y3-'28	Y4-'29	Y5-'30	Y6-'31
All	FEPP Levy Implementation	Process	External						
		Outcome	External						
	FEPP Levy Renewal Landscape	Formative	External						
	Investment Design for Levy Renewal	Formative	External						
Start	Universal Childcare & Preschool Feasibility	Formative	External						
	Home Visiting	Process	DEEL						
	Health	Process	DEEL						
	Childcare Worker Support	Outcome	DEEL						
	Child Care Assistance Program	Process	DEEL						
		Outcome	External						
	Seattle Preschool Program	Process	External						
		Outcome	External						
Learn	Expanded Learning Opportunities*	Formative	External						
		Process	DEEL						
		Outcome	External						
	Mental Health	Process	External						
		Outcome	External						
	School Based Health Centers	Outcome	External						
	Youth Safety	Process	DEEL						
		Outcome	External						
Launch	Post-secondary Landscape Analysis	Formative	External						
	College Pathways	Process	DEEL						
		Outcome	DEEL						
		Outcome	External						
	Career Pathways	Process	DEEL						
		Outcome	External						
Total				5	7	7	5	2	3

*ELO evaluations to include, but not be limited to, utilization and impact of SPR teen programs, including Teen Life Centers and Late Night programs.

Quarterly and Annual Reporting

Pursuant to Ordinance 127238, DEEL will submit an annual report to City Council and the FEPP Levy Oversight Committee that includes updates on all levy outcomes and indicators, program implementation, and progress in meeting levy-intended priorities and goals. Any changes made to policies outlined in this Plan will be documented in the FEPP Levy annual report. Annual reports will be submitted to the LOC and City Council no later than Quarter 2 of the following year.

In addition to the annual reporting to the LOC, DEEL will:

- Publish quarterly data dashboards to its website reporting on implementation, access, and outcome indicators related to all FEPP investments
- Submit a quarterly memo to LOC describing program monitoring data and summarizing implementation highlights and challenges
- Provide quarterly status updates to the chair of the City Council's committee with oversight of education programs

All reporting deliverables will emphasize actionable insights to support continuous improvement while meeting the City Council's request for specific, measurable outcomes.

II. Ready to Start: Early Childhood

The Ready to Start domain and Early Childhood investment area funds strategies designed to prepare Seattle’s youngest children for kindergarten and establish a strong foundation for long-term academic success.

The Ready to Start domain will fund four primary strategies including: (1) Home Visiting, (2) Health, (3) Childcare, and (4) Preschool. Table 3 provides six-year budget totals by strategy.

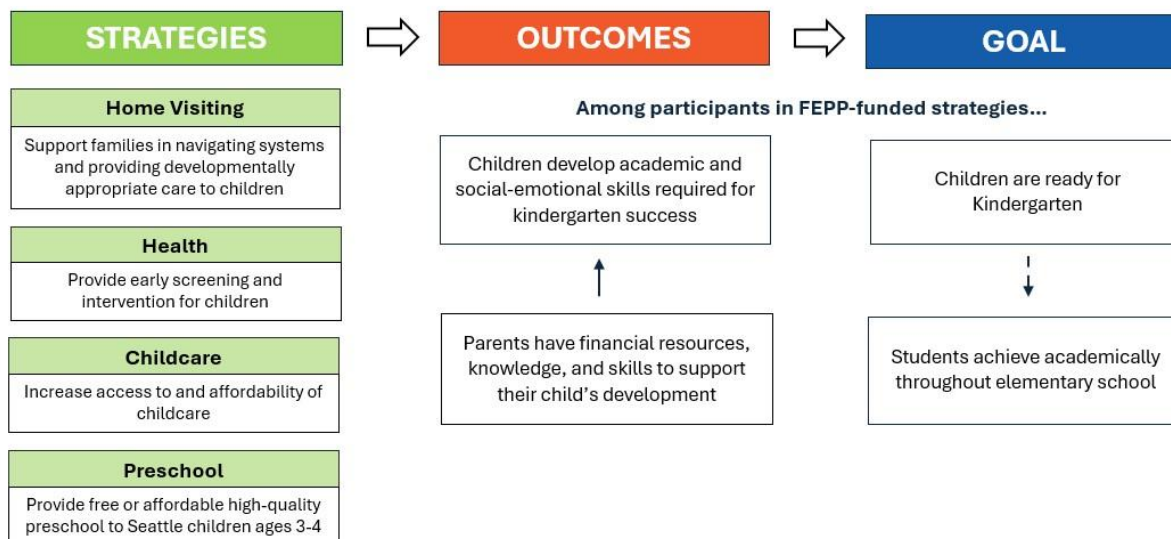
Table 5. Ready to Start Spending Detail*

	6-Year Total
Home Visiting	
Nurse Family Partnership	\$18,771,946
ParentChild+	\$9,543,014
Home Visiting Subtotal	\$28,314,961
Health	
Developmental Bridge	\$3,977,063
Childcare Health Program	\$22,806,335
Health Subtotal	\$26,783,398
Childcare	
Childcare Subsidies	\$90,537,870
Homeless Childcare Subsidies	\$3,234,126
SPR Childcare Scholarships	\$4,392,051
Childcare Workforce Payment Program	\$18,471,452
FCC Mentorship Program	\$4,038,976
Childcare Subtotal	\$120,674,475
Seattle Preschool Program	
Seattle Preschool Program	\$391,661,114
SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot	\$6,000,809
Seattle Preschool Program Subtotal	\$397,661,923
Ready to Start Labor	\$70,773,008
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$12,572,072
Total Ready to Start	\$656,779,835

**Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding*

The Ready to Start Theory of Change serves as an illustration of how and why change will occur because of Early Childhood investments and describes how inputs and strategies contribute to outcomes and the overarching goal for this domain (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Ready to Start Theory of Change



City departments will collect data on service implementation and report quarterly on access and service indicators. The FEPP Levy will also fund evaluations in this domain as detailed on page 15.

Strategy #1: Home Visiting

Funded Services

Home Visiting investments provide Seattle families guidance in navigating systems and provide developmentally appropriate support to families in their home or community-based settings. Services include but are not limited to health and developmental supports and home visiting programs, as well as program referral, case management, systems navigation, family engagement, or other community-based services. Programs to be funded include Nurse Family Partnership and ParentChild+, as described below.

- **Nurse Family Partnership** provides comprehensive prenatal and early childhood support including health education, parenting guidance, child development monitoring, and connections to community resources. These services are provided by a Registered Nurse.
- **ParentChild+** provides instruction on positive parent-child interactions using books and educational toys. These services are provided by trained early learning specialists.

Participant Eligibility

Home Visiting investments serve families including pregnant people during the prenatal and postnatal period, infants, toddlers, or children up to 5 years old, and the family systems of which they are members. To promote equitable access, services are prioritized for families who are low-income, first-time parents, experiencing housing instability, immigrant/refugee status, limited English language proficiency, or teen parents. Individual investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements.

- Nurse Family Partnership: Medicaid eligible, first-time pregnant parents enrolled by the end of their second trimester or 28th week of pregnancy¹
- ParentChild+: Parents with children 16-26 months old who have another risk factor such as low-income, limited formal education, immigrant/refugee, social isolation, single parenthood, teen-aged parent, and/or housing or food insecurity

¹ As of February 2026, Medicaid eligibility is defined as $\leq 300\% \text{ FPL}$ or 61% SMI

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards are provided below. All services require the contracted partner to recruit and enroll participants, provide ongoing staff professional development and supervision, use an evidence-based curriculum, and provide culturally and linguistically responsive services. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 6. Home Visiting

	Nurse Family Partnership	ParentChild+
Quality	Evidence-based national NFP model with fidelity; registered nurses with ongoing professional development and reflective supervision; services in family's preferred language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-informed curriculum implemented with fidelity Trained Early Learning Specialists Culturally and linguistically responsive services Ongoing supervision and training
Outcomes	Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development	Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Completing program % Meeting agreed-upon goals (educational/career) before program exit % Initiating Breastfeeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Completing program curriculum before exit % improving parent-child interactions
Service Targets	300 clients annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 275 children annually

Implementation Timeline

By direct award, in Year 1 (2026), DEEL will contract with Public Health Seattle-King County (PHSKC) to implement the Nurse Family Partnership and United Way of King County to implement ParentChild+.

Strategy #2: Health

Funded Services

Health investments are designed to increase access to health services and developmental screenings for Seattle families with children aged 0-5. Services include but are not limited to individualized care services, early intervention services, healthy development and wellbeing programs, developmental screening support, health and safety assistance, community outreach, education and staff training, and health consultations for early learning and school-age childcare programs. Programs to be funded include Developmental Bridge (DB) and Childcare Health Programs (CCHP), as described below.

- Developmental Bridge (DB)** provides developmental services to children with suspected developmental delays who are ineligible for federal/state programs but could benefit from individualized, quality early intervention services to promote ongoing healthy development and wellbeing. These services are delivered by Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT) agencies currently contracted with King County's Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS).
- Childcare Health Programs (CCHP)** provides services to childcare and preschool sites for health and developmental screenings, behavioral, nutrition and health consultations, nursing consultations and staff training opportunities. The CCHP offers providers tools and resources including model health policy templates, communicable disease prevention information, nutrition and other materials to promote healthy child development and behaviors. These services are provided by Public Health of Seattle-King County.

Participant Eligibility

Developmental Bridge (DB) serves infants/toddlers 0-3 years of age who do not qualify to receive Part C services, which are early interventions for children ages 0-3 who have developmental delays as provided by the individuals with Disabilities Education Act, but have a mild developmental delay; children who received Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT) services and would benefit from either a short-term extension of services and/or support in accessing ongoing services, as well as children who were referred 45 days or less before their third birthday (47 months of age) and demonstrate a developmental concern on a screening or assessment and need support accessing ongoing services. Caregivers with a disability which may prevent them from caring for an infant or toddler ages 0-3, may also qualify for benefits as funding permits. In order to achieve levy outcomes that advance equitable access, DB services are prioritized for children from families who are low- income, English language learners, or have immigrant/refugee status. To qualify for Bridge, families cannot be enrolled in ESIT or school district special education services.

The Childcare Health Program (CCHP) supports Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP), Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), and Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) providers.

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 7. Program Implementation Standards (Health)

	Developmental Bridge	CCHP
Quality	Validated screening tools; timely referrals to early intervention; coordination with Help Me Grow and school district services	Licensed health professionals such as Registered Nurses and dietitians with early childhood expertise; national CCHP standards; culturally responsive approaches
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Families with positive experiences % Connecting to services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Sites served # Service types delivered % Providers reporting skill/knowledge growth
Service Targets	175 children annually	90 sites annually

Implementation Timeline

By direct award, DEEL will contract with Public Health Seattle-King County (PHSKC) to implement the Childcare Health Program and with King County’s Developmental Disabilities & Early Childhood Supports Division at DCHS to implement Developmental Bridge.

Strategy #3: Childcare

Funded Services

Childcare investments are designed to increase access to and affordability of childcare for Seattle families with children ages 0 through 12, or children older than age 13 with special needs. Funding is also provided for early childhood professional support services for childcare workers at licensed childcare facilities and workers seeking to join the field or open a licensed childcare business. Programs to be funded include: Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP), Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Childcare Scholarship Program, Homeless Childcare Program, Family Childcare Mentorship Program, and Childcare Workforce Payment Program, as described below:

- **Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP)** provides tuition subsidies to Seattle residents for licensed childcare. Subsidies range from a rate of 25-100% based on child age, hours of care, and family income. Sites must have a Seattle business license and be located in Seattle or adjacent neighborhoods, including but not limited to White Center, Boulevard Park, Skyway, and Shoreline. Funding shall not exceed the cost of care for the number of Seattle children being cared for at each CCAP site.
- **Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Childcare Scholarship Program** provides tuition subsidies for licensed childcare for school-aged children operated by the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) at Seattle community centers and Seattle Public School sites. Subsidies range from rate of 50-90% based on family income.
- **Homeless Childcare Program** provides childcare subsidies for Seattle families experiencing homelessness, co-payments for families receiving state childcare vouchers, navigation of state childcare subsidy programs, and case management. DEEL contracts with BrightSpark to provide these services.
- **Family Childcare Mentorship Program** provides mentorship to interns working to become licensed family childcare providers and new providers located in Seattle, connections to resources to grow their business in Seattle, build bonds with fellow providers, and access to free training.
- **The Childcare Workforce Payment Program** provides an annual payment to part- or full-time employees of licensed childcare providers located in Seattle in an effort to aid retention of childcare workers. This program was previously funded with the Payroll Expense Tax.

Participant Eligibility

To achieve levy outcomes that advance educational equity, childcare investments and family support services are prioritized for families who are low-income or experiencing housing instability and vary by investment.

As it relates to childcare subsidies, families may only participate in one subsidy program at a time, including childcare subsidies administered by the state Working Connections Childcare (WCCC) or County Best Starts for Kids Childcare Subsidy (BSK). Additional participant eligibility criteria is presented in the table below.

Table 8. Participant Eligibility Criteria

	CCAP	SPR	Homeless Childcare
Residency	Seattle	Seattle	Experiencing housing instability with a nighttime address in Seattle
Child age	1 month-12 years old; 13 years or older if child had special needs	5 years-12 years old	1 month-12 years old
Income	Up to 110% State Median Income (SMI)	Up to 94% SMI	None
Attendance	Child attends at least one day per month	Child attends minimum 60% days per month	None
Recertification	Annual**	Biennial	Monthly
Additional Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not receiving subsidy from another regional childcare subsidy program*** • Demonstrated need for childcare, including part- or full-time work or school**** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not receiving subsidy from another regional program*** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At risk of or currently homeless • Not yet enrolled in another subsidy program, or unable to pay the co-pay of their existing subsidy

**Guardians who are not working or in school, but are in need of childcare in order to attend medical appointments, utilize family medical leave, or look for work (among other short-term reasons) may qualify for a short-term voucher

***Includes WA State Working Childcare Connections (WCCC), King County Best Starts for Kids Childcare Subsidy Program (BSK), Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP), and SPR Childcare Scholarship; does not apply to other social service benefits such as Supplemental Security Income or Veterans Benefits

****School includes (but isn't limited to) trades, vocational, English Language Learner (ELL), and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs as well as a guardian's first associate, bachelor, or advanced degree such as Masters, JS, MD, PhD

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards are provided below. All services require the contracted partner to recruit and enroll participants, provide ongoing staff supervision, and provide culturally and linguistically responsive services. Investments in these programs must report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 9. Program Implementation Standards (Childcare)

	CCAP	SPR	Homeless Childcare
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a license in good standing with by WA DCYF Maintain business liability insurance at or above minimum set amounts Invoice families monthly for services rendered Early Achievers (EA) participation, if applicable** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EA participation, if applicable** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource and referral agency able to connect families to licensed care Coordination with homeless services system; priority placement
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have financial resources, knowledge, and skills to support their child's development
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Caregivers who report less financial stress after receiving subsidy % Families paying 7% or less of their income in copays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Caregivers who report less financial stress after receiving subsidy % Families paying 7% or less of their income in copays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Families paying 7% or less of their income in co-pays
Service Target	1,300 annually	450 annually	250 annually

** If the state is experiencing significant delays in its rating review process, DEEL has authority to determine an equivalent measure of quality.

Table 10. Program Implementation Standards (Childcare Providers)

	Childcare Workforce Payments	Family Childcare Mentorship
Quality	Streamlined application and payments distributed within 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentors provide culturally responsive mentorship to interns in their own facility Mentors provide observation and guidance aimed at assisting their interns to become successfully licensed Uses peer-to-peer model for mentors that honors existing knowledge and skills Train culturally and linguistically diverse individuals to become childcare substitutes
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Workers retained year-over-year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Becoming DCYF-licensed childcare providers

Service Target	5,000 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15 FCC providers mentored annually• 25 childcare providers utilize substitute pool
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Implementation Timeline

- Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP): Through a provider agreement, all licensed childcare providers who meet implementation standards will be invited to enter into a provider agreement with DEEL to receive Childcare Assistance Program subsidies.
- Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Childcare Scholarship Program: The sole provider supporting the SPR Childcare Scholarship Program is the Associated Recreation Council.
- Homeless Childcare Program: By direct award, DEEL will contract with BrightSpark in 2026-2027 as a transition year. For subsequent levy years, DEEL will use a competitive process unless it is determined that there is no other provider that can meet this need as allowed by Section 9 of the levy Ordinance 127238, to implement the Homeless Childcare Program.
- Family Childcare Mentorship Program: By direct award, DEEL will contract with the Imagine Institute in 2026-2027 as a transition year. For subsequent levy years, DEEL will use a competitive process unless it is determined that there is no other provider that can meet this need as allowed by Section 9 of the levy Ordinance 127238, to implement Family Childcare Mentorship.
- The Childcare Workforce Payment Program: By direct award, DEEL will contract with BrightSpark to implement Childcare Workforce Payments in FEPP Year 1 (2026) and conduct a competitive grant process to identify an implementation partner for FEPP Years 2-6 (2027-2031).

Strategy #4: Preschool

Funded Services

Preschool investments provide access to free or subsidized high-quality preschool for all Seattle three- and four-year-olds. Programs to be funded include the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) and the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Waitlist Voucher Pilot, described below.

- **Seattle Preschool Program (SPP)** provides preschool instruction and tuition subsidies for eligible three- and four-year-olds. The City uses a mixed-delivery model for the SPP which includes classrooms operated by Seattle School District, community-based organizations (CBO), and family childcare centers (FCCs). Administrative hubs may be competitively selected to facilitate the SPP service delivery at FCCs.¹ Providers must be licensed by the State of Washington and be located in Seattle or in adjacent neighborhoods that serve Seattle children. Funding for non-Seattle sites shall not exceed the cost of care for the number of Seattle children being cared for at each SPP site. In addition, providers must:
 - Use DEEL-approved evidence-based curriculum;
 - Participate in DEEL coaching and quality supports;
 - Provide comprehensive supports for all SPP students who may need them to be successful in preschool; supports may include, but not be limited to, temporary staff for developmental supports, behavioral support materials, sensory equipment, or environmental modifications;
 - Conduct family conferences in alignment with EA requirements;

¹ Administrative hubs provide supports and services to family childcare (FCC) subcontractors who implement the Seattle Preschool Program, acting as the fiscal agent and prime contractor to DEEL, and monitoring and reporting on contracting compliance.

- Implement Kindergarten transition activities in alignment with Washington Administrative Code;
- Participate in developmental screening resource programs; and
- SPP is delivered via three service schedules to support working families:
 1. School year: Six-hours of daily instruction for 180 days of service in alignment with the Seattle Public Schools District calendar
 2. Full year: Six-hours of daily instruction for 215 days of services
 3. Extended day, full year: Ten-hours of daily instruction for 215 days of services

Additional services funded at some SPP providers may include specialized programming and dual language programming.

- **The SPP Waitlist Voucher Program** – this new program will provide vouchers for preschool services for families that are unable to access SPP program due to long waitlists. This program will be developed in the 2026-2027 school year and be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year. Families may only purchase services from eligible providers that have an active Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provider agreement. DEEL will develop quality standards for program curriculum and will require a minimum of six-hours of daily instruction be provided. The program will be available in Council Districts in which there are more than ten SPP providers with DEEL-managed enrollment waitlists. The intent of the program is to provide families with a voucher that can be used to access quality preschool close to home, where SPP slots are not available.

Participant Eligibility

Three- and four-year-old children who live in Seattle and are not yet eligible for kindergarten in Seattle School District are eligible to participate in SPP regardless of family income. Children are eligible to enroll in SPP when they are three or four years old as of August 31st of the school year. Families at or below 94% SMI are eligible for free tuition. Families above 94% SMI will pay tuition on a sliding scale.

SPP enrollment will be managed by DEEL and CBO/FCC providers. At sites where enrollment is managed by DEEL, children will be assigned to their requested site based on the following prioritization: 1) three- and four-year old children experiencing homelessness or in foster or kinship care; 2) four-year-olds; 3) children who apply to a site in their elementary school attendance zone; children with a sibling already enrolled in SPP or in the SPS building; three-year-olds with SMI below 54%; and three-year-olds who are dual-language speakers and are below 94% SMI.

Additional eligibility requirements for the SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot include: families who are located in Council Districts where more than ten SPP providers with DEEL-managed enrollment have a waitlist.

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 11. Program Implementation Standards (Preschool)

	Seattle Preschool Program	SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead teachers hold Bachelor degree • Maximum 1:10 adult-to-child ratio • Maximum of 20 children per classroom • If regulated by WA DCYF, maintain minimum EA level 3 rating** • Conduct quarterly assessments using DEEL-approved methodology. • Monthly site visits by a DEEL Early Education Specialist for contract monitoring and compliance. • Monthly site visit by a DEEL Early Learning Coach to provide support in the areas of teacher practice including curriculum implementation, inclusive environments, child-teacher interactions, child social and emotional wellness, and classroom management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 1:10 adult-to child ratio • Maximum of 20 children per classroom
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children develop academic or social-emotional skills required for kindergarten success
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • % Lead teachers with bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or equivalent • % Children meeting Teaching Strategies Gold Widely Held Expectations in Spring • % SPP participants ready for kindergarten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • % Families reporting quality preschool experience • % SPP voucher participants ready for kindergarten
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,100 seats annually by year 6 (see Table 4 for annual targets) • 840 dual language seats by year 6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 100 vouchers annually

**In the event of EA rating delays, the City may contract with sites that have not yet received an EA rating

Implementation Timeline

Seattle Preschool Program (SPP)

For school year 2026-2027, SPP providers in good standing with existing school year 2025-2026 agreements will continue to implement SPP. Planned expansion of SPP is as shown in Table 4 below. DEEL will conduct an annual process to identify new sites for SPP expansion, program models, dual language classrooms, and services as needed. DEEL will conduct site visits prior to contracting with new sites.

Table 12. Expansion Targets

Target	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-32	2031-32
School Year Seats	1,460	1,500	1,540	1,580	1,620	1,660
Full Year Seats	720	760	800	840	880	920
Extended Day Full Year Seats	420	440	460	480	500	520
Total SPP Seats*	2,600	2,700	2,800	2,900	3,000	3,100

**Planned expansion of Dual Language services will occur within the three SPP service models*

SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot

SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot will be developed during the 2026-2027 school year and implemented in the 2027-2028 school year. The program is funded through 2031-2032. It will be reviewed after implementation and adjustments made, as warranted.

III. Ready to Learn: K-12 Student Academic Supports; K-12 Student Health and Safety

The Ready to Learn domain includes the K-12 Student Academic Supports and K-12 Student Health and Safety investment areas. These two investment areas fund strategies designed to promote the academic achievement and social-emotional, physical, and mental wellness of Seattle students so they are ready to learn. Ready to Learn funded strategies seek to establish a strong foundation for college and career success.

The Ready to Learn domain will fund four strategies including: (1) Expanded Learning Opportunities, (2) Health, (3) Safety, and (4) Basic Needs. Table 7 provides six-year budget totals by strategy.

Table 13. Ready to Learn Spending Detail*

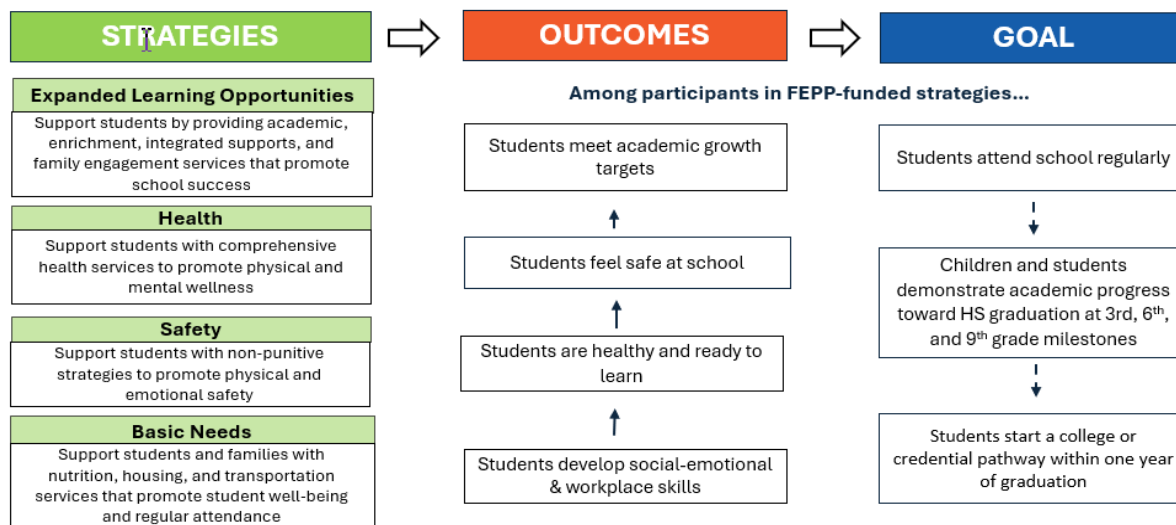
Investment	Dept	6-Year Total
Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO)		
School-Based Investments	DEEL/SPR**	\$159,861,541
Community-Based Investments	DEEL	\$22,164,780
Sports	DEEL	\$1,760,209
Environmental Learning	SPR	\$6,539,562
ELO Subtotal		\$190,326,093
Health		
School Based Health Centers	DEEL	\$83,716,716
Expanded SBHC Mental Health Staff	DEEL	\$41,125,237
Youth Mental Health	DEEL	\$57,273,918
HSD Youth Behavioral Health	HSD	\$9,291,507
HSD Multisystemic Therapy	HSD	\$1,099,306
Health Subtotal		\$192,506,685
Safety		
Restorative Practices	DEEL	\$11,124,113
Opportunity-Based Mentoring	DEEL	\$5,174,728
HSD School-Based Safety	HSD	\$30,212,376
HSD Gender-Based Violence Prevention	HSD	\$3,428,256
Safety Subtotal		\$49,939,473
Basic Needs		
Housing and Homelessness	DEEL/HSD	\$4,249,525
Transportation	DEEL	\$3,016,150
HSD Summer Food Program	HSD	\$660,978
Universal School Meals	OSE	\$7,740,000
Basic Needs Subtotal		\$15,666,653
Ready to Learn Labor		\$20,590,536
Cost & Risk Reserve		\$9,023,292
Total Ready to Learn		\$478,052,731

*Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding

**SPR Community Learning Centers are anticipated to continue to be funded, subject to the School-Based Supports RFP in Q4 2026. This funding would represent \$12.8 million of this line item.

The Ready to Learn Theory of Change serves as an illustration of how and why change will occur because of K-12 Student Academic Supports and K-12 Student Health and Safety investments and describes how inputs and strategies contribute to educational outcomes and the overarching goals for this domain (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Ready to Learn Theory of Change



City departments will also collect data on service implementation and report quarterly on access and service indicators. The FEPP Levy will also fund evaluations in this domain as detailed on page 15.

Strategy #1: Expanded Learning Opportunities

Funded Services

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) services are intended to provide academic and enrichment support such as tutoring and mentoring, integrated student supports such as family case management and referrals, active family and community engagement, collaborative leadership and practices, and environmental learning for Seattle youth. Programs to be funded include School-Based Investments, Community-Based Investments, Middle School Sports, and Environmental Learning, as described below.

- **School-Based Investments** provide funding to Seattle public and charter schools, for targeted student interventions delivered during the school day or out-of-school time (OST) such as afterschool, break camps, or summer. These interventions must advance four pillars of investments:
 1. *Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities*, which consists of two types of support:
 - *Academic supports* that are designed to close learning gaps and increase student proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA), math and/or science. Funded activities include, but are not limited to, high impact tutoring and extended instructional time.
 - *Enrichment supports* that are designed to boost student engagement, attendance, and overall well-being. Funded activities include, but are not limited to, mentoring, science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) programs, arts and culture, sports and physical wellness, social emotional learning, civic engagement, youth leadership development programming, international experiential learning, college and career readiness activities, environmental education, and Community Learning Centers.

2. *Integrated supports* designed to provide students and their families with supportive relationships and navigation assistance including, but not limited to, student case management, intensive family case management, and mentoring. Case management helps identify and connect students with additional services to remove barriers to learning.
 3. *Active family and community engagement* supports designed to promote partnerships between schools, students and their families. These support decision making as well as connecting students and their families with needed services and supports to meet academic goals. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, language access supports, student-led conferences, and established frameworks like Family Co-Design, Dual Capacity Building, Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT).
 4. *Collaborative leadership and practices* designed to ensure that school-community partnerships share a common vision, communicate effectively, and have clear distribution of partner responsibilities as they work together to support the student. This could include part-time temporary staff identified to serve as a coordinator for School-Based Investments; staffing allocation would be proportionate to grant amount.
- **Community-Based Investments** provide funding for Community Based Organizations or City departments to deliver targeted student interventions that advance at least one of the pillars described above in the School-Based Investments description. Support can be provided during the school day or out-of-school time (OST). Contracted partners must be on the SPS roster. Contracted partners cannot deliver services at public schools that already receive a School-Based Investment grant.
 - **Middle School Sports** provides funding for coaching stipends for SPS middle school athletic programs, to be administered by Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR).
 - **SPR Environmental Learning Programs** provide funding for environmental education, hands-on outdoor learning opportunities, and outdoor field trips, to be administered by SPR or qualified CBOs. Environmental learning programs may be delivered at SPR parks or other green spaces.

See Appendix V for additional details. Proceeds from the FEPP Levy are supplemental to the basic education financed by the State of Washington and the Seattle School District levies, and do not supplant, displace, or reduce, state or School District funding for the Seattle School District.

Participant Eligibility

To promote equitable access, ELO investments are designed to provide varied opportunities based on Seattle K-12 student needs. Individual investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements.

- School-Based Investments: K-12 Seattle public and charter school students, with services prioritized for students not yet meeting grade-level standards
- Community-Based Supports: Seattle students who live in Seattle and/or attend a K-12 school in Seattle
- Middle School Sports: SPS K-8 and middle school students
- Environmental Learning: Seattle students who live in Seattle and/or attend a K-12 school in Seattle

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Providers of School-Based Investments and Community-Based Investments are required to enroll participants, use and articulate evidence-based instructional strategies and curriculum, provide culturally responsive services, and meet all local and state regulatory requirements. Schools may use levy funds or leverage non-levy funds such as district, state, federal, philanthropic, or community partner funds to implement required components of the School-Based Investment pillars. See Appendix V for additional details.

Table 14. Program Implementation Standards (School-Based and Community-Based Investments)

	School-Based Investments	Community-Based Investments
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracted school partners implementing services must meet public school partnership and insurance requirements Funding prioritized to establish School-Based Investments feeder school patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in DEEL-led professional development and Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) activities Provider must maintain city insurance, licensing, and regulatory requirements
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students meet academic growth targets Students attend school regularly Students develop social-emotional & workplace skills Students are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students meet academic growth targets Students attend school regularly Students develop social-emotional & workplace skills Students are healthy and ready to learn
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Attending 90% of the school year % Consistently attending OST or integrated support programs % Reporting positive experiences/growth in social emotional skills, self-reported as well as instructor-observed % Academic intervention students improving Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) scores % SPS graduates starting a college or credential pathway within one year of graduation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Attending 90% of the school year % Consistently attending OST or integrated support programs % Reporting positive experiences/growth in social emotional skills, self-reported as well as instructor-observed % Academic intervention students improving Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and/or Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) scores % SPS graduates starting a college or credential pathway within one year of graduation
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 30 schools supported annually 5,000 students annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 15 agreements annually 2,500 served annually

Table 14. Program Implementation Standards (Other Expanded Learning Opportunities Investments)

	Middle School Sports	Environmental Learning
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches meet SPS requirements for qualifications, trainings, and First Aid/CPR certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-based curriculum that incorporates WA State learning standards Trained environmental staff to provide localized instruction Ongoing professional development and mentoring for staff
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students develop social-emotional & workplace skills
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served # Coaches supported % Attending 90% of the school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Reporting increased knowledge of local ecology or conservation
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 20 schools served 3,000 students annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,500 annually

Implementation Timeline

School-Based Investments: For school year 2026-2027, existing agreements for ELO services with Seattle Public Schools will be extended for one school year, and DEEL will provide an additional \$500,000 to SPS to expand access to school-based investments at five additional schools as a one-year grant. In Q4 2026, DEEL will conduct a competitive process to award School-Based Investments. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.

- Community-Based Investments: For school year 2026-2027, existing contracts with CBOs will be extended for one school year. In 2026, DEEL will conduct a competitive process to award Community-Based Investment contracts in alignment with 2025 FEPP Levy implementation standards.
- Middle School Sports: DEEL will renew an existing contract with SPS to provide coaching stipends for the duration of the levy.
- Environmental Learning: Environmental learning programs are primarily administered directly by SPR employees. In 2026, SPR will conduct a competitive process to identify service providers for a one-year contract. Future funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.

Strategy #2: Health

Funded Services

Funds dedicated to health support are designed to ensure that Seattle students have access to physical and mental health care services, promoting student wellbeing and school attendance. Student physical and mental health promote regular attendance and academic achievement. Funded programs include School Based Health Centers (SBHC) and DEEL and Human Services Department (HSD) Youth Mental Health Services as described below.

- **School Based Health Centers (SBHC)** provide evidence-based comprehensive healthcare services including, but not limited to, health education and promotion, comprehensive preventive care such as well-child exams and immunizations, healthcare assessments, diagnoses, treatment and referrals, age-appropriate reproductive health care, mental health screenings, counseling, treatment and referrals, and health insurance enrollment assistance. The comprehensive healthcare service model includes part- and full-time staff such as, but not limited to, a Clinic Coordinator, Mental Health Therapists, Behavioral Health Care Coordinators, Medical Providers, and School Nurses. SBHCs may also serve as hubs for additional mobile, portable, or fixed healthcare services such as, but not limited to, oral health and behavioral healthcare coordination.

Public Health Seattle King County (PHSKC) manages the provision of health, mental health, and health access services, in partnership with healthcare sponsors and community-based healthcare agencies, to operate SBHCs and other mobile, portable, and fixed school-based health services. Additionally, PHSKC may contract with SPS to supplement school nurse staffing at SPS schools with an SBHC on campus. SBHC staff coordinate with schools to integrate student support across other levy-funded strategies.

- **DEEL Youth Mental Health Investments** provide funding for mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment services.
 - Prevention services include outreach and education activities such as Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings designed to help identify students who may be experiencing mental health challenges and connect them to services, peer education, marketing and communication regarding available mental health resources; student enrichment programs with a focus on promoting social-emotional wellness, and supporting students to re-engage with school; and targeted prevention programs with a focus on school attendance and retention, barrier removal, and post-secondary pathways. Prevention services may be delivered by Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC), schools, CBOs, and individuals trained in youth mental and behavioral health promotion and education.
 - Early intervention services include implementing screening tools to assess student need for mental health services and intervention (e.g., Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment). Services may be delivered by trained City department staff, school staff, CBOs, or individuals with expertise in screening, referrals, case management, and outreach and engagement.
 - Treatment services include in-person and virtual therapeutic services, and one-on-one or group therapy. These services will be delivered by professionally trained and licensed individuals with expertise in mental health and behavioral health services. Referrals may be made by City departments, schools or CBOs. Treatment providers must maintain city and state insurance, licensing, and regulatory requirements.

- **HSD Multisystemic Therapy** investments are intended to provide intensive home treatment to teenage students to reduce high-risk behaviors and support services and interventions that address barriers to student success. Services include individualized strengths-based and family-focused treatment plans, and high-quality treatment services tailored to the teen youth’s and family’s cultural beliefs and practices for therapeutic change.
- **HSD Youth Behavioral Health (YBH)** investments provide students with high quality, clinical and non-clinical, culturally responsive behavioral health services and resources, and services that promote re-engagement, persistence, retention, and success in school, training programs and post-secondary pathways by addressing behavioral health barriers to participation and completion.

Participant Eligibility

Health investments are designed to improve the physical and mental wellness of Seattle students to support improved education outcomes, including opportunity for youth whose education has been interrupted to support their return to school. Individual investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements.

- School Based Health Centers: Seattle Public Schools K-12 students, regardless of what school they attend, and regardless of income
- DEEL Youth Mental Health: Seattle students who live in Seattle and/or attend school in Seattle, and regardless of income
- HSD Multisystemic Therapy: Seattle students ages 12-17 who have been referred for services by the King County Superior Court, Juvenile Court Services
- HSD Youth Behavioral Health: Seattle students who live in Seattle and/or attend school in Seattle with a household income at or below 80% AMI

Implementation Standards

Implementation standards for investments in this strategy are detailed below. All health services require the contracted implementation partner to recruit and enroll participants, use evidence-based practices and meet all local and state regulatory requirements. Program implementation standards and service targets are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts. Reporting will not impact patient privacy or confidentiality.

Table 15. Program Implementation Standards (Health)

	School Based Health Centers
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff allocations scaled to provide appropriate care • Middle and High School SBHCs will have 2.0 FTE Mental Health Therapists and 1.0 FTE Behavioral Health Care Coordinators • School nurse minimum qualifications include a B.A./B.S. degree in nursing from an accredited college or university and requires valid WA State Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Certificate and WA State nursing license
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are healthy and ready to learn • Students attend school regularly
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • % Attending 90% of the school year • Other health indicators as determined by PHSKC
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 schools in Year 1; up to 34 schools by Year 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7,300 students in Year 1; Years 2-6 target to be developed after planned RFP annually
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Table 16. Program Implementation Standards (DEEL Youth Mental Health Investments)

	Prevention	Early Intervention	Treatment
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainings and student enrichment programs are culturally responsive and have low barriers to participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioral health screening and referral staff are integrated into school multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) administrative structures Services are time-limited, goal-oriented, and directly tied to participation in education or post-secondary programs; not intended to fund general or ongoing treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services available in various modalities (such as school-based, community-based, virtual, (i.e. Telehealth) to meet differentiated student needs
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are healthy and ready to learn
Reporting Indicators*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Demonstrating reduced stress, anxiety, or depression, self-reported as well as instructor-observed % Reporting positive experiences/growth in social emotional skills, self-reported as well as instructor-observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Demonstrating reduced stress, anxiety, or depression, self-reported as well as instructor observed % Reporting positive experiences/growth in social emotional skills, self-reported as well as instructor-observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Demonstrating reduced stress, anxiety, or depression, self-reported as well as instructor-observed % Reporting positive experiences/growth in social emotional skills, self-reported as well as instructor-observed
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 600 served annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 9 schools 2,600 served annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,500 served annually

*Reporting indicators developed in partnership with PHSKC.

Table 17. Program Implementation Standards (HSD Youth Mental and Behavioral Health)

	Multisystemic Therapy (MST)	Youth Behavioral Health
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately MST-trained and certified staff • Maintain required licenses and insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain required licenses and insurance • Appropriately trained and licensed (or certified) staff • Behavioral health staff participation in HSD-led networking cohorts to share referrals, quality practices, and program improvements • Includes support for barrier mitigation to program participation and increased participant engagement • Services are culturally responsive and reflective for populations served
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are healthy and ready to learn
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Students served • % Completing treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Students served • # Achieving milestones • % Reporting improved well-being, self-reported as well as observed by licensed staff providing the treatment • % of students enrolled in K-12 or postsecondary pathways
Service Target	40 Students and families served annually	566 Students served annually

Implementation Timeline

- School Based Health Centers: DEEL will renew existing agreements with Public Health—Seattle & King County to implement SBHC services. PHSKC will conduct a competitive process in 2027 to identify service providers for planned expansion of school-based health services. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- DEEL Youth Mental Health Investments:
 - Prevention - In School Year 26-27, DEEL will maintain existing inter-departmental agreements with the Office of Arts and Culture and Seattle Parks and Recreation to provide arts-based programming at Seattle Parks and Recreation Community Centers and Teen Life Centers, with instructors from the Creative Advantage roster. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
 - Early Intervention and Treatment - In School Year 26-27, DEEL will maintain existing agreements and/or contracts with Seattle Public Schools, telehealth providers, and community-based providers to provide student mental health intervention and treatment services. In addition, in 2026, DEEL will conduct a competitive process to award \$1 million in one-year contracts for mental health service delivery for mental health services for students with limited access to care, such as K-12 foster youth. Intervention and Treatment services will be provided by professionally trained and licensed individuals. In subsequent years, DEEL will conduct either competitive processes, city interdepartmental agreements or direct awards as allowed by Section 9 of the levy Ordinance 127238, depending on the results of the UW Smart Center evaluation of the mental health services outcomes.
- HSD Multisystemic Therapy: HSD will continue to contract with King County Department of Community and Human Services to implement Multisystemic Therapy services. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.

- HSD Youth Behavioral Health (YBH): HSD agreements for Student Behavioral Health are in place through the end of 2027. In 2027. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.

Strategy #3: Safety

Funded Services

Safety investments are designed to improve education outcomes by equipping Seattle students with tools to navigate and avert violence, helping students feel safe in their schools, and educating students on gender-based violence to build safer and supportive home environments, promoting regular school attendance and academic achievement. Physical and emotional safety is directly connected to a student's ability to learn or stay enrolled in, and/or return to, K-12 education or post-secondary pathway. Funded programs include Restorative Practices, Opportunity Based Mentoring, HSD School-Based Safety, and HSD Gender-Based Violence Prevention as described below:

- **Restorative Practices** are relationship-centered strategies that build community, strengthen trust, and repair harm when conflicts occur. The focus is on taking personal responsibility rather than on punitive measures. Students are taught conflict resolution skills. Teachers, staff and coordinators engaged in this practice are trained to educate and facilitate these skills with their students. This program will provide one or more of the following services:
 - Community Programming that focuses on the prevention of trauma, informs schoolwide practices that strengthen relationships, creates a sense of belonging and fosters social-emotional learning.
 - Restorative Circle Processes, or talking circles, provide opportunities for targeted intervention when conflicts or harm occur between students; bring together affected parties in facilitated circles to discuss the impact of actions; understand different perspectives, and develop plans to repair and restore relationships.
 - Conferencing and Re-entry Support that addresses serious incidents and supports students returning from suspension, expulsion, or justice system involvement through intensive conferencing that includes families, school staff, and community members, along with individualized re-entry plans that help students successfully re-integrate into the school community.
 - Skills Building and Training for school staff and Restorative Practice Coordinators, including coaching opportunities once a month and quarterly convenings with participating schools and CBOs in support of teaching students these conflict resolution skills.
- **Opportunity-Based Mentoring** is a new program that will work with Seattle public and charter schools to serve students involved in, or at elevated risk of, criminal justice system involvement. Services will pair students with professionally trained mentors, who may have lived experience navigating the justice system and school disconnection, to provide consistent, relationship-based support anchored in school reconnection and post-secondary pathways. Participation incentives for meeting program milestones may be provided.
 - Mentors will partner with school staff to support re-entry after discipline or justice system involvement, reduce chronic absenteeism, and connect students to post-secondary pathways.
- The new program will be designed in the 2026-2027 school year for implementation in the 2027-2028 school year. Elements may include a co-design with the schools, teachers, local CBOs and

families that would adopt evidence-based models for Seattle students. As per the Plan, DEEL will provide program details for Council approval before implementation for the 2027-2028 school year.

HSD School-Based Safety investments may include, but are not limited to, case management services, therapeutic support, family engagement, violence interruption/conflict mediation and deescalation services, safe passage to and from school, and resources to support the needs of students and families. These services will be provided at specific schools in partnership with SPS and community-based organizations. Contracted partners must be on the SPS roster.

- **HSD Gender Based Violence (GBV) Prevention** investments include in-school and afterschool educational programming that raises awareness around dating/sexual violence, promotes healthy and safe student relationships, increases positive support networks through adult and peer mentorship, and helps change social norms and conditions in which GBV happens to help students feel safer, supporting physical and mental health wellness to be ready to learn.

Participant Eligibility

Individual investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements. Services are prioritized for students, schools and communities most impacted by gun violence. Services may also enroll youth whose K-12 education has been interrupted to support their return to school and/or post-secondary pathways. Across all services, participation will be prioritized for youth most impacted by gender-based and gun violence including K-12 students and opportunity youth whose K-12 education has been interrupted to support their return to school and/or career. Participant eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Restorative Practices: Seattle students who live in and/or attend school in Seattle
- Opportunity-Based Mentoring: Seattle students who live in and/or attend school in Seattle
- HSD School-Based Safety: SPS K-12 students
- HSD Gender-Based Violence Prevention: Seattle students who live in and/or attend school in Seattle

Implementation Standards

Implementation standards for investments in this strategy are detailed below. All Safety services require the contracted implementation partner to recruit and enroll participants, provide ongoing staff supervision, use evidence-based or evidence-informed practices, and meet all local and state regulatory requirements. Program implementation standards and service targets are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts. Additional details for HSD School Safety investments are provided in Appendix V.

Table 18. Program Implementation Standards (DEEL Youth Safety)

	Restorative Practices	Opportunity-Based Mentoring
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 12 hours International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP), or equivalent, professional training for all staff providing services to youth • For school-based services, Restorative Practice Coordinators must be 1.0 FTE • Coaching and ongoing professional development throughout year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This new program, to serve students involved in, or at elevated risk of, involvement in the criminal justice system will develop implementation standards which may include the following: • Mentor-to-youth ratios to be determined as program is defined. • Services to pair students with professionally trained mentors, who may have lived experience navigating the justice system and school disconnection, • Consistent, relationship-based support anchored in school reconnection and post-secondary pathways • partnering with school staff to support re-entry after discipline or justice system involvement, reduce chronic absenteeism, and connect students to post-secondary pathways • Participate in DEEL-led professional development and YPQA activities
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth feel safe at schools • Youth attend school regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth feel safe at schools • Youth attend school regularly
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • % Reporting positive behavior • % Reporting positive school climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • % Completing program • % Attending 90% of the school year • % Reporting positive behavior
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum eight schools annually • 200 Tier 2-3 students annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 served annually beginning in Year 2

Table 18. Program Implementation Standards (HSD School Safety)

	School-Based Safety	Gender-Based Violence Prevention
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific school services sites selected by City of Seattle and SPS • Participation in HSD-led networking cohorts to share referrals, quality practices, and program improvements • Culturally and/or linguistically responsive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally and/or linguistically responsive • Age-appropriate educational material • Involve youth in planning and development
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth feel safe at schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth feel safe at schools
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • # Incidents responded to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # Served • # Prevention activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Youth engaged in services that meet a goal, self-reported as well as provider observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Taking actions to prevent GBV, including but not limited to developing improved skills relating to conflict resolution and bystander intervention, and stronger community and peer connections
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 youth served annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 youth served annually

Implementation Timeline

- Restorative Practices: For school year 2026-2027, existing DEEL Restorative Practice agreements with SPS and CBOs will be extended for one year. In 2027, funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
- Opportunity-Based Mentoring: In 2026, funding will be allocated per the Plan's Timeline for Competitive Processes.
- HSD School-Based Safety: Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.
- HSD Gender-Based Violence Prevention: Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan's requirements for Competitive Processes.

Strategy #4: Basic Needs

Funded Services

Basic Needs investments are designed to help eliminate non-academic and socio-economic barriers to educational achievement and post-secondary pathways for students. Funded programs include Housing and Homelessness Supports, Transportation, Summer Food Program, and School Meals described below.

- **Housing and Homelessness Supports** includes emergency housing assistance funding, client-centered housing case management, and screening, referral and connection to stabilization services. Services are provided by housing service providers.
- **Transportation** provides transportation for students participating in levy-funded activities and events, with a priority for supporting SPS districtwide middle school sports. Seattle Parks and Recreation to administer funding, with services provided by SPS approved vendors.
- **Summer Food Program** provides prepared meals (breakfasts, lunches, and snacks) for students at designated community sites in Seattle during the summer months. Services are provided primarily by SPS.
- **New School Meals Program**, which will provide breakfast and lunch to all students at no cost during the school year. Services will be provided at 53 SPS schools to students who do not currently receive free or reduced meals supported by federal or state programs. Some students at these schools are already receiving free meals funded by these programs. This additional funding would support meals for those students who do not currently receive free meals. Funding for this new program is provided only for two years in anticipation of state funding supporting this program thereafter. Currently, 56 SPS schools fully fund meals for all students that are supported by federal and state programs.

Participant Eligibility

Basic Needs investments serve Seattle families, youth, and students. Participant eligibility criteria is as follows:

- Housing and Homelessness Supports: SPS K-12 students experiencing housing instability
- Transportation: SPS K-12 students participating in Out-of-School-Time (OST) programs or middle school sports
- Summer Food Program: Children and youth ages 1-18
- School Meals: SPS K-12 students

Implementation Standards

Program implementation standards and service targets are provided below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 18. Program Implementation Standards (Basic Needs)

	Housing and Homelessness Supports	Transportation
Quality	Services will be culturally-responsive with an emphasis on services being delivered in student’s home language	Determined by SPS using criteria such as experience and required staffing
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are healthy and ready to learn
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Attending 90% of the school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Consistently attending OST or integrated support programs
Service Target	90 students annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 20 schools annually 650 students annually

Table 19. Program Implementation Standards (Basic Needs – Food)

	Summer Food Program	School Meals
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% of a provider's participants must be Free and Reduced Lunch eligible in order to apply/qualify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals will be provided by SPS and meet Washington state nutrition standards
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are healthy and ready to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are healthy and ready to learn
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Meals served # Sites % of sites in areas where 50% or more students are eligible for free/reduced priced lunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Meals served % Participating in school meals
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60,000 meals annually 50 sites annually 	Up to 53 school sites annually

Implementation Timeline

- **Housing and Homelessness Supports:** The existing DEEL contract for Housing and Homelessness Supports will be extended through August 2027, and shift to HSD for administration. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- **Transportation:** SPR will continue its existing partnership with the SPS transportation office. SPS will manage vendor contracts directly. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- **Summer Food Program:** Existing HSD agreements for Summer Food Program are valid through 2026. Future funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- **School Meals:** OSE will direct award funding to Seattle Public Schools to implement School Meals through the 2027-2028 school year. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.

IV. Ready to Launch: College and Career Supports

The Ready to Launch domain and College and Career Supports investment area funds strategies designed to support a successful transition from high school to postsecondary education or meaningful career pathways for Seattle youth.

The Ready to Launch domain will fund two primary strategies including (1) College Pathways, (2) Career Pathways. Table 8 provides six-year budget totals by strategy.

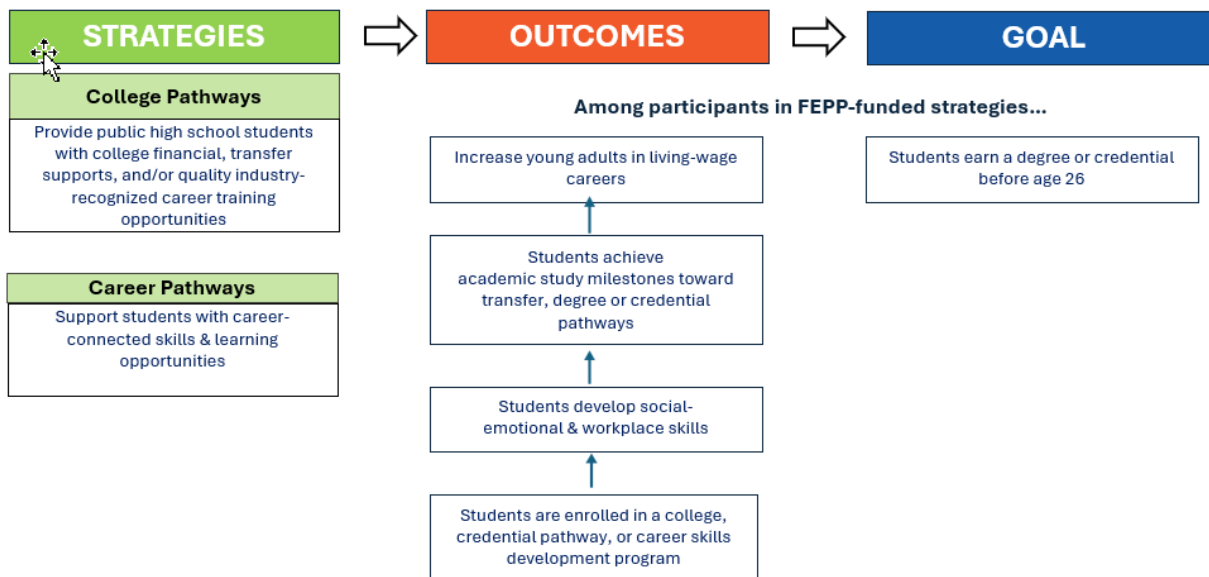
Table 20. Ready to Launch Spending Detail*

	6-Year Total
College Pathways	
Seattle Promise	\$56,299,588
Path to Trades	\$12,000,000
Path to UW	\$2,198,917
Path to Tech	\$614,502
Seattle Youth Employment Program	\$705,057
College Pathways Subtotal	\$71,818,063
Career Pathways	
Path to Trades Non-Colleges	\$2,000,000
Public Sector Pathways	\$1,121,021
HSD Youth Development	\$29,971,601
Career Pathways Subtotal	\$33,092,622
Ready to Launch Labor	\$5,987,296
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$2,144,689
Total Ready to Launch	\$113,042,670

**Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding*

The Ready to Launch Theory of Change serves as an illustration of how and why change will occur because of College and Career Supports investments and describes how inputs and strategies contribute to outcomes and the overarching goal for this domain (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Ready to Launch Theory of Change



**Ready to Launch investments are intended to serve youth up to age 24, but outcome indicators will track youth up to age 26.

City departments will collect data on service implementation and report quarterly on access and service indicators. The FEPP Levy will also fund evaluations in this domain as detailed on page 15.

Strategy #1: College Pathways Funded Services

College Pathways investments are designed to provide college access, persistence, completion, and transfer supports to public school students in Seattle. Programs to be funded include the Seattle Promise Program and Seattle Promise Pathways programs, described below.

- **The Seattle Promise Program** provides up to two years of support at Seattle Colleges for all graduating public high school students in Seattle. This support will be provided by Seattle Colleges staff, and includes, but is not limited to, investments in:
 - College Readiness, providing application support, Seattle Colleges exploration, financial aid guidance, and program information to 11th and 12th grade students and families.
 - College Enrollment, providing registration and orientation support (such as campus resources, advising, and peer connections); support to complete pre-enrollment requirements, financial aid applications, and course placement.
 - College Retention, Persistence and Completion, providing ongoing advising, academic planning, class selection assistance, transfer support, and career guidance; last-dollar tuition scholarships and equity scholarships for educational related expenses such as, but not limited to, books, transportation, housing, food, or childcare.

- **Seattle Promise Pathway Programs** provide support via the following programs:
 - Path to Trades Expansion at the Seattle Colleges, dedicating support for trade programs such as engineering technology, biomedical technology, welding technology, pipefitting, and construction and building programs to meet the needs of the Seattle economy. DEEL will work with the Seattle Colleges to prioritize services to support high-demand trade programs defined by the State of Washington. Support includes but is not limited to:
 - Career exposure and exploration events for public high school students and/or families to build awareness of skilled trades careers, experience hands-on learning, and explore Seattle College trades training programs; local employer engagement with youth including but not limited to City of Seattle departments and local labor unions.
 - Seattle Promise retention, persistence, and completion supports including last-dollar tuition scholarship, equity scholarship, and dedicated program advisors. Financial and academic support provided up to eight quarters or 120 credits, which may be extended for students in registered apprenticeships. Additional one-time scholarship up to \$1,500 to support cost of tools, supplies, or other required program and professional items.
 - Career support, providing dedicated career counseling through Seattle Colleges for Promise students, engagement with Seattle Youth Employment Program, other City departments, and other local employers.
 - Path to University of Washington, providing transfer advising for prospective UW students enrolled in the Seattle Promise Program, to support transfer steps, credit equivalencies, and preparation for desired majors. Support includes, but is not limited to:
 - For-credit summer seminars to provide on-campus experience, meet instructors, and complete additional college-level credits toward a degree, including minimum of one Information Technology seminar annually. \$1,000 stipend to be provided for attending summer seminars to offset education-related expenses.
 - Transfer application information session and workshops to support completion of personal statements, workshops, and financial aid requirements at transfer institution.
 - Continued support through transfer advisor and hand-off to program of study advisor.
 - Connection to other Path to UW transfer students throughout transfer process, as well as peer mentoring from past Path to UW students for students at UW.
 - Dedicated UW admissions and advising supports.
 - Data-sharing to track student progress from enrollment through bachelor's degree completion.
 - Path to Tech, supporting students in fields such as artificial intelligence, coding, software engineering, and computer programming languages. Support includes, but is not limited to:
 - Tuition for Seattle Promise scholars and Path to UW scholars completing selected short-term IT training during summer, after school, or weekend sessions.
 - Seattle Youth Employment Program, which provides “learn & learn” and internship opportunities for Seattle students. Support includes, but is not limited to:
 - Recruitment and placement services aligned to students' fields of study or career interests.

- Career-connected paid work experiences with private sector employers, nonprofit organizations, or government agencies including City of Seattle departments; career exploration and reflection activities.
- Employer recruitment and partnership development, administrative coordination with Seattle Colleges, Seattle Public Schools, and City of Seattle Human Services Department.

Participant Eligibility

College Pathways investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements.

Seattle Promise

Seattle public high school students may receive college access supports. Promise applicants must meet the following eligibility milestones during 12th grade in order to participate:

1. Complete a Seattle Promise application
2. Complete a Seattle College application
3. Complete FAFSA or WAFSA financial aid application
4. Participate in Seattle Colleges registration event
5. Graduate with a high school diploma from a Seattle public high school (SPS or Seattle charter high school), contracted non-public agency, or program within that year

As a Seattle Promise participant, scholars must meet the following eligibility milestones:

1. Participate in Seattle Colleges orientation event
2. Enroll full-time at the Seattle Colleges
3. Meet with Seattle Promise Advisor quarterly
4. Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as determined by the Seattle College campus that the student attends

Seattle Promise scholars that meet all program requirements are eligible to receive program services for up to two-years (eight quarters) or 90 attempted college credits, whichever comes first. Students may request an exception to the full-time enrollment requirement on a quarter-by-quarter basis under limited circumstances, such as demonstrating a substantial hardship or being unable to enroll full-time due to course offerings. Students are allowed to re-enter the program if they lose eligibility before meeting the 90 attempted credit maximum or two-years of attendance. Promise scholars that demonstrate financial need, defined as having a Student Aid Index (SAI) within the annual federal Pell Grant eligibility range, will receive an equity scholarship of up to \$500 per quarter or up to the established cost of attendance.

Seattle Promise Pathway Programs

- Promise Path to Trades: Seattle public high school students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in Path to Trades career exposure and exploration services. Seattle Promise program participants are eligible to receive Path to Trades completion and career supports.
- Promise Path to University of Washington (UW): Seattle Promise scholars
- Path to Tech: Seattle Promise scholars and Path to UW students wanting to develop Artificial Intelligence-driven technical knowledge, such as generative, large language, classification, regression, and foundation models
- Promise Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP): Promise scholars who meet SYEP eligibility criteria

Implementation Standards

Promise implementation standards are provided below. All services and supports require the contracted implementation partner to recruit and enroll participant and provide culturally and linguistically responsive supports. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 21. Program Implementation Standards (Seattle Promise)

	College Readiness	College Enrollment	Retention, Persistence & Completion
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seattle Promise partners with Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Charter schools to provide onsite and virtual Seattle Promise application support Outreach Specialists adapt their strategies to each school’s unique culture Seattle Public Schools ensures all SPS graduates have awareness of the Seattle Promise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A unified, cross-campus model ensures all students receive consistent, high-quality programming to support student transition and preparation Specialists provide clear information about registering for classes, completing financial aid files, and accessing campus supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target student-to advisor ratio of 100:1, with maximum of 160:1 Equity-focused, student-centered approach
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program Youth achieve academic student milestones toward transfer, degree or credential pathways 		
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Enrolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Retained Fall-to-Fall % Completing or transferring
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 Public high schools or programs 2,000 Promise applicants annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,475 Students enrolled each fall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,475 students annually

Table 22. Program Implementation Standards (Promise Path to Trades Expansion at Seattle Colleges)

	Career Exposure and Exploration	Completion Support	Career Support
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events designed in partnership with Seattle Colleges trades faculty and industry employers Seattle Colleges provide transportation for students to attend events and food at the events Hands-on activities reflect actual program curriculum and careers Materials provided in multiple languages; family engagement integrated into event design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities to explore trade careers prior to program selection and enrollment to generate awareness and align student interests, career requirements, and labor market demands Academic advising ensures support for academic success and program completion Last-dollar Promise tuition scholarship and equity scholarship remove barrier of tuition expense for all students and provide funding for other educational expenses for qualified students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools & Supplies Fund agreements based on program-specific requirements and removes barrier of high startup costs for trades programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career counselors trained to support career preparation and transition from training programs to high-demand trades career attainment Employer partnerships provide industry connections including but not limited to networking, industry events, career opportunities, and mentorship
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program Youth achieve academic student milestones toward transfer, degree or credential pathways 		
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Enrolled % Retained Fall-to-Fall % Completing program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served # Connected to employment or apprenticeship
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 high school students served in Year 1 1,300 students annually by Year 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 first-year students in Year 1 130 first-year students annually by Year 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90-100% participating students utilized career supports 70% of trade completers are connected to employment or apprenticeship with 6 months of completion

Table 23. Program Implementation Standards (Promise Path to UW)

	Transfer Support	Transition & Completion Support
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded UW Transfer Advisor at Seattle Colleges ensures accurate guidance and knowledge of UW systems, application, and majors UW Transfer Advisors conduct outreach, follow-up, and support of current Promise students Summer seminars are taught by UW instructors and take place on UW campus, providing students in-person access to UW campus and faculty and gain writing credits to be used toward bachelor's degree Summer seminar stipend allows students to prioritize the seminar instead of opting out due to financial needs of a job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UW Director of Advising Initiatives oversees UW transfer center and ensures UW advisors work with students from application to enrollment and handoff to UW program advisors. Path to UW Peer Mentors assist new transfer students adjusting to new campus and schedule and build community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination between Seattle Colleges advisors through Seattle Promise and UW Transfer Coordinator ensures seamless handoff UW transfer advisor familiar with UW application, requirements, and how to elevate Promise student UW applications to increase chances of successful application 	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program Youth achieve academic student milestones toward transfer, degree or credential pathways 	
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served # Applications to UW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % Admitted/Enrolled % Completing program
Service Target	70 served by summer seminar annually	120 enrolled at UW-Seattle annually

Table 24. Program Implementation Standards (Promise Path to Tech)

	Path to Tech
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training reflects current industry standards Completion agreements digital badges and certificates
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program Youth achieve academic student milestones toward transfer, degree or credential pathways
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Enrolled % Completing program
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65 Seattle Promise and Path to UW scholars annually

Table 25. Program Implementation Standards (Promise Seattle Youth Employment Program)

	Recruitment	Career Supports	Employer Engagement
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority given to students without prior professional internships, first-generation college students, and those pursuing high-demand credentials Coordination with Seattle Colleges through Seattle Promise ensures alignment with academic pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host employers must designate a supervisor to provide regular feedback and mentorship Placements must provide meaningful work aligned with students' fields of study Compliance with all applicable labor laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracted partner organizations must demonstrate capacity for internship coordination, employer engagement, and student support services Supervisors trained to provide quality mentorship
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are enrolled in a college, credential pathways, or career skills development program 		
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # served % Internship placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # served % Completing program
Service Target	75 Promise scholars apply for SYEP programming annually	60 Promise scholars served annually	60 Promise scholar internship placements across private, nonprofit, and public sector employers

Implementation Timeline

- Seattle Promise Program: Through direct award, in 2026 DEEL will contract with the Seattle Colleges to implement the Seattle Promise program. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- Promise Path to Trades: Through direct award, in 2026 DEEL will contract with the Seattle Colleges to implement the Path to Trades expansion. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- Promise Path to University of Washington (UW): Through direct award, in 2026 DEEL will contract with University of Washington to implement Promise Path to UW. Funding will be allocated per the Plan’s Timeline for Competitive Processes.
- Path to Tech: Through direct award, in 2026 DEEL will contract with the Seattle Colleges to implement the Path to Tech program. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- Promise Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP): In 2026, DEEL will establish an inter-departmental agreement with HSD to implement Promise SYEP. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.

Strategy 2: Career Pathways

Funded Services

Career Pathways investments create career awareness, provide exploration, and preparation support for Seattle youth interested in careers such as public service and trades. Programs to be funded include Public Sector Career Programs, Path to Trades Non-Colleges, and Youth Development programs administered by the Human Services Department (HSD), described below.

- **Public Sector Career Programs** provide support for local public sector career development through the following investments:
 - Seattle Fire Department (SFD) career programs, offering young adults an opportunity to explore a career in the fire service. Programming includes youth-focused community outreach, as well as additional funding for the SFD Fire Cadet and Fire Prep programs. The SFD Cadet program is for youth in the pre-application stage, meant to enhance youth familiarity with SFD staff, work culture, and job requirements before they are eligible to apply. The SFD Fire Prep program is for individuals in the SFD hiring pipeline, offering a structured 6–7-week program with a detailed curriculum designed to strengthen applicants before they are hired. The SFD Fire Cadet and Prep program investments include a \$1,250 stipend for youth participants.
 - Seattle Police Department (SPD) Explorer’s Program, providing workshops and activities to promote interest in law enforcement careers, and offering \$2,250 stipends for participants.
- **Path to Trades Non-Colleges**, providing support for prospective Seattle students in the trades at Washington state-accredited educational institutions, Washington state-registered apprenticeship programs, or Washington state-accredited training providers, offering a one-time scholarship up to \$1,500 for tools, supplies, or other required program and professional items, as well as other financial and academic supports.
- **HSD Youth Development Programs**, provide educational support to Seattle youth such as academic and career mentoring, college and career exploration, pre-employment and career readiness training, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) learning, and postsecondary navigation. See Appendix V.III for a list of contracted organizations in this program.

Participant Eligibility

Seattle students who live in and/or attend school in Seattle are eligible to receive career pathways services. Individual investments and activities may have different eligibility requirements.

- Public Service Career Programs: Seattle students who meet the eligibility criteria for Seattle Fire and Seattle Police Department career programs, and are working toward successful completion of education or a career pathway, up to age 24
- Path to Trades Non-Colleges: Seattle students who meet provider eligibility criteria to become apprentices, and are working toward successful completion of education or a career pathway, up to age 24
- HSD Youth Development: Seattle youth ages 14-24 who remain engaged in and are working toward successful completion of education or career pathways.

Implementation Standards

Implementation standards for investments in this strategy are detailed below. Investments in this strategy will report on access and outcome indicators, disaggregated by demographic characteristics, as available. This requirement will be included in provider contracts.

Table 26. Program Implementation Standards (Public Sector Careers)

	Fire Career Programs	Police Career Programs
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stipends are provided in a timely manner allowing students to meet entry requirements and obtain required tools Seattle Fire recruits diverse groups of students and families for community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stipends are provided in a timely manner allowing students to meet entry requirements, obtain required tools, and pay fees. Life skills workshops use a growth-oriented approach focusing on developing positive workplace behavior through personal goal setting
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase young adults in living-wage careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase young adults in living-wage careers
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Applications # Served % Completing program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Applications # Served % Completing program
Service Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 Cadets annually 15 Prep participants annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 Explorers annually

Table 27. Other Career Pathways

	Path to Trades Non-Colleges	HSD Youth Development
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected apprenticeship providers are registered through WA Labor & Industries and are directly tied to employment Registered apprenticeships combine on the job training with related supplemental instruction in a classroom Apprentices receive pay from employer for work performed while on the job and in training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services are culturally responsive and reflective for populations served. Programs provide developmental and skill-building supports that strengthen protective factors, confidence, self-determination, supportive adult connections, and readiness skills when directly tied to helping priority populations of youth access, remain engaged in, and successfully complete education or career pathways Participate in HSD-led networking cohorts to share referrals, quality practices, and program improvements
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase # of youth in living-wage careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth develop social-emotional & workplace skills Increase of # of youth who successful complete education or career pathway
Reporting Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Enrolled % Completing program # Connected to employment or apprenticeship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Served % Completing program % Achieving employment or skills development outcomes # Connected to employment or career pathway

Service Target	TBD following RFP	990 youth annually
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Implementation Timeline

- Public Service Career Programs: Public Service Career Programs: Beginning in FEPP Year 2, DEEL will partner with SPD and SFD to implement public service career pathway services. Funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- Path to Trades Non-Colleges: In 2026, DEEL will conduct a competitive grant process to identify Path to Trades partners. Future funding will be allocated subject to the Plan’s requirements for Competitive Processes.
- HSD Youth Development: Existing HSD agreements for Youth Development are valid through the end of 2027. In 2027, HSD will conduct a competitive process for the duration of the levy, after assessing program performance and impact related to levy outcomes.

V. Appendix

V.I Detailed Six-Year Spending Plan

The six-year spending plan presented here is planned spending. The budget may be amended and modified as part of the City's annual budget process.*

Strategy Funded Services	Year 1 2026-27 SY	Year 2 2027-28 SY	Year 3 2028-29 SY	Year 4 2029-30 SY	Year 5 2030-31 SY	Year 6 2031-32 SY	6-Year Total
Ready to Start (Early Learning)							
Home Visiting	\$4,377,422	\$4,508,744	\$4,644,007	\$4,783,328	\$4,926,827	\$5,074,632	\$28,314,961
Nurse Family Partnership	\$2,902,096	\$2,989,159	\$3,078,834	\$3,171,199	\$3,266,335	\$3,364,325	\$18,771,946
Parent Child	\$1,475,326	\$1,519,585	\$1,565,174	\$1,612,129	\$1,660,493	\$1,710,308	\$9,543,014
Health	\$3,961,769	\$4,151,864	\$4,349,799	\$4,555,874	\$4,770,398	\$4,993,693	\$26,783,398
Developmental Bridge	\$614,844	\$633,289	\$652,288	\$671,857	\$692,012	\$712,773	\$3,977,063
Childcare Health Program	\$3,346,925	\$3,518,575	\$3,697,511	\$3,884,017	\$4,078,386	\$4,280,921	\$22,806,335
Childcare	\$21,442,110	\$19,747,278	\$20,414,126	\$21,103,935	\$21,817,513	\$22,150,323	\$126,675,284
Childcare Subsidies	\$15,611,311	\$14,049,991	\$14,502,813	\$14,970,236	\$15,452,732	\$15,950,788	\$90,537,870
Homeless Childcare Subsidies	\$499,988	\$514,987	\$530,437	\$546,350	\$562,741	\$579,623	\$3,234,126
SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot	\$927,710	\$955,541	\$984,208	\$1,013,734	\$1,044,146	\$1,075,470	\$6,000,809
SPR Childcare Scholarships	\$1,028,685	\$709,861	\$731,157	\$753,092	\$775,683	\$393,573	\$4,392,051
Childcare Workforce	\$2,750,000	\$2,873,750	\$3,003,069	\$3,138,207	\$3,279,426	\$3,427,000	\$18,471,452
Family Childcare Mentorship Program	\$624,416	\$643,148	\$662,442	\$682,316	\$702,785	\$723,869	\$4,038,976
Seattle Preschool Program	\$55,881,676	\$59,409,664	\$63,110,990	\$66,993,239	\$71,045,466	\$75,220,078	\$391,661,114
Ready to Start Labor	\$12,171,622	\$10,819,405	\$11,252,181	\$11,702,268	\$12,170,359	\$12,657,173	\$70,773,008
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$292,612	\$408,388	\$2,647,528	\$2,811,037	\$2,995,238	\$3,417,269	\$12,572,072
Total Ready to Start	\$98,127,210	\$99,045,344	\$106,418,631	\$111,949,680	\$117,725,801	\$123,513,169	\$656,779,835
Ready to Learn (K-12)							
Expanded Learning Opportunities	\$29,939,631	\$30,384,691	\$31,276,732	\$32,265,534	\$33,241,900	\$33,217,604	\$190,326,093
School-Based Supports	\$22,361,188	\$25,000,786	\$25,731,309	\$26,553,749	\$27,358,761	\$28,192,025	\$159,861,541
Community Supports	\$4,682,339	\$3,292,898	\$3,391,685	\$3,493,435	\$3,598,238	\$3,706,185	\$22,164,780
Sports	\$272,124	\$280,288	\$288,696	\$297,357	\$306,278	\$315,466	\$1,760,209
SPR Environmental Learning	\$1,531,665	\$1,056,950	\$1,088,659	\$1,121,319	\$1,154,958	\$586,011	\$6,539,562
Basic Needs	\$4,878,066	\$5,403,783	\$1,301,696	\$1,340,747	\$1,380,970	\$1,361,391	\$15,666,653
Housing and Homelessness	\$656,966	\$676,675	\$696,975	\$717,884	\$739,421	\$761,604	\$4,249,525

Strategy	Year 1 2026-27 SY	Year 2 2027-28 SY	Year 3 2028-29 SY	Year 4 2029-30 SY	Year 5 2030-31 SY	Year 6 2031-32 SY	6-Year Total
Funded Services							
School Meals	\$3,600,000	\$4,140,000					\$7,740,000
Transportation	\$466,289	\$480,278	\$494,686	\$509,527	\$524,813	\$540,557	\$3,016,150
HSD Summer Food Program	\$154,811	\$106,830	\$110,035	\$113,336	\$116,736	\$59,230	\$660,978
Health	\$33,677,205	\$30,096,902	\$30,999,809	\$31,929,805	\$32,887,698	\$32,915,265	\$192,506,685
School Based Health Centers (SBHC)	\$10,037,765	\$13,877,767	\$14,294,100	\$14,722,923	\$15,164,611	\$15,619,549	\$83,716,71
Expanded SBHC Mental Health Staff	\$8,863,119	\$6,077,000	\$6,259,310	\$6,447,089	\$6,640,502	\$6,838,217	\$41,125,237
Mental Health Prevention	\$4,446,582	\$3,048,800	\$3,140,264	\$3,234,472	\$3,331,506	\$3,403,451	\$20,632,075
Mental Health Early Intervention	\$2,253,335	\$1,545,000	\$1,591,350	\$1,639,091	\$1,688,263	\$1,738,911	\$10,455,950
Mental Health Treatment	\$5,342,272	\$3,662,930	\$3,772,818	\$3,886,003	\$4,002,583	\$4,121,660	\$24,788,266
Mental Health Operations	\$300,445	\$206,000	\$212,180	\$218,545	\$225,102	\$235,355	\$1,397,627
HSD Youth Behavioral Health	\$2,176,212	\$1,501,730	\$1,546,782	\$1,593,187	\$1,640,982	\$832,614	\$9,291,507
HSD Multisystemic Therapy	\$257,475	\$177,675	\$183,005	\$188,495	\$194,149	\$98,507	\$1,099,306
Safety	\$9,668,245	\$7,532,992	\$7,797,017	\$8,070,675	\$8,354,331	\$8,516,213	\$49,939,473
HSD Gender-Based Violence Prevention	\$802,950	\$554,089	\$570,711	\$587,832	\$605,467	\$307,207	\$3,428,256
HSD School-Based Safety	\$6,438,750	\$4,443,163	\$4,576,458	\$4,713,752	\$4,855,164	\$5,185,089	\$30,212,376
Restorative Practices	\$1,626,545	\$1,711,740	\$1,801,128	\$1,894,909	\$1,993,293	\$2,096,498	\$11,124,113
Opportunity-Based Mentoring	\$800,000	\$824,000	\$848,720	\$874,182	\$900,407	\$927,419	\$5,174,728
Ready to Learn Labor	\$3,400,369	\$3,173,771	\$3,300,722	\$3,432,751	\$3,570,061	\$3,712,863	\$20,590,536
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$252,464	\$341,187	\$1,943,730	\$2,037,958	\$2,142,531	\$2,305,421	\$9,023,292
Total Ready to Learn	\$81,815,981	\$76,933,326	\$76,619,706	\$79,077,470	\$81,577,490	\$82,028,757	\$478,052,731
Ready to Launch (Post-Secondary)							
College Pathways	\$10,783,539	\$11,421,518	\$11,870,021	\$12,213,675	\$12,567,497	\$12,961,813	\$71,818,063
Seattle Promise	\$8,703,776	\$8,964,889	\$9,233,835	\$9,510,851	\$9,796,176	\$10,090,061	\$56,299,588
Path to Trades	\$1,540,757	\$1,900,974	\$2,063,919	\$2,113,436	\$2,164,312	\$2,216,602	\$12,000,000
Path to Tech	\$95,000	\$97,850	\$100,786	\$103,810	\$106,924	\$110,132	\$614,502
Path to UW	\$335,006	\$345,535	\$355,842	\$366,471	\$377,405	\$418,657	\$2,198,917
Promise SYEP Internships	\$109,000	\$112,270	\$115,638	\$119,107	\$122,680	\$126,361	\$705,057
Career Pathways	\$7,329,001	\$5,373,750	\$5,534,963	\$5,701,011	\$5,872,041	\$3,281,856	\$33,092,622
Path to Trades Non-Colleges	\$309,195	\$318,471	\$328,025	\$337,866	\$348,002	\$358,442	\$2,000,000

Strategy	Year 1 2026-27 SY	Year 2 2027-28 SY	Year 3 2028-29 SY	Year 4 2029-30 SY	Year 5 2030-31 SY	Year 6 2031-32 SY	6-Year Total
Funded Services							
Pub. Sect. Pathways SPD Explorers		\$ 93,650	\$96,459	\$99,352	\$102,334	\$105,403	\$497,198
Pub. Sect. Pathways SFD Career Programs		\$117,500	\$121,025	\$124,656	\$128,395	\$132,247	\$623,823
HSD Youth Development	\$7,019,806	\$4,844,129	\$4,989,454	\$5,139,137	\$5,293,311	\$2,685,764	\$29,971,601
Ready to Launch Labor	\$887,509	\$941,559	\$979,222	\$1,018,390	\$1,059,126	\$1,101,491	\$5,987,296
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$58,811	\$79,010	\$478,519	\$500,845	\$525,921	\$501,583	\$2,144,689
Total Ready to Launch	\$19,058,859	\$17,815,837	\$18,862,725	\$19,433,920	\$20,024,586	\$17,846,743	\$113,042,670
Operations (Leadership & Administration)							
Administrative Costs	\$3,297,979	\$3,314,384	\$3,529,913	\$3,760,104	\$4,005,973	\$3,801,392	\$21,709,744
External Evaluation	\$1,189,961	\$1,225,659	\$1,262,429	\$1,300,302	\$1,339,311	\$1,379,490	\$7,697,153
Operations Labor	\$7,748,973	\$8,011,968	\$8,332,447	\$8,665,744	\$9,012,374	\$9,372,869	\$51,144,375
Cost & Risk Reserve	\$37,877	\$55,914	\$341,623	\$363,103	\$387,257	\$420,862	\$1,606,637
Total Operations	\$12,274,789	\$12,607,925	\$13,466,412	\$14,089,253	\$14,744,915	\$14,974,614	\$82,157,909
FEPP 25 TOTAL	\$211,276,840	\$206,402,432	\$215,367,474	\$224,550,324	\$234,072,791	\$238,363,283	\$1,330,033,144

*Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding

V. II SLI Response

The table below identifies Council priorities outlined in 2026 Statements of Legislative Intent DEEL001S-A-1 and DEEL-002-A-3.

	Council Priority	Plan Section	Page
1	Quarterly Reporting	Quarterly Reporting	10 – 11
2	Universal citywide preschool feasibility study	Evaluation	13
3	Preschool voucher pilot program	Preschool	21
4	Restorative practices and non-punitive safety investments	Safety	34
5	Afterschool programming for at-risk youth	Community Supports; Youth Development	25
6	Food assistance	Basic Needs	38
7	Support for foster care youth transitioning to adulthood	Preschool; Youth Mental Health	21,35
8	Support for public sector careers	Career Pathways	50
9	Support for information technology careers	Promise Path to UW; Promise Seattle Youth Employment Program	48

V.III Year 1 (School Year 2026-2027) Contracted Partners

The 2025 FEPP Levy continues many existing City investments that provide education support services to Seattle children, youth, and families. The table below presents investments and contracted partners that will continue for the first year for FEPP implementation (Calendar Year 2026 or School Year 2026-2027), or longer, to prevent disruption of services to community. Contracts may be renegotiated to meet implementation standards outlined in this plan.

Ready to Start: Early Childhood

Strategy	Department	Investment	Contracted Partners
Home Visiting	DEEL	Nurse Family Partnership	• Public Health—Seattle and King County (PHSKC)
Home Visiting	DEEL	ParentChild+	• United Way King County
Health	DEEL	Developmental Bridge	• King County Developmental Disabilities and Early Childhood Supports
Health	DEEL	Child Care Health Program	• PHSKC
Childcare	DEEL	Child Care Assistance Program	• See list below
Childcare	SPR	School Age Childcare	• Associated Recreation Council
Childcare	DEEL	Homeless Child Care	• BrightSpark
Childcare	DEEL	Child Care Referral	• Mary’s Place
Childcare	DEEL	Child Care Workforce Payments	• BrightSpark
Childcare	DEEL	Family Child Care Mentorship	• Imagine Institute
Preschool	DEEL	Seattle Preschool Program	• See list below
Preschool	DEEL	SPP Scholars	• North Seattle College

Ready to Learn: K-12 Student Supports

Strategy	Department	Investment	Contracted Partners
Expanded Learning Opportunities	DEEL	School-Based Investments	See list below
Expanded Learning Opportunities	DEEL	Family Support Services	SPS
Expanded Learning Opportunities	DEEL	Community-Based Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACE Academy • Adult & Youth Learning Center • Atlantic Street Center • BRAVE • Celebrating Roots • Creative Justice • East African Community Services • Empowering Youth & Families Outreach • Eritrean Association • FEEST • Financial Leadership Skills Academy • Friends of the Children • Geeking Out Kids of Color • Girls on the Run • Kandelia • Movimiento Afrolatino Seattle • Multimedia Resources and Training Institute • Neighborhood House • OneWorld Now! • Refugee Women's Alliance • SafeFutures Youth Center • School Connect WA • SPR • South End Stories • STEM Paths Innovation Network • The Breakfast Group • The Good Foot Arts Collective • Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle • WA-BLOC • YMCA Young Women Empowered
Expanded Learning Opportunities	DEEL	Culturally Specific and Responsive	SPS
Expanded Learning Opportunities	DEEL	Sports	SPR

Ready to Learn: K-12 Health and Safety

Strategy	Department	Investment	Contracted Partners
Health	DEEL	Nursing	PHSKC
Health	DEEL	Behavioral Health Coordination	PHSKC
Health	DEEL	Universal Screening	SPS
Health	DEEL	Youth Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Counseling and Referral Service • Consejo Counseling and Referral Services • Joon • PHSKC • Seattle Children’s - Odessa Brown • Southwest Youth and Family Services • Seneca Family of Agencies • SPS • TalkSpace • WA Therapy Fund Foundation
Safety	DEEL	Multisystemic Therapy	KC Dept. of Community and Human Services
Safety	HSD	School-Based Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Street Center • Lambert House • Neighborcare Health • Northwest Credible Messenger • South East Youth and Family Services • Southwest Youth and Family Services • Teen Link • Therapeutic Health Services • WAPI Community Services
Safety	DEEL	Restorative Practices	SPS
Safety	HSD	School-Based Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Passageways • Freedom Project • InvestED • Seattle Children's Hospital • Seattle Neighborhood Group • Urban Family • YMCA of Greater Seattle
Safety	HSD	Gender-Based Violence Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Foot Arts Collective • Seattle Indian Health Board • Solid Ground WA
Basic Needs	DEEL	Housing and Homelessness Support	Neighborhood House
Basic Needs	HSD	Summer Food Program	SPS

Ready to Launch: College and Career Sports

Strategy	Department	Investment	Contracted Partners
College Pathways	DEEL	Seattle Promise	Seattle Colleges
College Pathways	DEEL	Promise Path to UW	University of Washington
College Pathways	DEEL	Promise SYEP	Human Services Department (HSD)
Career Pathways	HSD	Supporting Youth and Young Adults for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Counseling and Referral Services • Consejo Counseling and Referral Services • Dare 2 Be • El Centro De la Raza • Empowering Youth and Families Outreach • Geeking Out Kids of Color • Good Foot-Rainier Valley Corps • Life Enrichment Group • Open Doors for Multicultural Families • Stem Path Innovation Network • YMCA of Greater Seattle • World Mind Creation Academy • Seattle Goodwill Industries • Youth Build

Child Care Assistance Program Providers

- 1st Start Learning Family Home Center
- A Mother's Touch Daycare
- Aaliyah Family Learning Program LLC
- ABC Academy of Diversity LLC
- Adam Home Day Care
- Ages in Stages Childcare
- Aisha Family Childcare
- Aisha Home Daycare
- Al Fatha Home Day Care
- Al-Nura Home Daycare
- Amiin Family Child Care
- Anab Hash Haybe
- Anas Family Child Care
- Angels Nest Childcare
- Anisa Daycare LLC
- Asha's Family Child Care
- Associated Recreation Council
- Astan Childcare
- Aster Blossom Child Care
- Ayan Childcare
- Ayan Family Child Care
- Ayans Family Home Childcare
- Azhar Family Child Care
- Barakat Home Day Care
- Beginnings CC 1
- Boru Family Child Care
- Hormuud Home Family
- Iftin Childcare
- Ilhan Home Day Care
- Iman Family Childcare
- In Toddler Care
- Innsha Allah Family Childcare
- Iqra Family Child Care
- Ismahan Family Childcare
- Jasmin Day Care
- Khayrd Home Childcare
- Khayre Family Daycare
- Kids First Early Learning
- Kiki Family Childcare
- Kusum's Family Child Care
- Laila Waran Childcare
- Le Jardin Day Care & Preschool
- Little Blessings Daycare
- Little Cubs
- Little Jewel Daycare LLC
- Lovable Nest Child Care
- Loved Kids Family Home Daycare
- Loving Family Home Childcare
- Loving Hands Childcare
- Mai Thanh Day Care, Inc.
- May May & Yan Yan's Family Day Care
- Maymun Home Childcare

- Bright Minds Home Childcare
- Bright Start Family Home Child Care
- BrightSpark
- Busy Bee Childcare
- Causey's Learning Center
- Child Care For All
- Community School
- Cottage School
- Creative Kids
- Creciendo Juntos
- Denise Learning Center
- Denise Louie Education Center
- Discovery Child Care & Preschool
- Early Learning & Development Center
- Ebla Family Childcare
- El Centro de la Raza
- Fahima Home Day Care
- Fatah Child Care
- Fatax Home Child Care
- Fathiya Hassan
- FGH Corporation Yasmine Daycare
- Filsan Family Early Learning Program
- First Place
- Firststep Child Care Learning Center
- Grandmas Daycare LLC
- Growing Hearts Childcare
- Haggard-Nelson Child Care Resources Inc
- Hanan Family Daycare
- Happy Day Care
- Hayat Family Home Childcare
- Hidayah Family Child Care LLC
- Hinda Childcare
- Hoa Nguyen Home Daycare
- Hobyo One Childcare
- Miles of Smiles Family Child Care
- Minas Day Care
- Mona's Childcare LLC
- Moyale Home Family Childcare
- Muna Childcare
- Nasiib Family Child Care
- Nasri Family Child Care
- Nasteha Family Childcare
- Nesteho Child Care
- Nurturing Hands Daycare
- Paradise Family Home Childcare
- Playmates Daycare
- Radwaan Family Child Care
- Rahma Daycare
- Rahma Home Daycare
- Ram's Early Learning Program
- Ridwan Family Daycare
- Sabastian's Bilingual Preschool
- Salmaan Family Childcare
- Senait Family Home Child Care
- Small World Childcare
- Son Rise Child Care
- Suheila Childcare LLC
- Takaba Childcare
- Takawal Family Childcare LLC
- The Little Dreamers
- Tina Abdinoor Falestin daycare
- View Point Child Care
- Waliin In Home Childcare
- Weeble Peeple Day Care
- Yusra Home Day Care
- Zamzam's Family Home Childcare
- Zhi Weng Ye
- Hormuud Home Family

Seattle Preschool Program Providers

- Anas Family Child Care
- Angels Nest Childcare
- Associated Recreation Council
- Aster Blossom Child Care
- Boru Family Child Care
- Chinese Information Service Center
- Community School of West Seattle
- Creative Kids
- Denise Louie
- El Centro - Jose Marti CDC at Beacon Pacific Village
- Launch
- Le Jardin Day Care and Preschool
- Lovable Nest Child Care
- Nasri Family Child Care
- Northwest Center Kids
- Nurturing Hands Daycare
- Primm ABC Child Care
- Puget Sound Ed. Svc. Dist. Educare
- Refugee Women's Alliance
- Sabastian's Bilingual Preschool

- Experimental Education Unit UW
- First Place Preschool
- Hanan Family Daycare
- Hayat Family Home Childcare
- Hearing, Speech and Deaf Center
- Hilltop Children's Center
- Hormuud Home Family
- Hutch Kids Child Care
- Ilhan Home Day Care
- Iman Family Childcare
- Innsha Allah Family Childcare
- Jasmin Day Care
- KinderCare
- Kusum's Family Child Care
- La Escuelita Bilingual School
- Salmaan Family Childcare
- SPS
- Seed of Life
- Senait Family Home Child Care
- Sound Child Care Solutions
- The Children's Center B.G. Gardens
- The Little Dreamers
- Tiny Tots
- United Indians of All Tribes
- Voices of Tomorrow
- Waliin In Home Childcare
- West African Community Council
- WorldKids
- YMCA

School Based Investments

- Beacon Hill Elementary School (ES)
- Aki Kurose Middle School (MS)
- Chief Sealth High School (HS)
- Cleveland HS
- Concord ES
- Dearborn Park ES
- Denny International MS
- Dunlap ES
- Emerson ES
- Franklin HS
- Interagency HS
- John Muir ES
- Kimball ES
- Leschi ES
- Lowell ES
- Madrona ES
- Martin Luther King Jr. ES
- Mercer MS
- Northgate ES
- Olympic Hills ES
- Rainier Beach HS
- Rising Star ES
- Robert Eagle Staff MS
- Sand Point ES
- Sanislo ES
- South Shore PK-8
- Thurgood Marshall ES
- Washington MS
- West Seattle ES
- Wing Luke ES

V.IV Evaluation Principles

The evaluation of FEPP investments will be guided by five core values framed as actions. Putting principles into action requires city staff to: (1) practice accountability, (2) support continuous quality improvement, (3) commit to asset-based indicators, (4) disaggregate data by subpopulations, and (5) promote good stewardship of public funds.

1. **Practice Accountability:** Evaluation activities will ensure that levy-funded activities are aligned with stated goals and produce measurable results. Departments will clearly define expectations, track progress toward outcomes, and report findings transparently to the Levy Oversight Committee, City Council, and the public. Accountability will be framed not only as compliance, but as a shared commitment to delivering meaningful improvements for Seattle’s children and youth.
2. **Support Continuous Quality Improvement:** Evaluation activities will function as a tool for learning and improvement across the six-year levy. Monitoring and evaluation findings will be used to refine strategies, strengthen program implementation, and support providers in improving service quality. By generating timely and actionable insights, evaluation activities will help ensure that FEPP investments evolve in response to emerging needs and lessons learned.
3. **Commit to Asset-Based Indicators:** Evaluation activities will prioritize asset-based indicators that reflect strengths, progress, and positive development. Rather than focusing solely on deficits or gaps, measures will highlight student growth, resilience, achievement, and milestones toward long-term success. This approach aligns with the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative by recognizing and building upon the strengths of Seattle’s communities.
4. **Disaggregate Data by Subpopulations:** To ensure student achievement is improving equitably across student population, data will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, income, language, disability status, and other relevant characteristics. This practice ensures that improvements are not masked by aggregate averages and allows City to identify and address disparities. Evaluation will examine whether levy investments are reducing persistent opportunity gaps.
5. **Promote Good Stewardship of Public Funds:** As stewards of public resources, City will use evaluation to ensure that levy investments are deployed effectively and efficiently. Evaluation findings will inform strategic decisions about scaling, refining, or discontinuing approaches based on evidence of impact. By linking funding decisions to measurable outcomes, City aims to increase public trust and ensure responsible use of levy dollars.

V.V Ready to Learn Domain Investment Details

This appendix provides additional details to guide service implementation for funded strategies within the Ready to Learn Domain.

Expanded Learning Opportunities

Academic Supports

Academic supports are targeted interventions that are designed to close learning gaps and increase student proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Funded activities include high impact tutoring and extended instructional time. Supports can be delivered during the school day or out-of-school time (OST) such as afterschool, break camps, or summer.

High impact tutoring services include one-on-one or small group tutoring (maximum 6:1 student to tutor ratio). Services must be aligned to approved school curriculum and delivered by certificated teachers or trained tutors. Minimum frequency is three 30-minute sessions per week for 10 consecutive weeks; dosage may be modified for OST settings such as a break camp or summer program.

Extended instructional time includes large group or traditional classroom format instruction with student to educator ratio in alignment with SPS grade-level policies. Services must be aligned to core classroom curriculum and delivered by certificated teachers or trained tutors. Minimum frequency is 30 minutes per week. This activity supplements, and does not supplant, the provision of basic education as defined and funded by the state.

Enrichment Supports

Enrichment supports are targeted interventions that are designed to boost student engagement, attendance, physical and mental health so they are ready to learn, and achievement of levy goals. Supports can be delivered during the school day or OST. Enrichment programs may include, but are not limited to, mentoring, science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), arts and culture, sports and physical wellness, social emotional learning, civic engagement, youth leadership development programming, international experiential learning, college and career readiness activities, environmental education, and Community Learning Centers. These activities supplement, and do not supplant, the provision of basic education as defined and funded by the state.

Enrichment support funding will prioritize career-connected learning in alignment Ready to Launch investments. This includes, but is not limited to, exposure to trades and industry skills, information technology artificial intelligence, coding, software engineering, and computer programming. School-Based Investments require funded schools to provide after-school and summer enrichment with the frequency standards listed below. Other FEPP-funded services have flexibility to choose their implementation model at the specified dosage.

Integrated Supports

Integrated supports are targeted interventions that are designed to provide youth and families with supportive relationships and navigation assistance. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, mentoring and case management services. Case management services support students who are chronically absent and not yet meeting grade level learning standards. Service models include attendance case managers or school social workers that may serve up to 200 students annually per FTE or intensive family case management (such as Family Support Services) that may support a caseload of 20 students. Intensive family case management removes barriers to student learning through activities such as meeting students' basic needs, providing interventions to help students develop social,

emotional, and self-regulation skills, and creating connections to economic resources that help the student's family maintain stability. When students' basic needs are met, they are able to focus on learning and meeting academic goals. These investments are designed to help eliminate non-academic and socioeconomic barriers to educational achievement and career readiness.

Mentoring programs provide services such as structured case management, academic engagement support, leadership development, identity-affirming practices, and ongoing care coordination designed to improve attendance and academic outcomes for students. Services are delivered a minimum of 3 times per week and can occur during the school day or OST.

Active Family and Community Engagement

Family and community engagement consists of strategies and activities centered on school partnership with families in decision making and supporting students, as well as connecting families with needed services and supports. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, language access supports such as translation and interpretation, student-led conferences, and established frameworks like Family Co-Design, Dual Capacity Building, Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT).

Collaborative Leadership and Practices

Collaborative leadership and practices are essential to the success of School-Based Investments. These practices ensure school-community partnerships share common vision, communicate effectively, and have clear distribution of contracted partner responsibilities. This could include part-time temporary staff coordinator; staffing allocation would be proportionate to grant amount. The coordinator can be employed by SPS or a CBO. Duties may include:

- Primary liaison to City and responsible for the holistic implementation of the program model
- Member of school's Community Leadership Team
- Cultivates and manages school-CBO partnerships
- Coordinates community & family engagement activities
- Promotion of available services and student/family enrollment
- Data monitoring submission to City and use of data to improve student outcomes

School-Based Safety

Safe Passages

This program element places trusted adults from CBO staff along main routes to and from school grounds to foster safe environments. According to a Justice Department briefing, Safe Passage programs track locations with high volumes of students before and after school, and that may have seen previous violence. This element plays a key role in identifying emerging conflicts, preventing further escalations, and providing opportunities for de-escalation.

Conflict Mediation and Deescalation

This program element is a modification of Violence Interrupter strategies, with a specific focus on mediating conflict. According to the John Hopkins Bloomberg School for Public Health, violence Interrupters are trained to interrupt cycles of retaliatory violence, help connect high risk individuals to social services, and change norms around using guns to solve." The school-based conflict mediation efforts center on identifying emerging conflicts involving students, engaging those youth involved in a conflict, and de-escalating the conflict. Violence Interrupters are also charged with connecting students to case management support.

Case Management and Resource Navigation

Under the program model, case managers act as a resource for youth and assist their families. Case managers focus on meeting a wide range of needs to support the development of safe activities, relationships, and spaces for youth. If the case manager doesn't have direct access to a specific resource, they will connect the student and/or their family to other programs and resources to provide a tailored support plan.

Family Resource Fund

This fund is a flexible pool of funds available to students and their families at each school site selected by HSD and SPS for school-based safety measures. Family Resource Funds are intended to address a broad array of needs, ranging from basic needs support (utility or food support) to more flexible needs (yearbook or school activity costs). When a student's basic needs are met, they are able to focus on learning and meeting their academic goals. The Family Resource Fund is not intended to replace program-based participation incentives, like stipends, or be used to cover CBOs' direct program costs. Each situation is reviewed by SPS, HSD, and a contracted CBO who disperses funds to schools. These investments are designed to help eliminate non-academic and socioeconomic barriers to educational achievement and career readiness.

V.VI Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Meaning
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCAP	Child Care Assistance Program
CCHP	Child Care Health Program
City	City of Seattle
CQI	Continuous quality improvement
DCHS	King County Department of Community and Human Services
DCYF	Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families
DEEL	Department of Education and Early Learning
ECEAP	Washington State’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
ELO	Expanded Learning Opportunities
FCC	Family Child Care
FEPP	Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy
HSD	Human Services Department
LOC	Levy Oversight Committee
NFP	Nurse Family Partnership
MST	Multisystemic Therapy
OSE	Office of Sustainability and Environment
OST	Out of School Time
Plan	Implementation and Evaluation Plan for the FEPP Levy
PHSKC	Public Health Seattle King County
RET	Racial Equity Toolkit
SMI	State Median Income
SPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
SBHC	School Based Health Center
Seattle Colleges	South Seattle College, Seattle Central College, and North Seattle College, and Seattle Colleges District
Seattle Promise	Seattle Promise Program
SPP	Seattle Preschool Program
SY	School Year
ToC	Theory of Change
UW	University of Washington
YPQA	Youth Program Quality Assessment

Summary and Fiscal Note

1. Legislation Summary

Department: Department of Education and Early Learning

Title: An ordinance relating to the 2025 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy; approving an implementation and evaluation plan as required by Ordinance 127238; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

Background: This legislation approves a Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy Implementation and Evaluation Plan (“the Plan”) as required by Section 7 of Ordinance 127238. Ordinance 127238, which authorized a \$1.2583 billion, six-year education services levy package, directs that Levy proceeds can only be invested in accordance with a Plan approved by ordinance. The Plan sets out the priority criteria, measurable outcomes, and methodology by which Levy proceeds-funded strategies will be selected and evaluated. The Plan includes the process and schedule by which partners will be selected to provide services as well as the evaluation methodology to measure individual investment and overall Levy impacts.

A ratify and confirm clause approving actions prior to the ordinance effective date is included because it has been necessary to start certain activities in January 2026 in order to ensure continuity of services and minimize service disruptions. Calendar year 2026 and School Year 2026-2027 investments are detailed in the Plan Appendix.

Summary Attachments:

Summary Attachment 1 – Racial Equity Toolkit – Child Care Workforce Payments

Summary Attachment 2 – Racial Equity Toolkit – Safety

Summary Attachment 3 – Racial Equity Toolkit – Path to Trades

Summary Attachment 4 – Stakeholder Engagement Summary

2. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

Yes

No

3. Summary of Financial Implications

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?

Yes

No

3d. Other Financial Impacts

a. Does this legislation create any other financial impacts for The City of Seattle, such as direct or indirect costs, one-time or ongoing, that aren't mentioned above? If yes, please explain these impacts.

No. This legislation adopts the Levy Implementation and Evaluation Plan.

b. If the legislation has costs that can be covered within the current budget, explain how. Does the department have extra resources in its budget to handle these costs? Or does the department need to shift resources away from other work to handle these costs?

N/A

c. What financial costs or other impacts might happen if this legislation is not implemented?

If legislation is not implemented before the summer of 2026, the department will not be able to release competitive bidding processes or otherwise ensure consistent and uninterrupted service for services not contemplated in the FEPP 2018 Implementation and Evaluation Plan such as Path to Trades for the 2026-27 school year.

d. How might this legislation affect other City departments besides the one that proposed it?

Multiple City departments contribute to the implementation of this legislation, includes the Human Services Department, Office of Sustainability and Environment, Seattle Fire Department, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the Seattle Policy Department.

4. Other Impacts

a. Does this legislation require a public hearing?

Yes

No

b. Does this legislation require a notice to be published in The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times?

Yes

No

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No

d. Race and Social Justice Initiative impacts:

1. How does this legislation affect vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you come to this conclusion? Please consider both impacts within City government (like employees and internal programs) and in the broader community.

The Plan outlines DEEL's commitment to promote educational equity through the three domains: Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch. The overarching goal of the FEPP Levy is to "ensure every child has

the resources to be ready to start, ready to learn, and ready to launch, so that every child can succeed.” Funded education support services are designed to promote equitable outcomes for Seattle children, youth, and families. A summary of stakeholder engagement conducted to inform investment design is attached to this Fiscal Note.

2. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses used to develop or assess this legislation.

In designing new and expanded investments, DEEL completed Racial Equity Toolkits (RET) following the Office for Civil Rights framework. Attached RETs include review of policies related to the following FEPP funded services:

- Childcare Workforce Payments
- Safety
- Path to Trades

3. What is the Language Access Plan for communicating with the public about this legislation?

In accordance with Executive Order 2017-10, DEEL partners with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs to ensure equitable access to information regarding department activities and services. Additional details regarding language access will be included in subsequent annual Language Access Plans submitted to OIRA.

e. Climate change impacts:

1. Emissions: Will this legislation significantly increase or decrease carbon emissions? Attach any studies or materials that inform your answer.

N/A

2. Resiliency: Will this legislation make Seattle more or less able to adapt to climate change? If it reduces resiliency, explain what can be done to lessen the impact.

N/A

f. If this legislation creates a new program or expands an existing one, what are the long-term, measurable goals? How will this legislation help achieve those goals? What methods will be used to track progress?

The Implementation and Evaluation Plan details long-term and measurable goals for all investments concurrent with request for budget appropriation.

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP that involves shared funding with a non-City partner or organization?

No.



OCR Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: Child Care Workforce Payments

Description: Annual payments to be issued to staff at licensed child care providers to support Seattle child care workers.

Department: Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL)

Contact: Raka Bhattacharya

Indicate whether the item is:

Policy Initiative Program Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to the issue?

- # Sites Participating
- # Workers Participating
- % of Participants staying in workforce from year to year

1b. Which racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | |

Are there impacts on impacts on:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contracting Equity | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immigrant/Refugee Access to Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement |

Please describe:

- The child care workforce is mainly women of color and immigrants.
- Family Child Care (FCCs) providers operate small businesses on razor-thin profit margins with limited administrative capacity.
- Application system barriers (e.g., address verification confusion, language access gaps) disproportionately impact immigrant providers and providers near Seattle city boundaries (e.g., White Center, Burien, Lynnwood, etc.).

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders & Analyze Data.

2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas? Yes No

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Seattle Neighborhoods	<input type="checkbox"/> Lake Union	<input type="checkbox"/> East District
<input type="checkbox"/> Ballard	<input type="checkbox"/> Southwest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> King County (outside Seattle)
<input type="checkbox"/> North	<input type="checkbox"/> Southeast	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outside King County
<input type="checkbox"/> NE	<input type="checkbox"/> Delridge	Please describe: <i>Snohomish County child care workers.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Central	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater Duwamish	

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?

Seattle’s child population and early learning workforce reflect a pronounced racial and economic divide with important implications for equity and program design. From Seattle Public Schools data¹ we know that 54% of enrolled students are children of color, and the child care workforce is disproportionately made up of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), as well as immigrants. This is also the case at the Washington state level, where approximately half of child care providers are people of color.²

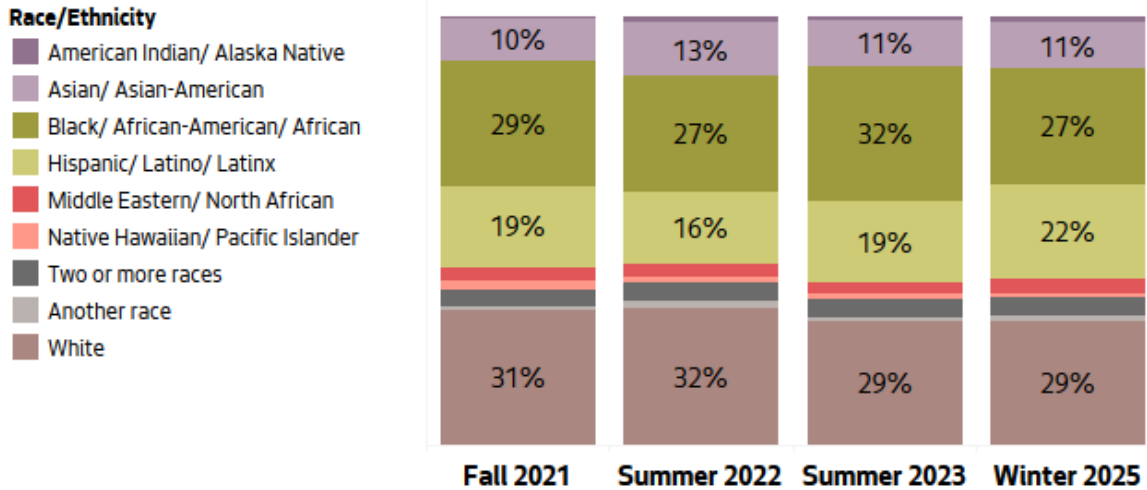
At the same time, child care jobs are among the lowest paid professions, with lead teachers earning roughly \$17–\$20 per hour on average in King County, despite the high cost of living.³ These low wages contribute to high turnover—estimated at around 43% in Washington and significantly higher than other occupations nationally—which disrupts continuity of care. Research from the Harvard Center on the Developing Child shows that stable, responsive relationships with caregivers are essential for healthy brain development and the formation of cognitive and social-emotional skills.⁴ Therefore, workforce instability from low wages and staff turnover not only affects providers but also has direct consequences for child outcomes and long-term educational equity.

Researchers from the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment found that even after controlling for educational attainment, African American educators working with infants and toddlers earn on average \$0.77 less per hour than their white counterparts. For those working with preschool age children the gap is \$1.73 per hour.⁵ Beginning in 2021, the City of Seattle began offering Child Care

¹ Seattle Public Schools, *2023–24 SPS Race and Ethnicity*, retrieved from <https://www.seattleschools.org/about/>
² J. Capito and S. Workman, *Understanding the True Cost of Child Care in the City of Seattle and King County* (Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, 2023), https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/DEEL/Results/Reports%20and%20Data/Child%20Care%20Reports/KC_Seattle_CostofCareBrief_FINALdesign_July%202023.pdf
³ Capito and Workman, *True Cost of Child Care*.
⁴ Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, *From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts: A Science-Based Approach to Building a More Promising Future for Young Children and Families* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2016), <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/from-best-practices-to-breakthrough-impacts/>
⁵ L. J. E. Austin, B. Edwards, and M. Whitebook, *Racial Wage Gaps in Early Education Employment* (Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley, 2019), <https://cscce.berkeley.edu/publications/brief/racial-wage-gaps-in-early-education-employment/>

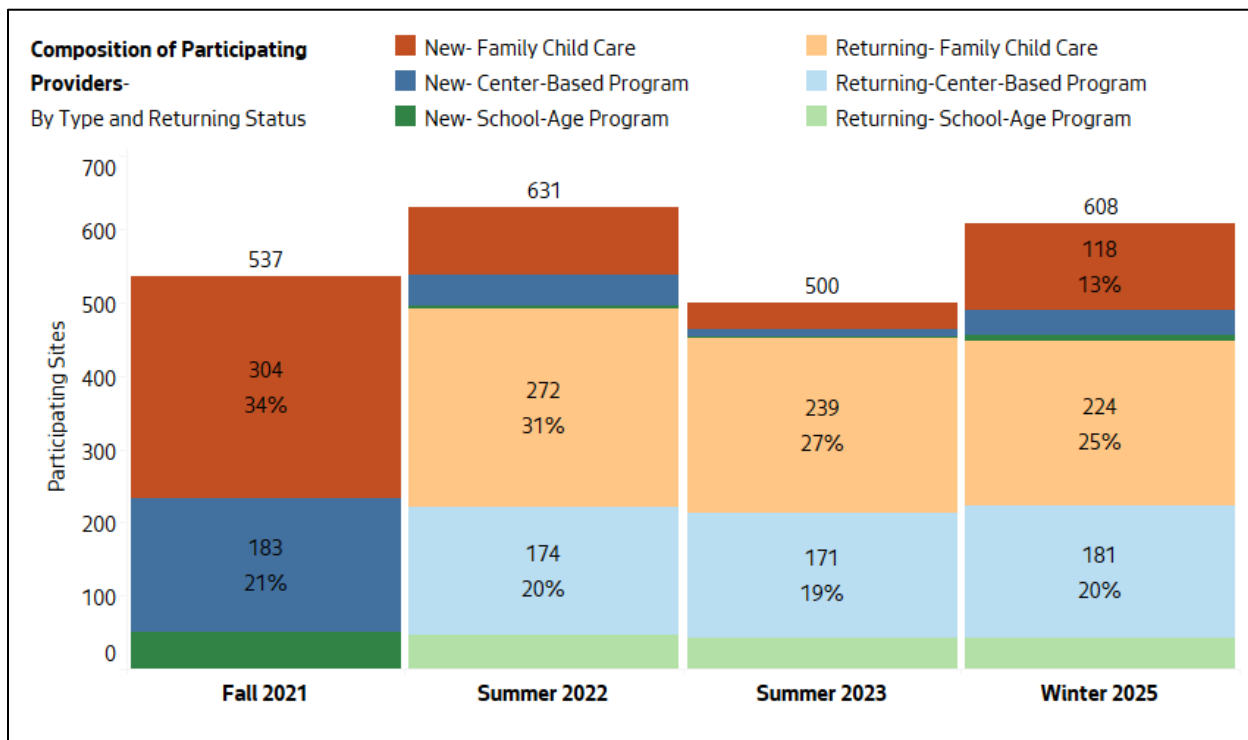
Stabilization Funds to eligible child care providers and their staff. These payments have been issued four times (2021, 2022, 2023, 2025). From 2021-2025, over 70% of workers who received payments were Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

The child care workforce data of the 2021-2025 recipients is as follows:



FCC providers made up the majority of participants in each round, followed by center-based and school-age-only providers. FCCs, which are small, home-based businesses, often employ one or two additional staff members, whereas centers and school-age programs have larger teams and serve more children. FCCs in Seattle are mostly staffed by women of color and/or of immigrant backgrounds and represent a growing segment of the workforce (notably increasing by 25% from 2023 through 2025⁶).¹

⁶ “Worker Supports Evaluation – Summary of 4 Rounds of Funding,” Appendix Attachment 2.



(Source: DEEL data)

2c. How have you involved community members and stakeholders?

Across four funding rounds (2021–2025), the City distributed over \$15M in retention payments to over 630 licensed providers—over 80% of all licensed providers in Seattle—and nearly 5,000 workers annually at peak participation. The investment design for workforce payments improved with each funding round based on provider feedback collected via surveys and direct engagement in provider meetings. To improve grant-making, DEEL referenced application data and spoke directly to key stakeholders such as payment administer BrightSpark, SPP Directors, child care providers via groups such as the Greater Seattle Child Care Business Coalition, Imagine Institute, and SEIU 925.

In a 2025 provider survey administered by DEEL, 90% of providers agreed the payments were beneficial. At the same time, providers were clear: one-time payments alone cannot solve systemic workforce challenges like low wages and high turnover. One provider shared, “the retention payment is nice to have, but is not an incentive for anything. To be a tool for retention, it has to be consistent, predictable, and impactful. This payment is similar to giving \$0.30/hour increase for the year. It’s another example of state, local, and federal governments failing to do anything meaningful for child care.”⁷

As part of FEPP Levy renewal engagement conducted in 2024-2025 by DEEL in partnership with South Sound Strategies (SSS), DEEL engaged child care stakeholders on topics such as child care access, affordability, and quality as well as business and workforce stabilization. Over nine months of community engagement for all parts of the 2025 FEPP levy, SSS conducted a multi-method engagement process that centered child care workers and historically underrepresented communities.⁸

- Provider-specific engagement

⁷ “Worker Supports Evaluation,” Appendix Attachment 2.
⁸ FEPP 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Report, May 2026.

- CCAP providers: 2 virtual + 1 in-person event (32 providers)
- Seattle Preschool Program providers: 2 virtual events + 2 surveys (26 providers)

Across these engagements, child care stakeholders emphasized:

- Compensation is the root issue for staff turnover: bonuses help, but wages and benefits drive retention;
- Staffing shortages limit provider enrollment which reduces access for families;
- Burnout is widespread due to high workload and low pay; and
- Career pathways and professional development are essential for sustainability.

2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people's lives and should be taken into consideration?

Data analysis and stakeholder engagement elevated four factors for consideration during design of the child care worker payment program: (1) worker demographics, (2) provider administrative burden, (3) worker wages, and (4) payment cadence and amount.

Stakeholder conversations reveal that existing racial inequities in the child care sector significantly shape providers' experiences and must be carefully considered in program design. FCC providers face a disproportionate administrative burden, because, as small business owners, they must independently manage complex tasks such as billing, licensing compliance, tax reporting, and subsidy paperwork without dedicated administrative support, which increases stress and reduces the time they can focus on child care. Seattle providers for whom English is not their first language are essential to our ecosystem. However, these heritage-language speakers can struggle with tax withholding guidance and vendor setup processes that are not offered in their primary language, highlighting ongoing language and system-access barriers.

Confusion around city geographic boundaries further creates risks of inequitable exclusion, leaving some providers ineligible because they have a Seattle zip code but aren't within the technical boundaries of a Seattle Council District. While low-barrier pandemic-era systems increased access, they also introduced vulnerabilities to fraud, illustrating the balance between accessibility and accountability. Administrative infrastructure gaps have required substantial labor from DEEL staff.

Underlying all of these administrative challenges are structural inequities in wages: child care workers remain underpaid relative to their educational requirements and job demands, and many earn so little that they rely on public assistance to support their own families. Many child care professionals in King County experience significant financial difficulties, where half of child care workers who took the Best Starts for Kids Wage Boost Pilot Pre-Launch Survey in 2025 were considered at risk for either food or financial insecurity before the wage boost pilot.⁹ In 2024, one provider shared, "we're constantly losing great staff to better-paying jobs in the public school system or other industries. If we want quality child care, we need to invest in the people providing it."¹⁰

When considering one annual payment versus two payments a year, some stakeholders supported splitting the payments to address timing gaps and support year-round retention. Others preferred a lump sum, emphasizing that a larger amount feels more meaningful and that splitting could increase tax

⁹ E. Miles, E. Mefferd, and J. B. Doromal, *Health and Well-Being of the King County Child Care Workforce: Best Starts for Kids Wage Boost Pilot Pre-Launch Survey Findings* (Urban Institute & Cardea Services, 2025), <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2025-10/Health-and-Well-Being-of-the-King-County-Child-Care-Workforce.pdf>

¹⁰ FEPP 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Report, May 2026.

and administrative complexity. Equity considerations shaped the design of the King County Wage Boost Pilot program, and their program administers quarterly payments, suggesting that staggered payments may better stabilize the workforce, while a lump sum may be more effective for appreciation or income boosts.

The concept of prioritizing payment by program participation, such as higher payments for workers supporting FEPP-levy funded services such as the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) or Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) elicited strong feelings. This was explored based on the practices of: Travis County, TX (CARE Program Bonuses); Contra Costa County, CA (Wage Enhancement Stipends Program); King County, WA (Child Care Wage Boost Pilot) who have a similar worker compensation program. Critics noted that workers do not control site participation, and creating tiers could widen equity gaps, create tension, and be perceived as unfair. Proponents argued that prioritization could incentivize serving subsidized or high-need populations and be an incentive to recruit more providers into SPP and CCAP. However, these supporters ultimately agreed that a tiered approach carries greater risk of reinforcing institutional racial inequities.

Finally, stakeholders considered how to allocate funding if more than 5,000 workers applied. Several options were discussed: dividing payments evenly (reducing amounts), implementing a lottery (localized or weighted), prioritizing high-turnover sites, lowest-wage roles, classroom staff over management, or subsidy-serving sites, and capping eligibility at 5,000 while maintaining a meaningful payment. Strong caution was raised to avoid reducing payments below an impactful threshold and to carefully design lotteries to prevent mistrust.

2e. What are the root causes of factors creating these racial inequities?

"With women making up over 95% of the child care workforce nationally, and 50% of providers in Washington being people of color, this workforce has long suffered from a gendered and racialized degradation of their work."¹¹ One root cause contributing to inequities in child care worker compensation, is the historic undervaluing of care work which is predominantly performed by women of color.¹² Structural racism has shaped societal perceptions of labor associated with child care, often minimizing its economic and social importance. This devaluation contributes to persistent disparities in wages, recognition, and opportunities for advancement within the sector.

Limited access to capital and essential business infrastructure further compounds these inequities for small providers, restricting their ability to grow, stabilize, or compete on equal footing. Language barriers and avoiding public benefits due to fears around immigrant harassment create additional obstacles, preventing some individuals from fully participating in programs or accessing available resources. These challenges are reinforced by fragmented public payment systems. Many providers who currently benefit from the city's worker payment program are pulling together more than five program funding streams to sustain their business. They may participate in the City's Child Care Assistance Program, the county's Best Starts for Kids program, the state's Working Connections Child Care plus the state's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program - in addition to also collecting private tuition. This can be confusing and difficult to navigate, particularly for smaller or independent providers.

¹¹ Capito, J., & Workman, S. (2023). "Understanding the true cost of child care in the City of Seattle and King County",

¹² Capito, J., & Workman, S. (2023). "Understanding the true cost of child care in the City of Seattle and King County",

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity?

What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.

Benefits: The Child Care Worker Retention Payment program supports a predominantly women-of-color and immigrant workforce, stabilizes early learning infrastructure in historically underserved communities and focuses on structural wage inequities. Benefits include:

- Direct payments projected at \$500-\$720 annually will increase worker income stability;
- Payments may serve as incentive to join the child care workforce or stay in it; and
- Sites participating in more than three consecutive rounds of payments may show improved staffing retention.

Potential Burdens / Unintended Consequences: If not designed with smaller service providers at the center, the payment application process and administrative system could perpetuate racial inequities. Areas to monitor include administrative design choices that impact equity, tiering systems that risk widening gaps, payment sizes that impact child workers in terms of perceived value, language access and tax clarity as central to equitable access, and infrastructure modernization. DEEL is currently evaluating the following factors:

- Fraud risk or duplicate payments (for workers at multiple sites);
- Administrative strain on small FCCs;
- Confusion during address verification excludes eligible providers;
- Tax withholding misunderstandings leading to worker anxiety; and
- Staffing changes between application and payment cycles complicate eligibility.

Overall, the program advances racial equity through income support but requires systemic improvements to avoid inequitable access barriers. With intentional administrator selection, multi-lingual infrastructure, meaningful payment levels, and transparent prioritization (if needed), this program can be an equitable workforce stabilization tool.

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

4. How will you address the impacts (Including unintended consequences) on racial equity?

What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q. 6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program Strategies: To address the immediate impacts of racial inequity, the program focuses on practical, direct strategies that provide equitable and accessible support. A flat rate payment model has been established to reduce disparities and ensure consistency across recipients, while maintaining a minimum impactful amount of \$500 to guarantee meaningful financial assistance. Clear appreciation messaging is also prioritized, reinforcing respect and recognition for participants.

Through a competitive administrator selection process, a vendor for years 2-6 will be selected to deliver a mobile-access, multilingual platform that reduces barriers to access and increases inclusivity. Realtime support via chat and text will help ensure participants can get timely assistance, while a tax webinar will help providers understand their accounting needs. Offering non-bank payment options

further expands accessibility for individuals who may be excluded from traditional financial systems. If the program adopts a retention focused approach, a twice a year structure may also be considered to promote sustained engagement and longer-term retention.

Policy Strategies: Policy strategies are designed to promote fairness while minimizing unintended inequities in program implementation. A key priority is to avoid tiered systems based solely on program participation, as these can inadvertently reinforce disparities rather than reduce them. When prioritization is necessary, the approach should rely on transparent, equity-based criteria (such as wages, subsidy percentages, and turnover rates) to ensure that decisions are grounded in measurable need and are clearly communicated to stakeholders.

In addition, careful planning and relying on available data are essential to maintaining both equity and efficiency. Developing a clear plan in the event more than 5,000 applications are received will ensure the program can respond effectively. Data should be used thoughtfully to screen and prioritize participants when needed to implement consistent and objective processes. At the same time, safeguards against fraud must be implemented in a way that does not create additional barriers to access, balancing accountability with inclusiveness for all child care providers.

Partnership Strategies: The partnership strategies draw on recommendations gathered through stakeholder interviews and emphasize collaboration with experienced and community-rooted organizations. One key step is to leverage the King County-Best Starts for Kids Levy experience working with Wage Boost Pilot program administrators as well as to engage Imagine Institute for additional insight as they have a tripartite contract role in supporting the Pilot program. These partnerships can provide valuable guidance on effective implementation and help avoid common challenges.

The program also aims to explore collaborations with organizations that offer specialized expertise in areas such payment administration to promote efficient and reliable distribution of funds or offer tax and benefits counseling. Together, these partnerships are intended to strengthen program delivery, enhance participant support, and build a more responsive and equitable system.

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountability.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate, and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

DEEL's Levy performance monitoring approach will ensure accountability, measure progress, and track the program's impact on racial equity over time. A central focus is on collecting and analyzing data that reflects participation and outcomes across different groups. This includes tracking participation rates by race, site type, and geography, as well as comparing FCC participation to the overall FCC population to assess representativeness. The program will also monitor workforce stability by examining turnover rates before and after payment cycles alongside child care provider satisfaction with the program administrator. Language access usage, tax assistance utilization, and payment processing times will help evaluate how effectively the program is meeting participants' needs and reducing barriers to access.

If a lottery or prioritization system is used (if the worker number exceeds 5,000), the program will also evaluate the demographic distribution of recipients to ensure that selection processes are equitable and

aligned with stated goals. Using this data will support transparency and allow for adjustments as needed to better address disparities.

The timeline for evaluation and accountability is structured to support both short-term learning and long-term impact. Annual levy reporting will provide regular public updates on progress and outcomes, while a first-year infrastructure review following the RFI/P/Q process will assess the effectiveness of initial implementation. Throughout this process, ongoing engagement with stakeholders and clear public reporting will be essential to maintaining accountability, building trust, and raising awareness about the underlying inequities the program seeks to address.

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make change?

Several unresolved issues remain that require careful consideration to ensure the program is both effective and equitable. One ongoing challenge is how to verify eligibility without placing an undue burden on providers, which could discourage participation or slow implementation. Additionally, the program must determine how to manage worker counts that exceed 5,000, particularly in a way that maintains fairness and administrative feasibility. The right balance between fraud prevention and accessibility is another key concern, as overly strict safeguards may unintentionally create barriers for those most in need. The program must also address immigration-related fears that could prevent eligible individuals from engaging, ensuring that processes are safe, trustworthy, and clearly communicated. The current political climate is not friendly to immigrant communities and people of color. Reaching child care providers who have recently been harassed by other government agencies create additional barriers to this program.

To successfully navigate these challenges, several critical resources will be required. Adequate funding for infrastructure and administrative capacity is essential to support program operations at scale. Legal review will be necessary to ensure compliance and to mitigate risks, particularly in sensitive areas such as data use and eligibility requirements. Providing dedicated multilingual technical assistance will help ensure that participants can access and navigate the program regardless of language barriers. Finally, strong data analysis capacity will be needed to inform decision-making, monitor outcomes, and continuously improve the program over time.

Attachments

1. National Comparisons and Best Practices
2. Childcare Worker Supports Evaluation: Summary of Four Rounds of Funding

Attachment 1. National Comparisons and Best Practices

Table 1. National Comparisons and Best Practices for Supplemental Wages for Child Care Workers	
Jurisdiction (County)	Dollar amounts, numbers of participants, and Distribution Methods
Travis County, TX: CARE Program Bonuses ¹³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1-3K per staff member, based on funding availability • Providers must be contracted with WFS Capital Area and have at least one CCS-enrolled child
Contra Costa County, CA: Wage Enhancement Stipends Program ¹⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000/month for 18 months per staff member, based on funding availability • Programs licensed to serve infants and toddlers • Educators must work directly with children at least 20 hours per week • Program must be in good standing with California Community Care Licensing • Final selection will be by lottery, ~120 workers
King County, WA: Child Care Wage Boost Pilot ¹⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1400 workers at selected facilities receive a “wage boost” in the form of quarterly payments • Worker payment varies by hours: 1.0 FTE (25+ hour/week) receive \$2,080 quarter (\$8,320 yr); 0.5 FTE (10-24 hour/week) receive \$1,040 quarter (\$4,160/yr)

¹³ Austin/Travis County Workforce Solutions Capital Area Child Care Services, <https://www.wfscapitalarea.com/our-services/childcare/for-providers>

¹⁴ Contra Costa County Wage Enhancement Stipends Program, <https://www.wdbccc.com/wage-enhancement-stipends-program>

¹⁵ King County Best Starts for Kids Wage Boost Pilot, <https://bskwageboost.imaginewa.org/>

Attachment 2. Childcare Worker Supports Evaluation: Summary of Four Rounds of Funding.

Overview

Since 2021, DEEL has issued four rounds of payments to licensed childcare providers in Seattle to support staff retention. In each round, providers applied to receive money to distribute to their staff. Based on the number of applicants and available funding, DEEL determined the per-worker payments amount. These rounds occurred in Fall 2021, Summer 2022, Summer 2023, and Winter 2025.

Providers applied via SurveyMonkey. Then DEEL worked with a contractor, BrightSpark, to verify the eligibility and address applications with out-of-expected-range responses. Finally, BrightSpark disbursed the payment. BrightSpark was selected because it:

1. Has an existing coaching relationship with participants in the state’s childcare quality improvement program, Early Achievers.
2. Manages the Best Start for Kids childcare subsidy program, so it has W-9s and direct deposit information for most Seattle providers.

Washington State licenses three major types of childcare providers:

- **Family Child Cares (FCCs):** Small businesses operating out of the provider’s home, typically serving 12 or fewer children birth to 12 years. They usually only have one or two other staff members besides the owner.
- **Centers:** Larger facilities with more staff and multiple “classrooms” dedicated to specific age groups (Infants, Toddlers, etc.). Some serve all ages birth to 12, but others specialize in a smaller age range.
- **School-Age Only Providers:** Often located in or near elementary schools, they serve children 5-12. They provide before and after school, and often full -day care during school breaks or summers.

Table 1: Numbers Served from 2021 – 2025

Population	Fall 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023	Winter 2025
# Sites	537 (78% of Seattle providers)	631 (88% of Seattle providers)	500 (72% of Seattle providers)	608 (80% of Seattle providers)
# FCCs	304	365	276	346
# Centers	183	215	179	211
# School-Age Only Sites	50	51	44	51
# Workers	3,495	4,589	3,711	4,953
Approximate children potentially impacted	20,000	22,700	19,750	23,800
Total grant amount	\$2.9 M	\$2.4 M	\$5.3 M	\$2.9 M

\$ Payment per staff	\$835	\$503	\$1380	\$555
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Across the four rounds, 885 individual sites have received funding at least once.

Key Takeaways

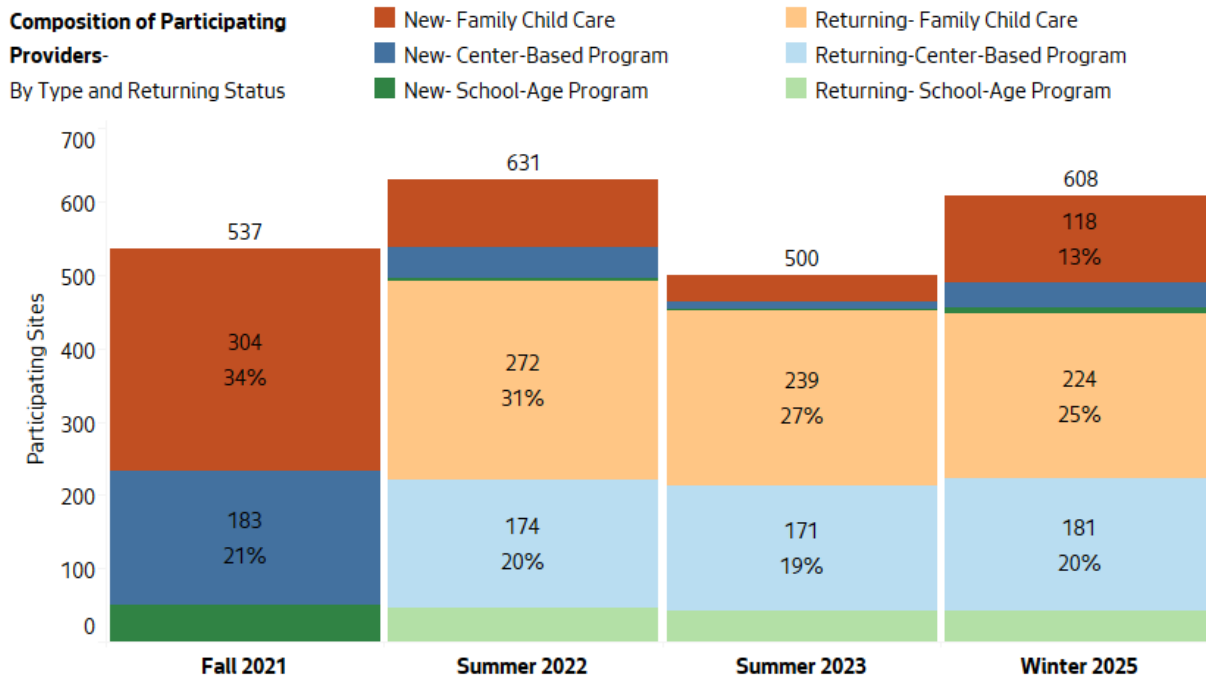
- A majority of Seattle licensed providers (80%+) are utilizing the worker supports.
- Providers overwhelmingly (90%) report that the payments are helpful with staff retention.
- Consistent participants have seen their “quit rates”ⁱ decrease and staffing levels increase over time.
- A few providers expressed doubts that one-off payments have a consistent impact.

Participation

Participating Sites

Reflecting the overall composition of Seattle licensed providers, the majority of participants each round have been Family Child Care (FCC) providers. Although most participants after Fall 2021 were returners, there was a notable increase in Winter 2025. That round saw the largest percent of new sites at 26%, with the increase concentrated in FCCs, where one-third were new participants.

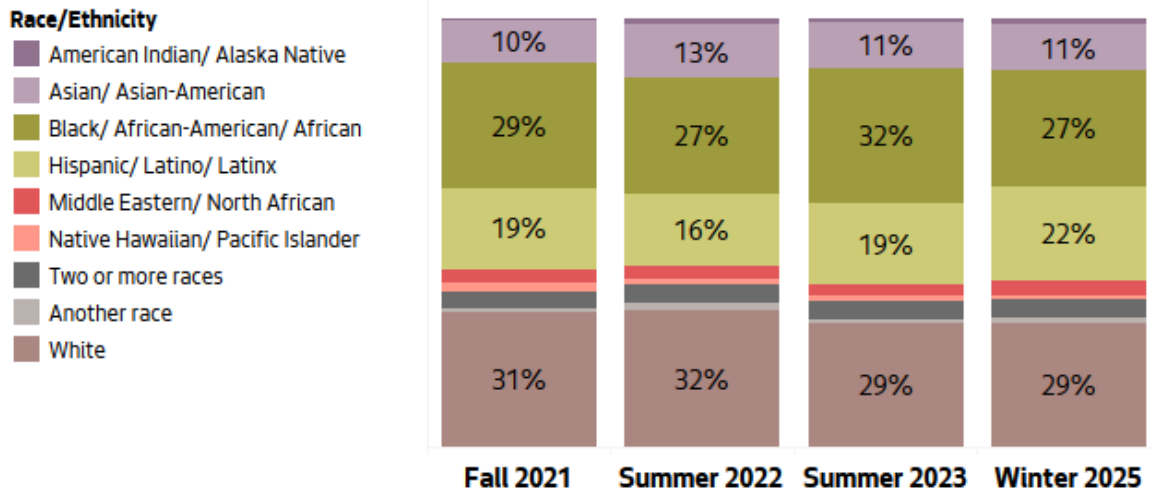
Chart 1: New and Returning Participants



Demographics of Workers Receiving Payments

The racial and ethnic identities of workers receiving the retention payment have remained fairly consistent over time. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), from 69% in Fall 2021 to 71% in Winter 2025.

Chart 2: Race/Ethnicities of Recipient Child Care Workers



Impact of Retention Payments

Provider Perception

In Summer 2023 and Winter 2025, providers were asked if the *previous* round of funding helped with retention. This was an optional question, so many providers did not respond.

- **Summer 2023** (381 respondents): 86% agreed or strongly agreed the \$503 per staff helped
- **Winter 2025** (329 respondents): 90% agreed or strongly agreed the \$1,380 per staff helped (+4%)

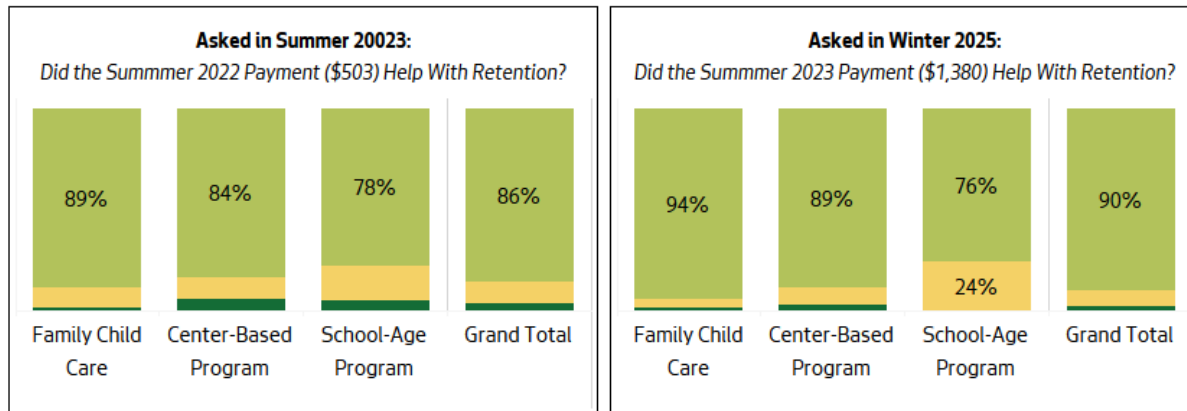
Receiving nearly three times as much money appeared to increase providers’ perception of its effectiveness only slightly. FCCs were the most likely to agree or strongly agree with the statement; school-age programs were the least likely. The disparity between these two groups widened from Summer 2023 to Winter 2025, increasing from an 11-point gap (89% vs. 78%) to an 18-point gap (94% vs. 76%).

Chart 3: Percent of Sites Agreeing that the Last Payment helped with Retention

How much do you agree or disagree:

The [last round of funding] Seattle Child Care Staff Retention Payment helped my organization retain staff:

■ Agree & Strongly agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree & Strongly disagree



A few positive quotes from Winter 2025:

- *Employees feel SO appreciated when they get this bonus!*
- *It dramatically increased employee moral! Teachers felt cared for and respected, moral increased significantly.*
- *It is always difficult to fully compensate staff for all their hard work and dedication. The ECE field is under funded and under appreciated. Anything helps.*

Some illustrative quotes from the 9% who were neutral or negative:

- *Payments are always appreciated and help make staff feel seen and valued. It didn't always lead to staff retention just because there are so many other factors that influence that decision, in addition to compensation.*
- *The funding was appreciated but didn't help with retention because it is temporary, one time, and not sustainable to rely on for income.*
- *The retention payment is nice to have, but is not an incentive for anything. To be a tool for retention, it has to be consistent, predictable, and impactful. This payment is similar to giving \$0.30/hr increase for the year. It's another example of state, local, and federal governments failing to do anything meaningful for childcare.*

Staffing Trends

In the Summer 2022, Summer 2023 and Winter 2025 rounds, providers were asked about how many staff they'd ideally have, how many had quit in the last year, and how long current staff had been employed. By comparing the responses of the same sites over time, clear trends emerge. Although

these trends are correlational and not necessarily caused by DEEL’s efforts, they suggest increase staffing stability among consistent participants.

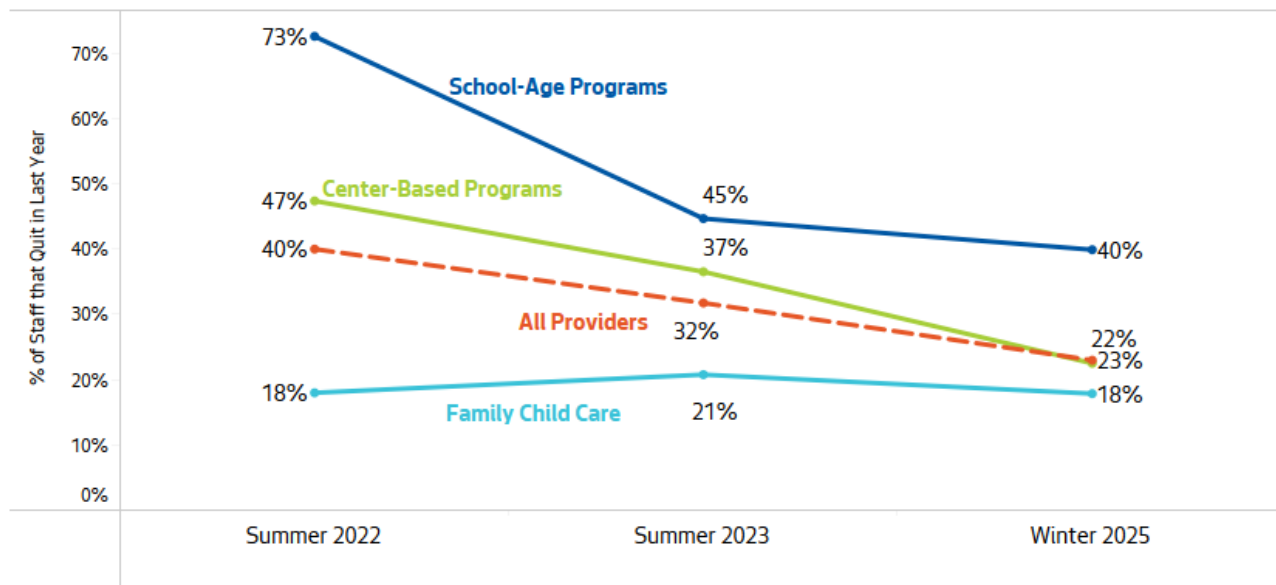
Quit Rate

Of the 323 sites that participated in all three of the rounds, 253 (78%) answered the optional questions about staffing and quitting in all three rounds. These sites reported that their “quit rate” (the number of staff who quit in the prior year divided by the total to be fully staff) decreased from 40% in Summer 2022 to 23% in Winter 2025.

This rate declined the most for school-age programs, where nearly three-quarter of staff (73%) had quit in the year leading up to Summer 2022, compared to only 40% quitting in the year prior to Winter 2025. However, most of the decrease was between Summer 2022 and Summer 2023. This trend aligns with the decreasing proportion of school-age programs reporting that payments were helpful for retention.

Family Child Care reported consistently low quit rates, which is expected given their small staff sizes. The center-based Programs fell between the two.

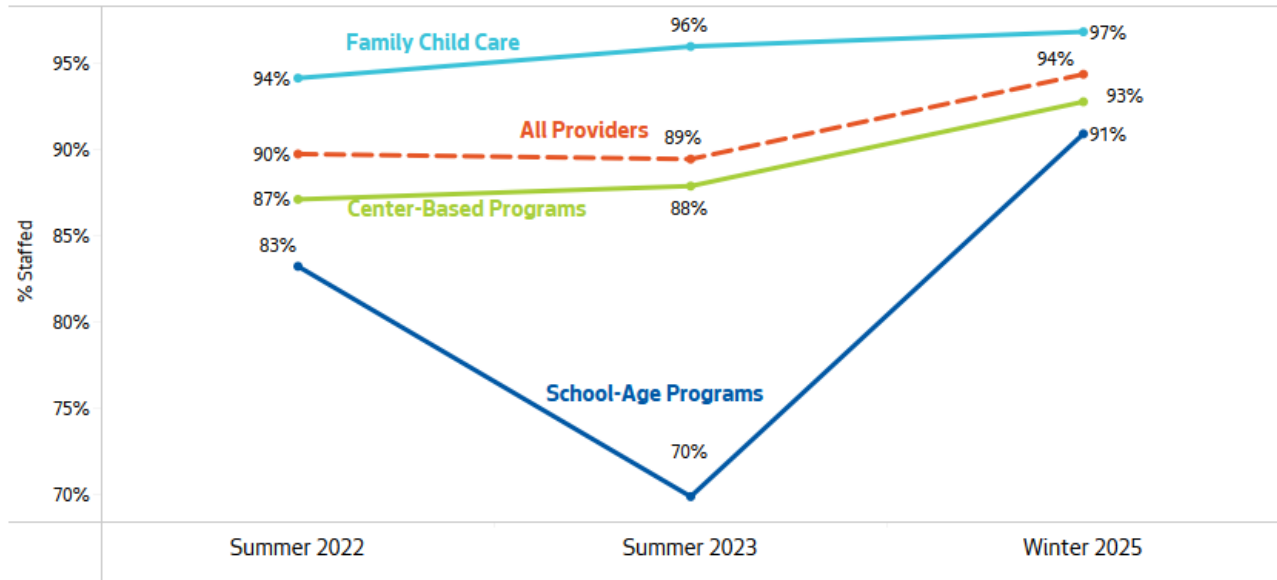
Chart 4: Quit Rate (# of staff quitting in the previous year divided by the number needed to be fully staff), 253 Consistently Responding Sites



Overall Staffing Levels

Providers must have adequate staffing to legally serve children. Other DEEL surveys have found some centers and school-age providers are operating well below their licensed capacity, likely due to staffing shortages. Among the 291 providers who consistently answered the optional questions about ideal staffing levels, respondent reported an increase in staffing levels (measures as current staff divided by ideal staff count). The most significant increase was among school-age providers, who went from 83% staffed in Summer 2022 to 91% staffed in Winter 2025.

Chart 5: Average Staffing Levels (# of current staff divided by the number needed to be fully staffed), 291 Consistently Responding Sites



Conclusion

The four rounds of childcare worker support payments achieved high participation rates and received positive feedback from providers. Consistent participants also demonstrated increased staffing stability over time.



OCR Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: 2025 FEPP Levy Safety Investments

Description: Student Safety investments address root causes through relationship-centered, non-punitive approaches that promote safe school environments, reduce interpersonal conflict, and reconnect justice-involved and disconnected youth to community, school, and career pathways

Department: Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL)

Contact: Rosa Ammon-Ciaglo

Indicate whether the item is:

Policy Initiative Program Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to the issue?

- % of students who feel safe at school
- % of students involved in interpersonal violence/conflict at school
- % of students of color furthest from educational justice that perceive fair application of behavior and safety rules/practices by adults at their school
- % of students who experience exclusionary discipline at school (reduce race-based disproportionality)
- # of schools with instances of gun violence occurring on or around school property

1b. Which racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | |

1c.

Are there impact on:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contracting Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant/Refugee Access to Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement |

Please describe: N/A

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders & Analyze Data.

2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas? Yes No

<input type="checkbox"/> All Seattle Neighborhoods	<input type="checkbox"/> Lake Union	<input type="checkbox"/> East District
<input type="checkbox"/> Ballard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southwest	<input type="checkbox"/> King County (outside Seattle)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> North	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southeast	<input type="checkbox"/> Outside King County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delridge	Please describe:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Central	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater Duwamish	

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?

Currently the City of Seattle (DEEL and HSD) invests in student safety-related programs at 23 public schools. The highest concentration of funding is in schools located in Council Districts 2 and 3, areas with relatively high percentages of BIPOC residents compared to other districts. All of the schools supported are in the top 50th percentile among all Seattle Public Schools for the share of the student population who identify as Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice¹ (SOCFFEJ) and/or English Language Learners. On average the student populations across supported schools are 60% SOCFFEJ.²

Indicators of need related to student safety that shape where DEEL directs its funding include both school and youth assets like school climate and sense of belonging and risk factors such as community-level violence occurring in and around schools. For the small number of schools that experienced instances of gun violence on their school block in SY 2024-25, an average of 78% of the student population are SOCFFEJ.³

An additional population impacted by the issue are youth who are disconnected from school and youth involved in the justice system. In SY 2024-25, an estimated 1,193 9-12th grade SPS students (7.8%) disconnected from school, and an estimated 3,841 youth citywide aged 16-24 were neither in school nor working.⁴ In 2024, 3.4 in 1,000 Seattle youth ages 8-17 were involved in arrests; this number was highest for Black youth, with 15.5 arrests per 1,000.⁵ These rates have been on the rise since 2021, though they have dropped significantly from 2019 levels.

2c. How have you involved community members and stakeholders?

DEEL has conducted 2 Phases of Stakeholder Engagement to inform FEPP Levy design and implementation. DEEL hosted 45 in-person and virtual events in locations throughout Seattle to capture feedback from youth, families, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders. School and student safety was a common theme that surfaced as an area of concern.

¹ Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice includes students who are of African American, LatinX, Pacific Islander, Native American, or Southeast Asian race or ethnicity.

² “School Needs Assessment”

³ DEEL internal analysis of SPD data.

⁴ DEEL analysis of SPS enrollment data and American Community Survey (ACS); Communities Count, *Youth In School or Working*, retrieved from: <https://www.communitiescount.org/youth-in-school-or-working>

⁵ The Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR), *Law Enforcement Data Analysis (LEDA) Dashboard: Washington State Juveniles (Ages 8 – 17) by City Level Demographics* (WSCCR, 2026), retrieved from: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/wscrr/viz/LEDAToolPackagedWorkingCopy/LEDALandingPage>

DEEL also conducted an Every Child Ready survey that had 213 responses from Seattle residents. Results of the survey included priorities for FEPP Levy student supports.

2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people’s lives and should be taken into consideration?

Data on key student outcomes related to school safety indicate the following trends for students of color:

- **Sense of physical and psychological safety at school:** across the Seattle Public School District, SOCFFEJ are less likely to agree that they feel safe and welcome at their school (83% compared to 86% of non-SOCFFEJ students respond positively to this question on the School Climate Survey). In addition, SOCFFEJ students feel less positively about their sense of belonging and inclusion at school (Table 1).
- **Student perceptions of fair application of rules/safety practices at school:** Students of color are slightly more likely to feel positively about the application of fair rules and safety practices at their school compared to other groups, though a much lower share of SPS students overall respond positively about this topic compared to other aspects of school climate (Table 1).
- **Exclusionary discipline:** Students of color, particularly Black/African American students, experience exclusionary discipline at higher rates than their peers and are more likely to experience longer periods of exclusion (such as 10 days or more) (Table 2).

Table 1: SPS School Climate Trends on Indicators Related to School Safety

SPS Districtwide	Percent of Students Responding Favorably by Topic/Question			
	I feel safe and welcome at my school	Belonging & Relationships	Inclusionary practices	Positive Behavior & Safety
African American Male Students	83	82	84	76
Non-African American Male Students	85	84	85	75
Students of Color Furthest from Education Justice (SOCFFEJ)	83	82	84	76
Non-SOCFFEJ	86	85	86	74

Source: SPS School Climate Survey SY 2023-24

Table 2: Seattle Public Schools Exclusionary Discipline Trends

Student Group	Discipline Rate	Rate Excluded 1 Day or Less	Rate Excluded 2 To 3 Days	Rate Excluded 4 To 5 Days	Rate Excluded 6 To 10 Days	Rate Excluded 10 Days or More
All Students	2%	28%	40%	14%	12%	7%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	2%	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	1%	26%	40%	17%	9%	9%
Black/ African American	6%	21%	41%	16%	15%	8%
Hispanic/ Latino of any race(s)	2%	31%	40%	12%	11%	6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2%	13%	63%	25%	0%	0%

Two or More Races	2%	30%	34%	14%	13%	10%
White	1%	38%	40%	11%	8%	4%

Source: OSPI, Discipline Report Card SY 2024-25

Stakeholder feedback related to student safety from the Every Child Ready community conversations and survey included the following key themes:

- **Community Violence:** Parents express concern about shootings near schools, particularly in South Seattle
- **Immigration Concerns:** Ensuring students of all immigration statuses feel safe attending school
- **Prevention Over Intervention:** Strong preference for addressing root causes rather than reactive security measures
- **Restorative Practices:** 69% of survey respondents included conflict resolution or restorative practices as a top health and safety support that would improve the K-12 student experience, with higher rates of support for restorative practices among respondents who identified as people of color.
- **Mixed Views on Officers:** Some families support unarmed community safety guards while others report students feel unsafe when seeing police
- **Physical Security:** Youth request basic improvements like locks on doors, and 43% of survey respondents listed physical security or school security as a key priority in health and safety supports.
- **Parent Engagement:** Suggestion for parent co-parenting circles as conflict mitigation strategy

2e. What are the root causes of factors creating these racial inequities?

Physical violence risk and psychological unsafety share overlapping drivers: trauma exposure, community violence, lack of trusted relationships and support systems, and environments where conflict is not prevented early or repaired effectively.⁶

Root causes of physical violence in/around schools

Students experience physical safety threats when violence is normalized, escalates quickly, or is left unaddressed until it becomes crisis-level.

- **Community violence exposure + gun violence risk**, which can spill into school settings and elevate fear, conflict, and retaliation cycles
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma exposure**, which can increase hypervigilance, impulsivity, conflict responses, and risk behaviors
- **Engagement in risky behaviors (drug/alcohol use)**, increasing likelihood of conflict and unsafe situations
- **Economic insecurity and instability**, increasing stress, unmet needs, and youth vulnerability to harm and risky environments
- **Interpersonal conflict and lack of conflict mediation/de-escalation capacity**, where conflict escalates rather than being resolved early

Root causes of psychological unsafety (fear, mistrust, belonging gaps)

Even when violence is not occurring in the moment, students may feel unsafe due to school climate and social conditions.

- **Lack of belonging and peer connection** (students don't feel socially safe, respected, or supported)

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Risk Factors for Youth Violence*, retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/youth-violence/risk-factors/index.html>

- **Lack of trusted adults and support pathways**, limiting help-seeking and early intervention
- **Unaddressed anxiety/depression and chronic stress**, which can worsen students' sense of threat and disengagement
- **Disproportionate or punitive discipline climates** that increase mistrust, especially for students most impacted by harm and system involvement
- **Bullying, harassment, sexual violence, and relationship harm**, which often drive psychological unsafety even when not always reported as “violence”

Root causes of racial inequities in school safety include the following:

- **Racial disproportionalities in punitive discipline** patterns observed in Seattle mirror national trends, which research indicates stems from implicit racial bias in how adults in a school setting respond to student behaviors.⁷ This bias has a particularly large impact on Black students and leads to long-term repercussions from reduced school attendance and engagement to increased likelihood of criminal justice system involvement. Research has also shown that a heightened punitive climate in a school setting often leads to lower psychological safety and increased mistrust of school, especially among students of color.⁸
- **Systemic racial inequities in socioeconomic conditions** lead to higher likelihood of risk factors associated with school safety being concentrated in communities of color and affecting students of color.

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity?

What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.

Benefits: Safety investments are designed to increase racial equity in safety outcomes in two ways:

- Prioritizing strategies like restorative practices, culturally responsive youth violence prevention programs, and mentorship that are specifically designed to address root causes of interpersonal violence and exclusionary discipline, advance racially equitable practices among teachers, and strengthen safety protective factors such as social-emotional skills, strong peer relationships, and access to trusted adults.
- Prioritizing schools or communities for investment that have higher instances of safety concerns, which baseline data show tend to be concentrated in schools with high proportions of SOCFEJ. The index of safety need or risk used by DEEL⁹ includes the following indicators: student exposure to bullying at school, students' perceived sense of safety at school and traveling to school, rates of violent crime in school neighborhood, rates of students experiencing exclusionary discipline, and students' perceptions of existing discipline and safety practices at school.

Evidence behind the strategies that will be the focus of safety investments demonstrates a direct connection to priority racial equity outcomes.

⁷ Sevon, M.A., *Schooling While Black: Analyzing the Racial School Discipline Crisis for Behavior Analyst* (Behavior Analysis in Practice, 2022) retrieved from <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9744995/>

⁸ Nance, J.P., *Students, Security, and Race* (Emory Law Journal, 2013), retrieved from [https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1221&context=elj](https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1221&context=elj;);

⁹ “School Needs Assessment”

Evaluation research on the effects of restorative practices in schools demonstrates significant reductions in exclusionary discipline rates and student arrests, reduced racial disproportionality in exclusionary discipline, and improved school climate (a protective factor linked to improved psychological safety and reduced interpersonal violence in school settings).¹⁰

Among secondary (middle and high) schools currently receiving funding for restorative practices from DEEL, outcomes in student perceptions of school climate and safety practices are improving more rapidly than at their counterparts not receiving restorative practices support (Table 3), supporting the findings in literature about these strategies.

Table 3: School Climate Favorable Responses, SPS Secondary Schools (Middle and High)

School Climate Survey Indicators Related to School Safety	Schools Receiving RP Funding		Schools without RP Funding	
	Spring 2022	Spring 2025	Spring 2022	Spring 2025
Belonging & Relationships	81%	86%	81%	83%
Inclusionary Practices	82%	90%	82%	85%
Positive Behavior and Safety	73%	81%	68%	73%

Long-term 1-1 mentoring programs, which establish a meaningful relationship with a trusted adult, have been shown in research to improve emotional well-being, reduce behavior issues (“delinquent behavior”), and increase engagement in school and work.¹¹ These are important protective factors for improving interpersonal relationships between students in a school setting, addressing root causes of interpersonal violence, and in some cases restoration and reintegration (such as re-establishing school attendance) for youth who have been involved in interpersonal conflict or the criminal justice system.

Mentoring also advances racial equity by directly addressing the systemic and environmental conditions that disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and other students of color. Many high-risk youth experience overlapping challenges such as chronic absenteeism, academic failure, unstable housing, exposure to violence, and limited access to mental health supports. These risks rarely occur in isolation but rather accumulate and interact, creating compounded barriers to safety, stability, and school engagement. Students of color are more likely to encounter these intersecting stressors due to structural inequities, making the stabilizing presence of a consistent, caring adult especially impactful.¹²

A long-term mentor relationship helps rebuild trust in adults and institutions, trust that is often affected by experiences of trauma, discrimination, or inconsistent support. Mentoring strengthens coping skills, emotional regulation, and problem-solving, which are essential for reducing conflict and improving school climate¹³. For students of color who have disproportionately experienced exclusionary discipline

¹⁰ Adukia, A. et al, *From Retributive to Restorative: An Alternative Approach to Justice in Schools* (Institute of Labor Economics, 2025), retrieved from: <https://educationlab.uchicago.edu/resources/from-retributive-to-restorative-an-alternative-approach-to-justice-in-schools/>; Katic, B. et al, *A Systemic Evaluation of Restorative Justice Practices: School Violence Prevention and Response* (Journal of School Violence, 2020), retrieved from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15388220.2020.1783670>

¹¹ Brookes, J. et al, *A Rapid Review of Wellbeing, Offending, and Successful Matching in mentoring for “at risk” young people* (Children and Youth Services Review, 2025), retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740925000155?via%3Dihub>

¹² Brookes, J. et al, *A Rapid Review of Wellbeing, Offending, and Successful Matching in mentoring for “at risk” young people*

¹³ The Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Spotlight on Youth Mentoring* (The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2024), retrieved from <https://www.aecf.org/blog/spotlight-on-youth-mentoring>

or strained relationships with school systems, this relational buffering and advocacy can interrupt cycles of disengagement and conflict.

Potential Burdens/Unintended Consequences: Some interventions designed for school safety are considered punitive and may not be eligible for FEPP funding, such as school-based police officers (School Resource Officers/School Engagement Officers), and metal detectors. These strategies have been linked in research evidence to adverse outcomes for students of color or shown to reduce overall student perceived safety at school. For example, in peer cities that have utilized School Resource Officers outcomes include increases in weapon identification, exclusionary discipline, and student arrests, with either null or negative impacts on overall student feeling of safety.¹⁴ Outcomes with equity implications include increased exclusionary discipline among Black students and students with disabilities, and lower perceived safety among BIPOC students.¹⁵ Metal detectors have been shown in some studies to reduce the likelihood of carrying weapons to school, but they are also linked to negative outcomes such as reduced students' perceived safety at school, reduced belonging and school connectedness, and increased student anxiety and stress.¹⁶

It is also possible that more focus on racial equity in safety could inadvertently lead to targeting students of color for violence prevention and intervention in a manner that is discriminatory rather than focused on addressing broad root causes in an equitable and culturally responsive manner.

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

4. How will you address the impacts (Including unintended consequences) on racial equity? What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q. 6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

When developing and implementing school-based safety investments in the FEPP levy, DEEL will pursue partnership, policy, and program strategies to avoid and/or mitigate any unintended consequences for racial equity.

Program Strategies: If funding safety interventions such as physical security measures (metal detectors, school engagement officers, etc.) require evidence-based practices to mitigate potential inequities resulting from these practices. These include cross-institutional MOUs/policies for role clarity in responding to disciplinary incidents and pairing physical security strategies with school-wide restorative practices.¹⁷

¹⁴ Javdani, S., *Policing Education: An Empirical Review of the Challenges and Impact of the Work of School Police Officers* (American Journal of Community Psychology, 2019), retrieved from:

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6597313/>

¹⁵ Sorensen, L. et al, *Navigating the tradeoffs of police in schools* (The Brookings Institution, 2023), retrieved from:

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/navigating-the-tradeoffs-of-police-in-schools/>

¹⁶ Gastic, B., *Metal Detectors and Feeling Safe at School* (Education and Urban Society, 2010, Sage Journals), retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0013124510380717>; Mowen, T.J., et al, *Is More Necessarily Better? School Security and Perceptions of Safety among Students and Parents in the United State* (American Journal of Criminal Justice, 2018), retrieved from: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7205221/>; Nance, J.P., *Students, Security, and Race*

¹⁷ Javdani, S., *Policing Education: An Empirical Review of the Challenges and Impact of the Work of School Police Officers*; San Diego Unified School District, *Restorative Discipline Policy: Building restorative school communities rooted in equity, belonging, and thriving for ALL students* (San Diego Unified School District, 2025), retrieved from: <https://sandiegonunified.diligent.community/document/00fc3896-39ef-4150-a331-33b08e644a0c/>

Policy Strategies: Require schools to engage with their communities, especially families/students of color, to inform development of safety strategies

Partnership Strategies: Prioritize culturally responsive programs and organizations to receive youth violence prevention funding and provide restorative practices trainings to ensure that racial equity is centered in implementation of evidence-based safety strategies

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountability.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate, and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

DEEL will use the following methods to evaluate and report on racially equitable safety outcomes:

Annual monitoring and reporting: key racial equity outcomes such as school climate, student perceptions of school safety, exposure to violence (such as bullying), and exclusionary discipline rates will be tracked on an annual basis and disaggregated by race/ethnicity.

Evaluation: DEEL will conduct a formal evaluation of FEPP-funded safety strategies before the end of the 6-year implementation period that will include consideration of racial equity impacts.

Eliminating racial inequities in safety entirely rely on systemic conditions and risk factors (such as community safety, adverse childhood experiences, etc.) that are outside the scope of educational investments. However, DEEL safety strategies will aim to significantly move the needle on racial equity in safety across key outcomes by the end of the six-year levy period, following the high-level trajectory below:

- Implementation years 1-3:
 - Make progress on key protective factors supporting school safety (increasing overall results and ensuring reduction or closure of race-based gaps)
 - School climate indicators (listed in sections above)
- By implementation years 5-6:
 - Reduction in race-based disproportionality in exclusionary discipline at schools receiving restorative justice funds
 - Improvement in student perceived safety at schools receiving safety investments

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make change?

Engaging with SPS district to determine integration of DEEL safety investments with SPS strategies, including Central Office Restorative Practices, with focus on racial equity goals and/or implications

- Establishing partnerships with organizations with expertise in the justice system, particularly those supporting youth

Attachments

1. Restoration and Re-entry: Literature Review on Mentorship for High-Risk Youth

Restoration and Re-entry: Literature Review on Mentorship for High-Risk Youth

Seattle Department of Education & Early Learning, April 2026

Introduction

A growing number of youth are navigating circumstances that place them in heightened risk of school disengagement, dropout, and long-term disconnection to education. Often referred to as high-risk youth, this group includes adolescents and young adults ages 13–24 who face overlapping challenges such as chronic absenteeism, academic failure, unstable housing, exposure to violence, mental health concerns, involvement with the juvenile justice system, or caregiving and financial responsibilities that pull them away from school. These risks rarely occur in isolation. Instead, they accumulate and interact, creating conditions that make it difficult for young people to remain engaged in school or envision a viable path toward adulthood.

Multiple systemic and environmental factors contribute to youth becoming high risk. Poverty, community violence, and limited access to mental health supports can undermine a young person’s sense of safety and stability. Experiences of trauma, discrimination, or family instability can erode trust in institutions and adults. Schools themselves, often under-resourced and overburdened, may struggle to provide individualized attention or relational support to students who need it most. As these pressures build, many young people begin to disengage: attendance declines, academic performance drops, and eventually some leave school altogether. Once disconnected, youth face even greater barriers to reentry, including bureaucratic hurdles, stigma, and a lack of supportive relationships to help them navigate the return.

Mentoring has emerged as a promising strategy for supporting high risk youth and reengaging those who have already left school. Unlike short term interventions, mentoring provides consistent, caring relationships that help young people rebuild trust, strengthen coping skills, and reconnect with supportive adults and institutions. Research shows that high quality mentoring can reduce delinquent behavior, improve emotional wellbeing, and increase engagement in school or work, effects that are especially pronounced for youth facing significant adversity (Brooks, 2025). According to a 2023 MENTOR study, 74% of young people reported their mentor as a key contributor to their later success in life (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2024). For young people who have dropped out or are at risk of doing so, mentors can serve as advocates, connectors to resources, and guides through the complex process of returning to school.

Mentorship

Mentorship methodologies for high-risk youth are not rigid silos, they can be combined or used independently depending on the youth’s needs and the program structure. Mentoring methodologies for high-risk youth can be grouped into three primary categories: community-based mentoring, specialized mentoring, and other mentoring models (involving school-connected mentoring).

Although these categories are distinct, they are not mutually exclusive. In practice, they often coexist within the same program. A mentor may build trust through community-based strategies, apply

trauma-informed techniques when needed, and simultaneously support academic re-integration. At the same time, each category can also be used independently, depending on the program’s goals and the youth’s needs. The following will take a closer look into each of these mentoring methodologies.

Community-Based Mentoring

Community-based mentoring (CBM) is defined as a formal, one-to-one relationship between a non-parental adult and a young person, typically lasting around a year and taking place in community settings rather than schools. This mentorship methodology is developmentally oriented, aiming to support socioemotional and academic growth through a mix of relational, recreational, and goal-oriented activities (Goldner and Ben-Eliyahu, 2021). This mentor method is grounded in theories of attachment, social support, and social learning, emphasizing the importance of close, trusting relationship as the mechanism for change. The model is flexible and can serve youth with a range of risk profiles, though research notes that youth with moderate risk may benefit most.

Limitations do exist with community-based mentoring that limits its overall impact. Research shows that CBM produces small average effects across socioemotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes (Raposa et al., 2019). The model also depends on long, stable relationships, yet many matches end early. Relationship quality varies widely, and not all mentors provide the support, sensitivity, and trusty identified as essential for positive outcomes. This mentor method is also resource intensive, costing far more than other mentoring methodologies, making sustainability of program challenging. Evidence suggests that youth with moderate risk may benefit more consistently than those with the most complex needs, indicating community-based mentoring alone may not be sufficient for higher risk populations.

Specialized Mentoring

Specialized mentoring refers to structured, clinically informed models designed for youth experiencing trauma, substance use, violence, or reentry from juvenile justice or residential settings. Unlike community-based mentoring, which emphasizes flexible, relationship-driven support in neighborhood settings, specialized mentoring incorporates targeted interventions grounded in trauma-informed care, cognitive-behavioral strategies, restorative practices, Noand coordinated case management. These programs typically involve mentors with advanced training who work within multidisciplinary teams and follow structured protocols to address safety, emotional regulation, relapse prevention, or reintegration needs. While specialized and community-based mentoring can coexist, and in some cases complement one another, they are not always implemented together. Specialized models require more intensive resources, professional oversight, and clinical alignment than traditional community-based approaches, which can make integration challenging depending on program capacity and youth needs (Tolan, 2013).

Other Mentoring Models

School-based mentoring

Unlike community-based mentoring, school-based mentoring occurs within the school environment and is integrated into the daily routines of students who are already attending. Because of this, it can be challenging to implement with high-risk youth who are fully disengaged from school or have already dropped out. However, school-based mentoring is often used as a preventative strategy for students who are beginning to show signs of academic or behavior risk, providing early support before disengagement (Herrera et al., 2007).

In school-based models, teachers or school staff identify students showing academic or social-emotional risk and match them with volunteer mentors who meet with them regularly on campus, often for about an hour a week and is primarily focused on academic support (Portwood and Ayers, 2005). School-based mentoring has expanded rapidly, partly because it is less costly and easier to implement than community-based models (Rhodes, 2002). However, the school calendar limits the duration and intensity of these relationships, often resulting in matches that fall short of the year-long commitment recommended in the mentoring field (Rhodes, 2002). Delays in matching and reliance on college-grad volunteers can further shorten the mentoring period (Karcher, 2008). Evidence suggests that these structural constraints may contribute to school-based programs producing smaller or less sustained effects than community-based mentoring (Dubois, et. Al, 2002).

Check and Connect Mentoring Model

The check & connect model is a school-based mentoring intervention designed to promote student engagement and reduce dropout risk through a combination of systematic monitoring and sustained relationship-building (National Mentoring Resource Center, 2017). In this model, mentors, often referred to as monitors, regularly track indicators such as attendance, academic performance, and behavior (“check”) while also developing supportive, problem-solving relationships with students (“connect”). Although the model is rooted in the school context, it can incorporate community-based elements, including engagement with families and referrals to external support services. However, research highlights notable variability in how the model is implemented across settings. Differences in mentor roles (e.g., school staff versus community-based providers), levels of family involvement, mentor caseloads, and the amount of time spent with students can significantly shape program delivery and outcomes. This flexibility allows adaptation to local contexts but also complicates efforts to determine which components are most essential for effectiveness. As a result, the Check & Connect model is often characterized as a hybrid approach in practice, though its core remains firmly grounded in school-based intervention.

Table 1. The Organizations Using These Mentoring Models

Mentorship Program	Mentoring Model	Year	Students Served	Budget	Outcomes
Check & Connect Plus Truancy Board	Check and Connect (Specialized Mentoring)	2012 (uploaded in 2018)	NA	NA	82% more likely to graduate and 18% less likely to drop out
BBBS Tampa Bay	Community and school-based mentoring	2024	2,549	\$6,056,016	Academic and relational focus. 88% maintained or improved academic performance 85% remained stable or improved with depressive symptoms 77% maintained or improved in parental connectedness
BBBS Kansas City	Community-based mentoring	2023	1,057	\$5,576,000	Relational focus. 91% feel better about themselves

					after spending time with their mentor 97% say having a mentor has had a positive impact in their life
lmentor	School-based mentoring	2024	10,910	NA	Career, education focus. 91% learned about new career pathways and how to work towards career goals.
Grand County School District – Grand Area Mentoring	Specialized mentoring: community and school-based	2025	77	\$215, 351	Re-integration focused. 50% skipped less school. 80% got less in trouble in school. 79% of matches lasted for more than one year.
US Department of Education Student Mentoring Program	School-based Mentoring	Evaluated in 2004	Overall 200 grantees, not clear on total number of students served	\$277,000 per grantee	Long delays in matching. Short match duration. Heavy reliance on young mentors. Activities focused more on social support than academics. No measurable impact on academic, behavioral, and interpersonal outcomes.
OJJDP National Mentoring Programs	National RFP	2023	NA	\$30,000,000(5 awards)	36-month program structure
OJJDP Multistate Mentoring Programs Initiative	National RFP	2023	NA	\$9,000,000 (16 awards)	

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OCR Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: Path to Trades

Description: Expansion of the Seattle Promise Program to include Path to Trades

Department: Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL)

Contact: Amanda Stoddard, Launch Policy Advisor

Indicate whether the item is:

Policy Initiative Program Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable community outcomes related to the issue?

- # participated in career exposure events
- # enrolled (in trades pathway/area of study)
- # completing first quarter (of trades pathway)
- # completing program
- % completers connected to employment or apprenticeship within 6 months of completion

1b. Which racial equity opportunity area(s) will the issue primarily impact

impacts on:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jobs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | |

1c. Are there impacts on:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contracting Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant/Refugee Access to Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce Equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement |

Please describe:

- Achieving workforce equity goes beyond student enrollment
- A multitude of factors, including financial access, information access, structural access, and completion and retention support access impact an individual's ability to participate in the workforce

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders & Analyze Data.

- 2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas?** Yes No
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Seattle Neighborhoods | <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Union | <input type="checkbox"/> East District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ballard | <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest | <input type="checkbox"/> King County (outside Seattle) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside King County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NE | <input type="checkbox"/> Delridge | Please describe: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greater Duwamish | |

Please describe:

Seattle Promise is a universal access program. Since its inception, access has grown to all Seattle public high schools. Please see attachment 2 for Fall 2024 enrollment by high school.

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?

The Path to Trades expansion is not intended to divert students away from a 4-year pathway but to ensure all young people have equitable opportunities to enter high-demand and living wage trade careers. Across Seattle, there is a clear racial equity gap where high-demand and living wage trade career talent is not reflective of and accessible to Seattle’s diverse population of young professionals.

In 2024, young people ages 18-26 made up roughly 13% of Seattle’s total population with 58% White, 23% Asian, 8% Hispanic/Latinx, 5% Black/African American and less than 1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander¹ Youth representation in Seattle-King County trade careers varies, where registered apprentices remain largely white at 64%, while Hispanic/Latinx stands at 17%, and Asian and Black representation at 3% and 6% respectively.²

2c. How have you involved community members and stakeholders?

From July 2024 to March 2026, DEEL engaged more than 1,496 individuals to share their priorities for FEPP levy spending and implementation. Engagement occurred across two phases, with the first informing the FEPP Levy renewal and the second to allocate funds and shape implementation details.

To inform the Path to Trades program design, DEEL referenced Promise application, enrollment, and completion data and spoke directly to key stakeholders such as the Seattle Colleges, City of Seattle Departments OED, FAS, SCL, SPU, SPD, SFD, OLS, and OSE as well as Masters, Mates & Pilots, MLK Labor Union, and Local 242.

As part of FEPP Levy renewal engagement conducted in 2024-2025 by DEEL in partnership with South Sound Strategies (SSS), DEEL engaged stakeholders on topics such as access and affordability, barriers to degree or certification attainment, and college and career supports. Over nine months of community

¹ “2024 ACS 1-Year Estimates,” U.S. Census Bureau, 2024, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/table-and-geography-changes/2024/1-year.html>

² “Registered Apprenticeship Application Report, 2024 Annual Report to the Legislature ,” Washington State Department of Labor & Industries , 2024, https://www.lni.wa.gov/agency/_docs/2024RegisteredApprenticeshipApplicationReport.pdf.[2024RegisteredApprenticeshipApplicationReport.pdf](https://www.lni.wa.gov/agency/_docs/2024RegisteredApprenticeshipApplicationReport.pdf)

engagement for all parts of the 2025 FEPP levy, SSS conducted a multi-method engagement process that centered students, families, and historically underrepresented communities.³

As part of the Implementation and Evaluation Plan stakeholder engagement conducted in 2025-2026 by DEEL in partnership with DON, DEEL engaged college and career stakeholders on access and interest in high-quality career pathways that lead directly to family-wage jobs in the skilled trades and related industries.

- Trades-specific engagement
 - Students, Promise alumni and families: 5 in-person events, 3 virtual events, 1 survey
 - Providers and institutional partners: 12 interviews, 1 survey

During these engagements, college and career stakeholders emphasized:

- **Reduced Stigma:** Students report trades stigma has decreased; seeing economic opportunities makes trades appealing
- **Skills Center Barriers:** Limited slots, scheduling conflicts with AP/IB courses, transportation challenges, and parking costs
- **Maritime Opportunity:** Silver tsunami in maritime industry presents opportunity; interest in specialized maritime high school model
- **Exposure Timing:** Early exposure (8th-9th grade) recommended to earning potential, union membership, and career options
- **Job Shadow Access:** Students report difficulty finding opportunities independently; school-year options preferred over summer-only
- **Gender Dynamics:** Question raised about who is being told about trades opportunities and potential gender bias in outreach

2d. What does data and your conversations with **stakeholders** tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people's lives and should be taken into consideration?

Data analysis and stakeholder engagement elevated four factors for consideration during design of the Path to Trades expansion program: (1) Opportunity development for BIPoC youth (2) student Interest and engagement, (3) ethical working conditions and (4) long-term sustainability and retention.

Stakeholder conversations revealed inequities in the college and career sector significantly impact students ability to earn a certificate, degree, or credential.

Evidence shows that formal credentials, such as certifications and apprenticeships consistently raise⁴ earnings for those who obtain them. In Washington State, there is a 50-100% pay gap for people who earn a trade credential and those who do not hold a degree or credential⁵:

- No credential: \$30k–\$40k average annual income
- Trade credential: \$55k–\$70k average annual income

³ ⁸ FEPP 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Report, May 2026.

⁴ E. Yeyati, "The Market Value of Non-Degree Credentials: New Evidence from 37 Million US Workers," CEPR, 2026, <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/market-value-non-degree-credentials-new-evidence-37-million-us-workers>.

⁵ Washington State Employment Security Department, "Employment and Wages," 2026, <https://esd.wa.gov/jobs-and-training/labor-market-information/employment-and-wages>.

Current Washington workforce programs show high placement rates for people who obtain a credential in specific trades, averaging 80%⁶. Seattle Promise Cohort 2024's fall-to-fall retention rate was 67%, exceeding the previous cohort. This growth trend shows Seattle Promise and the Path to Trades expansion play an important role in access, retention, and completion, ultimately positively impacting workforce equity in Washington State.

Additionally, work with the Seattle Colleges identified that many high-demand trades training programs were greater than 90 credits in length and had substantial tools and supplies costs to start the program. Seattle Promise previously only covered the first 90 credits of a student's studies. Both program length and program tool cost were identified as barriers and creating inequitable access to trades training and career opportunities.

Preliminary analyses show high-demand trades training programs exist at all three of the Seattle Colleges with approximately 110 Promise students currently in high-demand trades training programs.

Finally, stakeholders highlighted complex barriers young people experience while exploring a trades career such as trades competency competitiveness, systemic hiring inequalities stacked against them, and financial barriers. This tells us that racial inequities to participation in trades programs are driven by cumulative disadvantages, not just related to program access.

2e. What are the root causes of factors creating these racial inequities?

Intergenerational structural inequality⁷ refers to the disparities in resources, opportunities, and life chances between different generations within a society. These inequalities are reinforced over many generations through the passage and enforcement of policies that concretize inequality:

1. Redlining → segregated neighborhoods
2. Segregation → unequal school access
3. Unequal schooling → income disparities
4. Income disparities → limited wealth building
5. Wealth gap → reinforces housing inequality
6. Housing inequity → unequal school access

Redlining in Seattle⁸ began in 1936 with Homeowners' Loan Corporation maps. These maps labeled neighborhoods by "risk," heavily based on race. Areas with Black, Asian, or immigrant residents were marked "hazardous." As a result, Seattle's Black population became geographically concentrated in the Central District and Rainier Valley.

Even after formal segregation laws weakened, lending discrimination continued. A 1975 City of Seattle⁹ study found major banks made almost no loans in the Central District and Rainier Valley. In 1977 Washington State banned redlining but the discrimination did not end. The ability to access education and wealth building opportunities continue to be disparate.

⁶ Employment and Wages, Washington State Employment Security Department.

⁷ S. S. Hamedani, A. I. Amjad, and S. A. Aslam, "Exploring Structural Injustices in School Education: A Study on Intergenerational Repair," *Frontiers*, 2024, <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/education/articles/10.3389/feduc.2024.1395069/full>.

⁸ E. Okikawa, "Walking Through Past and Present: Seattle's Redlining Heritage Trail," Washington Trails Association, 2020, <https://www.wta.org/news/magazine/features/walking-through-past-and-present>.

⁹ Employment and Wages, Washington State Employment Security Department.

In addition to historic societal structural racism, trades professions have a history of racial discrimination and exclusion through biased examinations, gatekeeping, and overt racism that discourage BIPOC workers from joining.¹⁰ Through stakeholder engagement interviews we learned that having a family member in a union or trade can help a prospective worker gain access to apprenticeships or work. The power of the familial connection can amplify racial disparities if historically BIPOC workers have not had equal access in membership or training opportunities.

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity?

What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department's community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.

Benefits: The Path to Trades program is an expansion of the Seattle Promise program. In 2025, 69% of incoming students to Seattle Promise identified as BIPOC. This is significantly higher than the general Seattle Colleges population, which is 47%. The Path to Trades expansion funds access, completion, and job placement supports, prioritizing services to support high demand trade programs. Benefits include:

Access

- Early exposure and guidance
- Awareness and access to trade pathways that lead to careers and result in living wages

Completion

- Training program (certificate and degree) completion for high-demand trade pathways that lead to living wage careers

Job Placement

- Mentorship and practical tools to build a diverse local talent pipeline for high-demand trades
- Pre-apprenticeship and post-secondary connections

Potential Burdens / Unintended Consequences: The Seattle Promise is a Universal Program. While DEEL's internal evaluation has shown an increase in access to all demographics, national research has shown that "free tuition" equity enhancing programs can often disproportionately benefit white or higher-income students¹¹. Meanwhile, certain trades careers have extremely low percentages of Black/African American workers (Construction, etc), and even lower percentages of Black/African American trades professionals in leadership positions¹². An unintended consequence may be perpetuating a gap in African Americans in certain trades due to the existing opportunity gap in Promise retention/completion for African American students.

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

¹⁰ 1. Travis Watson, "Union Construction's Racial Equity and Inclusion Charade," Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2021, [1. Travis Watson, "Union Construction's Racial Equity and Inclusion Charade," Stanford Social Innovation Review](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/union_constructions_racial_equity_and_inclusion_charade) https://ssir.org/articles/entry/union_constructions_racial_equity_and_inclusion_charade

¹¹ M. M. Chingos, "Who Would Benefit Most from Free College," Brookings, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/who-would-benefit-most-from-free-college/>

¹² Ciquoiah Broxton and Raina Grace, "Who Gets to Build? Examining Racial Disparities in Construction Apprenticeships," UChicago Inclusive Economy Lab, 2025, <https://medium.com/inclusive-economy-notes/who-gets-to-build-examining-racial-disparities-in-construction-apprenticeships-d7083144cd30>

4. How will you address the impacts (Including unintended consequences) on racial equity? What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q. 6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program Strategies: Last dollar scholarship programs, such as the Seattle Promise, have been shown to improve access to enrollment, but without complimentary policies, such as the Path to Trades expansion, they can also unintentionally increase race-based retention and completion gaps and exclusion from educational institutions.

Policy Strategies: The Path to Trades expansion includes the following policy strategies to mitigate unintended consequences:

- Pair tuition subsidies with basic needs fiscal supports (equity scholarships)
- Create a tools and supplies scholarship to fund additional required trades training costs
- Invest in capacity expansion for local trades program
- Academic and preparation outreach and advertising
- Fund and provide transportation to attend trades exploration events to ensure all high school students can attend

Partnership Strategies: In order to execute this expansion, DEEL is working with the Seattle Colleges, local labor unions, the City-Wide Workforce Development Board, City departments, the Levy Oversight Committee, and the Washington Student Achievement Council.

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountability.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate, and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

The Path to Trades strategy is an expansion of the Seattle Promise program funded by the FEPP levy, providing students with another pathway to earning a certificate, degree or credential from a skilled trade program at Seattle Colleges. All FEPP Levy investments are subject to required monitoring activities and scheduled evaluations, ensuring progress is made toward racial equity and overall levy goals outlined in the Implementation & Evaluation plan. As an expanded strategy, evaluation and data reporting complement existing Seattle Promise monitoring activities, which include:

- Regular data reporting of students enrolled in a credential pathway, program retention, and completion of a credential pathway disaggregated by race/ethnicity where student counts meet FERPA compliance
- Program data review between DEEL and funded partners
- Implementation of critical policy or program changes
- Two scheduled evaluations, in Year 2 and Year 4 of the levy

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make change?

Building on our Fall 2025 stakeholder engagement findings, we are committed to reducing barriers to skilled training and job attainment for young skilled professionals of color by the end of the levy. While current trades program participation and job placement outcomes tend to skew toward an average age of 30 and underserve professionals of color¹³, we plan to bridge this access gap through direct partnerships with Seattle Colleges and City of Seattle Departments, and job-readiness programming. Partnerships

¹³ Department of Education & Early Learning, FEPP Trades Stakeholder Engagement (2025)

and programming aim to improve regional workforce development systems alignment and create networks of support (e.g., mentoring, guest speakers, networking events, etc.) for young professionals of color in high-demand industries in Seattle.

We recognize that quantitative data for this strategy is currently limited; we are leveraging qualitative data to shape racial equity goals. Through planned reporting and evaluation, we will stay accountable to our progress and responsive to areas needing improvement.

Attachments

1. Ready to Launch Trades Stakeholder Engagement Summary Memo
2. Seattle Promise: Fall 2024 Enrollment by High School
3. Seattle Colleges High Demand trade Program List

Attachment 1

DEEL conducted a series of 12 interviews and 2 focus groups with stakeholders to ensure that policy implementation includes a diverse representation of the opportunities and strengths for trades education in Seattle. These stakeholder partners included representatives from labor unions, Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, and other city government departments. Of these partnerships, eight described formal apprenticeship programs, while six partners acted as facilitators and connectors, with no formal apprenticeship program. Interviews and focus groups occurred November 2025 - January 2026.

Interviews focused on the work stakeholder organizations do with apprenticeships or skilled training programs, what occupations or programs youth are interested in, what barriers exist for beginning trades or apprenticeship applicants, features supporting successful job attainment, and potential opportunities to support young people pursuing a skilled trade career. On important note for reading this data: while within the memo narrative, I use quote marks to reference the language from interviews/focus groups, this reflects how data collection relied on notes from the conversations rather than recordings. Language and wording may differ from the interview, but we tried to retain the key ideas and topics discussed with stakeholders.

Key Findings

- Support gaps and unmet basic needs are primary barriers to retaining apprentices and skilled talent
- In addition to skill competencies, quality career-readiness skill development such as 21st century skills and employability were commonly cited competencies that may bolster young people's competitive advantage prior to job recruitment
- Targeted outreach and destigmatizing trades careers are key program design elements with potential to increase knowledge, social and navigational capital among youth of color interested in a trades career

Several supporting themes were identified and discussed in the following section. Key emerging quotes were compiled (see appendix A for an extended list of quotes).

High-Level Themes

Seven topics emerged through qualitative analysis: youth interest and engagement, the effectiveness of the pipeline's structural access to trades education and pathways, community outreach and awareness, youth workforce's basic needs, and professional development and skills in relationship to trades.

Professionalization and Career Skills Training Needed for Competitive Job Applications & the Professional Ecosystem

Several stakeholders noted that to make youth more competitive, we need to expand career-readiness training for applicants and youth entering apprenticeships by developing 21st century skills, employability skills, and knowledge of what will be asked of them in careers of choice. Local 242, OSE, HSD, SPU and SCL noted that their few apprenticeships receive a large number of applications. Youth face difficulties obtaining apprenticeships in a competitive field when there are so many qualified applicants with existing work experience. Local 242 discussed how the average age of applicants for their positions are 30, and so youth are competing for jobs with older, more experienced candidates. SCL estimated that for their pre-line worker apprenticeship program, they received around 1000 applications for 6 open spots. OSE noted that for 2 posted internship positions, they received 300 applications. We should be considering how to provide support and opportunities to make youth more competitive applicants.

Additionally, SPD noted that young applicants have difficulty passing the background investigation, physical fitness test, the civil service exam, and need job preparation for interviews and the oral boards. Local 242 noted the need to teach accountability, coachability and employability to find ways to stand out. SPU's Drainage Rehab participant also noted the need to help youth understand the difference between submitting their resume for private sector work vs. government jobs and helping youth assess what they want to do and how to search for jobs and starting places at the entry level.

Pipeline and Opportunity Development for BIPOC Youth Needs Attention

Pipelines leading to trade careers need to address how to support youth, particularly BIPOC youth, in being competitive as applicants, as well as develop awareness and engagement for youth and communities about trades careers.

Stakeholders discussed the need to prioritize BIPOC youth and communities. Several departments noted that traditional word of mouth and family knowledge play a key role in entry into the trades, leading to low awareness with youth and the homogeneity of these industries because it's about "who you know" (ARTS). Outcomes for programs like ANEW, which supports women in trades jobs, serves primarily white women, rather than BIPOC women.

Stakeholders described needing outreach for awareness that will engage youth and communities of Color, especially with families, students and high schools, that trades are a desirable career path and alternative to college, as well as defining what "the trades" actually means.

Robust Opportunities in Trades for Green Energy Development are Coming

Overall, opportunities in green energy and green infrastructure are a huge opportunity in the future and we need to be getting youth into these roles and training now while it is about to boom. (Paraphrase from Interview with MLK Labor Union).

Youth opportunities in trades programs and education exist, however, Seattle needs to develop both the opportunities and applicants for successful trades careers in response to shifting economic needs. The intersection of climate change, city infrastructure and energy needs create an area of opportunity linked to the rise of green energy in technologies such as HVAC, carbon-free concrete, and retrofitting childcare facilities due to the rising heat threshold. MLK Labor Union discussed their pilot at SPU and SDOT with carbon-free concrete and the cement union and noted that Seattle City Light (SCL) could play a major role in building entry-level opportunities for youth in green energy, which SCL confirmed. SCL stated the need to add programs, for example in HVAC, to address this need. SCL also noted that they are hearing a lot of energy and excitement from youth about easing energy doom.

Basic Needs & Ethical Working Conditions are a Concern

Ethically, we need more infrastructure and tailored supports developed to wrap-around youth interested in entering careers in trades. Across the board, participants noted the lack of support for youth who face a lot of systemic barriers, particularly for low-income and first-generation youth. Local 242 noted a 50-60% completion rate in their laborer's apprenticeship program because many youths may not realize what they're getting into, have life struggles, and struggles with program guidelines (submitting hours, RSI).

Skilled trades employment programs should focus on developing equitable working conditions a key factor to sustain robust and ethical pathways to trade careers. Drainage and FAS both explained that people are leaving apprenticeships due to working conditions and not being treated well. More work

around developing safe working environments must occur to combat the reasons apprentices leave programs, such as bullying in the work environment.

Reliable wrap-around services are needed to ensure long-term sustainability of trades jobs and apprentice retention

10 of the 14 stakeholders interviewed noted that successful trades development means that we need to meet the basic needs of workers. Structural barriers to meeting basic needs may be outside of the control of individual departments. Employees need to more to be able to maintain a standard of living, housing, have reliable transportation (apprentices may shift job sites frequently), consistent hours, flexible childcare, access to food and clothing, and in general, wrap-around services to support trades workers and apprentices. However, departments can evaluate the needs of their apprentices and entry-level workers to determine what basic needs they can meet. For example, the SEIUs stakeholder recognized that the machinist's institution is working to open childcare at the Boeing plant to ease the strain of childcare. Local 242 has four apprenticeship coordinators who support 700-800 apprentices and guide them through the program and support with accessing wrap around services. One stakeholder at OED noted that the Regional Pre-Apprenticeship Collaboration has been giving real-time updates allowing them to know about what contractors are experiencing and need, while Electricians are giving respectful worksite training and ironworkers are pushing to accept trans apprenticeships and standing up women in trades.

Stakeholders from SEIU noted that in addition to difficulty finding flexible childcare, the pay is horrible with no benefits, and "childcare is a leading reason why people cannot complete their apprenticeships, with lack of childcare outside of hours 9-5". Additionally, HSD noted they did not have long-term supports for those who have experienced a lot of barriers.

Cross-Sector Partnerships are Needed for Sustainable Pathways

Developing structures and relationships for long-term sustainability of trades work is paramount. Stakeholders discussed, absent of a dedicated training fund or quality training program, programs like the City of Seattle solid waste or cadet program career industries with regional demand remain underdeveloped and underutilized programs. For example, maritime careers, a high-demand industry in Seattle, tend to have significant costs creating financial barriers for trainees looking to reach journey or crew mate levels.

Public-private sector relationships are needed to increase clear and quality trades career opportunities for youth. Coordinated partnerships may increase access to high-demand, entry-level positions for young people completing skilled training and/or apprenticeships.

Using Student Interest and Engagement to Drive Development

More hands-on learning along with monetary payment would help generate interest in skilled trades (Paraphrase from Interview with OED)

There was discussion of paying youth and ensuring compensation such as SPS credits for out of school time. Several stakeholders noted that we must pay youth for their work and training when they are in pre-apprenticeship.

Additionally, 11 of 14 stakeholders discussed engaging students and driving interest through connecting with youth about what they want. Stakeholders noted that exposure to hands-on experiences, tours, and project-based learning drove student engagement with trades professions. Stakeholders see a lot of youth interest in creative, innovative careers in tech, arts, non-profit and human services, as well as in trades with hands-on experiences like automotive and construction.

Demand for Workers Needs to Meet Infrastructure for Developing Those Skilled Laborers with Pre-Apprenticeships

Stakeholders shared a sense of a lack of entry-level jobs for youth that help develop them for skilled labor in the trades. Many trades jobs demand specific skills and experience, however the pipeline to train for these trades and pathways are often inaccessible due to the timing and expense of the training programs. Maritime careers, for example, are expensive and require lots of training – however many companies start hiring at mid-level journey positioned and companies don’t fund training programs. SPD training is provided after hiring, but many youths don’t meet requirements of hiring due to lack of knowledge of what is required at application, such as a deep background check. Structural growth around development of pre-apprenticeships for trades careers can make these pathways more accessible and candidates more competitive.

Appendix A: Supplemental Mixed Methods Joint-Display

Across stakeholders interviewed and surveyed, there was both consensus and difference in responses regarding what industries in Seattle have the greatest demand and interest. Table A compares the results from one survey question (“*What industries do you believe have the greatest demand in Seattle? Please check all that apply*”) and juxtaposes this data with paraphrases from participants conversations about these industries to show points of convergence and divergence across both data collection methods. While data correlation is limited based on the fact that not all stakeholders in the survey were interviewed, and vice versa, this table works to give anecdotal examples alongside the opinions shared in the survey.

It is also important to note that while there is agreement that industries such as Utilities/Skilled Trades have high demand, further investigation is warranted into how high attrition from apprenticeships and the workforce impact that demand from the retention side, along with the need to recruit and train more skilled workers.

- There is agreement across survey and interviews/focus groups that areas of industry with greatest demand, driven both by recruitment needs and retention needs, in Seattle are Utilities/Skilled Trades, Green Jobs/Manufacturing, and Maritime.
- While stakeholders shared that they believed there is a high demand for Construction, based upon qualitative data, addressing professionalization, wrap-around services, and the cyclical nature of construction work may be more valuable than efforts such as outreach for this industry.

Table A: Cross-Method Summary of Beliefs About High-Demand Industries in Seattle

Survey: What industries do you believe have the greatest demand in Seattle?	Focus Group & Interview Paraphrases
Utilities/Skilled Trades (10 respondents)	<p>Drainage Rehab Program</p> <p>There are people leaving/tapping out of apprenticeships due to conditions of work and work environment and people not being treated well.</p> <p>In first rounds they have 100+ people go through application process, mental and physical aptitude test.</p>

	<p>“I have found that when the economy is doing great, we have a hard time getting people into the trades, but when the economy is down, we have many people interested in the trades.”</p> <p>HSD In the IDT workforce group SPU or SCL mentioned they had apprenticeships, but they said young people would not be super competitive.</p> <p>Do have contracts that offer some level of training and job connectedness.</p> <p>SCL Pre-line worker apprenticeship programs – something like 1000 applicants for 6 spots.</p> <p>Do not have formal training programs for other skilled trades.</p> <p>HVAC technician is hard to fill position and good to have a training position around that.</p> <p>UCW - utility classification worker position has informally become entry level role and can lead to apprenticeship position.</p> <p>Electrical helpers (entry-level worker position)</p> <p>Other utilities in the region for other areas that have gaps in training and there may be opportunity to expand MOU with Seattle Colleges to build more apprenticeships.</p> <p>There are a few other positions they have on the job training – ex. Hydro operators have some on the job training for about 2 years at level 1, then they can move to next level. Similar set up with power dispatcher.</p> <p>Entry level positions – admin specialist jobs, management systems analyst, Fish hatchery positions.</p> <p>They have very few entry level positions.</p> <p>SPU Where we don't have a program but is like a trade that we would struggle to get is in our solid waste program – people start as laborers then become machine operator.</p> <p>Timing [is a barrier] - limited number of spots; don't struggle with applications, but spots limited. Sourcing isn't an issue, it's just competitive.</p>
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	<p>Unsure of retention rate; anecdotally, 1 or 2 out of a group of 30 will drop out but it's usually about scheduling; have heard about instances where wraparound services were in need.</p>
Healthcare (9 respondents)	N/A
Transportation (8 respondents)	N/A
Green Jobs/Manufacturing (8 respondents)	<p>OSE Started clean energy apprenticeship program. Put out an RFP and select a set of contractors (smaller) to HVAC, solar installation, etc. RFP gives funding to make apprenticeships paid.</p> <p>In 2026...received a commerce grant. They are using it to bring on climate fellows (2-3) be within OSE office and implementing emission and performance standards.</p> <p>Duwamish valley biodigester program – paid for 1 year for them to set up this biodigester program.</p> <p>Serving a lot of young folx in clean energy apprenticeship positions.</p> <p>Lots of policy work to provide rebates to switch to clean energy – it is creating opportunity for apprentices going to smaller shops where they are doing the work to switch to clean heat.</p> <p>Always house interns and when posted 2 internship positions, they received 300 applications.</p> <p>There is some portion of FEPP about building upgrades for childcare facilities and there could be connection for funding to have OSE apprentices work on childcare infrastructure changes.</p> <p>OED w/FAS Labor Equity Team \$1.3M in RFP from 2023. OED previously committed \$300k. OSE is the major funder in this RFP and focusing on green and clean construction.</p> <p>MLK Labor Union Piloting with SPU and SDOT with carbon free concrete through Georgetown campus with cement union...they are involved with PACT program at South Seattle/Georgetown, and they have seen great results and suggest further investment in that program.</p> <p>There isn't a lot of funding, and lots of people out of work. How can we get people into roles that get them experience and pay to start.</p> <p>SCL could be major player in green energy – maybe good entry level work.</p> <p>The city is not putting enough resources into the green trades and infrastructure. Ex. - there could be initiatives to build EV charging</p>

	<p>stations around neighborhoods...these jobs could be entry level jobs that build experience and youth pipeline.</p> <p>Overall opportunities in green energy and green infrastructure is huge opportunity in the future and we need to be getting youth into these roles and training now while it is about to boom.</p>
<p>Maritime (8 respondents)</p>	<p>Masters, Mates & Pilots Trend over time: Ships got bigger, crews got smaller, less ships out there – so there was a surplus of mariners for a while, so people stopped training them and now, we’re on the other side and need to ramp up mariner training program</p> <p>Maritime trades traditionally is word of mouth. Most people don’t know there are jobs here at the port even though it is right outside our door.</p> <p>Entry-level positions identified by Coast Guard aren’t carried by companies as they aren’t required to exist within each company. Many companies start at mid-level journey level positioned.</p> <p>Companies expect people to show up trained which can lead to a steep training curve and cost. There are not pre-apprenticeship programs that are in the area.</p>
<p>Maintenance Technicians (6 respondents)</p>	<p>MLK Labor Union Originally came from IBEW 77 – youth originally became meter reader and cable splicer and waiting for their time to become apprentice. These are great opportunities to get people into the work and gain experience. We need to be looking at more roles like these around the city at the city as workforce to get youth engaged, paid and get experience.”</p>
<p>Construction (6 respondents)</p>	<p>Local 242 They have no shortage of applicants. How does a 18yr old stand out vs someone who has been working the field for several years?</p> <p>They only bring in the amount of people who can go out to work, try to manage the apprenticeship list to make sure they don’t bring in too many people, and they can go out to work.</p> <p>OED w/FAS Labor Equity Team Somewhat interest in construction, but everyone wants to be in popular trades (like electrician) with high \$ amount. Anything to do with marketing/IT blend (social media, etc.).</p> <p>Construction is boom and bust. Right now, we are in bust, reducing workforce or not hiring</p> <p>High drop rates for young people in atmosphere of bullying.</p>
<p>Information Technology (4 respondents)</p>	<p>OED w/FAS Labor Equity Team Somewhat interest in construction, but everyone wants to be in popular trades (like electrician) with high \$ amount. Anything to do with marketing/IT blend (social media, etc.).</p>

Other (please specify) (2 respondents)	<p>SEIUs They do not have training fund or training program and don't run apprenticeships for early childcare workers.</p> <p>ARTS Out of pandemic, there was a brain drain when it comes to sound engineering and folks who were in the technical side of concerts and live events so there was some money that OED provided through the Vera Project – heard that is still a need to build that workforce back up.</p> <p>SPD Could also fund some parking enforcement officers that are 18-20 years old.</p> <p>Only hire about 4-5% about applicants they get.</p> <p>They hire frequently from the military because they haven't been able to do certain things that other people have done while going to college.</p> <p>Between new contract, and last mayor and council they pushed money and marketing to get police force back to fully staffed. On par to hire 160 this year and 180 next year (both are most in 12 years).</p>
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Attachment 2

Table 3 - Seattle Promise: Fall 2024 Enrollment by High School					
High School	Council District	Students Enrolled as Promise Scholars (Fall 2021)	Students Enrolled as Promise Scholars (Fall 2022)	Students Enrolled as Promise Scholars (Fall 2023)	Students Enrolled as Promise Scholars (Fall 2024)

Chief Sealth International High School	1	99 (9%)	111 (9%)	157 (11%)	173 (11%)
Summit - Atlas	1	Expanded Access SY2022-23	<10	<10 (<1%)	16 (1%)
West Seattle High School	1	84 (8%)	82 (7%)	86 (6%)	91 (6%)
Cleveland STEM High School	2	101 (9%)	105 (8%)	89 (6%)	111 (7%)
Franklin High School*	2	137 (12%)	182 (15%)	187 (13%)	202 (13%)
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	2	Expanded Access SY2022-23	<10	<10 (<1%)	<10
Summit - Sierra	2	Expanded Access SY2022-23	23 (2%)	10 (<1%)	<10
Interagency Academy	2	29 (3%)	45 (4%)	<10 (<1%)	24 (2%)
Rainier Beach High School	2	74 (7%)	77 (6%)	102 (7%)	141 (9%)
South Lake High School (Alan T. Sugiyama High School)	2	<10 (<1%)	<10	<10 (<1%)	<10
Garfield High School	3	73 (7%)	77 (6%)	96 (7%)	96 (6%)
Nova High School	3	16 (1%)	26 (2%)	38 (3%)	32 (2%)
Seattle World School	3	14 (1%)	15 (1%)	31 (2%)	17 (1%)
Lincoln High School	4	Expanded Access SY2022-23	24 (2%)	62 (4%)	97 (6%)
Roosevelt High School	4	88 (8%)	65 (5%)	60 (4%)	68 (4%)
Ingraham International High School	5	109 (10%)	118 (9%)	128 (9%)	156 (10%)
Middle College High School	5	<10 (1%)	<10	<10 (<1%)	<10
Nathan Hale High School	5	107 (10%)	116 (9%)	140 (10%)	147 (9%)
Ballard High School	6	135 (12%)	129 (10%)	115 (8%)	123 (8%)
The Center School	7	24 (2%)	23 (2%)	45 (3%)	34 (2%)
Cascade Parent Partnership	7	Expanded Access SY2022-23	<10	<10 (<1%)	13 (1%)
Total		1114	1250	1460	1595

Attachment 3

Program/Career	Institution	Total Credits	Materials Cost	Median Living Wage	High Demand Occupation per WA State	SBCTC Skills Gap List
Building Construction Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	22	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y

Marine Science/Merchant Marine Officer	Seattle Central College	63.5	\$4,000.00	Y	Y	N
Computer Programming/Programmer, General	North Seattle College	90	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y
Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications	North Seattle College	90	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y
Network and System Administration/Administrator	North Seattle College	90	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping	North Seattle College	90	\$0.00	Y	N	Y
Culinary Arts/Chef Training	Seattle Central College	90	\$3,240.00	Y	Y	N
Baking and Pastry Arts/Baker/Pastry Chef	Seattle Central College	90	\$3,440.00	Y	Y	N
Fire Science/Firefighting	North Seattle College	91	\$0.00	Y	Y	N
Real Estate	North Seattle College	91	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y
Welding Technology/Welder	South Seattle College	93	\$2,000.00	Y	Y	N
Applied Horticulture/Horticulture Operations, General	South Seattle College	93	\$0.00	Y	Y	Y
Surgical Technology/Technologist	Seattle Central College	95	\$2,077.50	Y	N	Y
Biomedical Technology/Technician	North Seattle College	97	\$0.00	Y	N	Y
Culinary Arts/Chef Training	South Seattle College	101	\$500.00	Y	Y	N
Restaurant, Culinary, and Catering Management/Manager	South Seattle College	101	\$500.00	Y	Y	N
Electrical, Electronic, and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	North Seattle College	102	\$0.00	Y	N	Y

Carpentry/Carpenter	Seattle Central College	102	\$800.00	Y	Y	Y
Wine Steward/Sommelier.	South Seattle College	107	\$0.00	Y	Y	N
Diesel Mechanics Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	118	\$2,000.00	Y	Y	N
Aircraft Powerplant Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	128	\$1,000.00	Y	Y	N
Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	128	\$1,000.00	Y	Y	N
Quality Control Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	?	\$0.00	Y	Y	N
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology/Technician	South Seattle College	10 weeks	\$0.00	Y	N	Y
Mason/Masonry	South Seattle College	2.5 - 4 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
Drywall Installation/Drywaller	South Seattle College	3 years	?	Y	Y	Y
Electrician	South Seattle College	3 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
Concrete Finishing/Concrete Finisher	South Seattle College	3.5 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
Carpet, Floor, and Tile Worker.	South Seattle College	4 years	?	Y	Y	N
Electrical and Power Transmission Installation/Installer, General	South Seattle College	4 years	?	Y	Y	Y
Glazier	South Seattle College	4 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
Lineworker	South Seattle College	4 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
Pipefitting/Pipefitter and Sprinkler Fitter	South Seattle College	5 Years	?	Y	Y	Y

Summary Att 3 - Racial Equity Toolkit - Path to Trades
V1

Plumbing Technology/Plumber	South Seattle College	5 Years	?	Y	Y	Y
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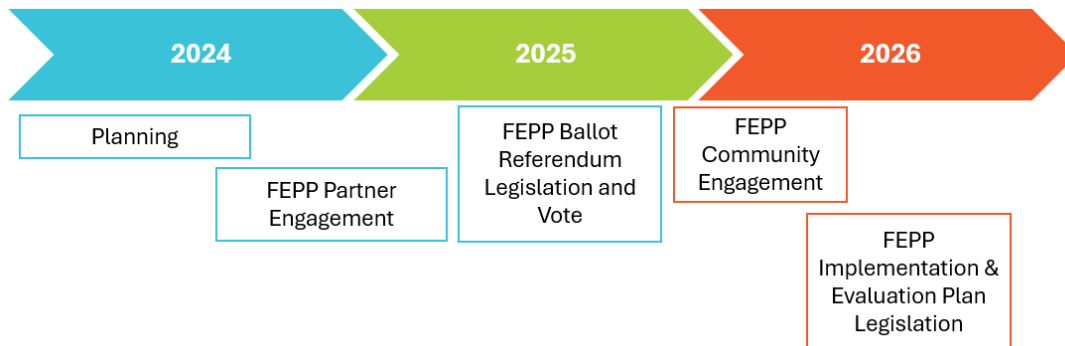
Every Child Ready-Families, Education, Preschool and Promise Levy Stakeholder Engagement Report

Seattle Department of Education & Early Learning
April 2026

Executive Summary

The Families, Education, Preschool and Promise (FEPP) Levy is a critical investment to support Seattle’s children, youth, and families with access to education support services. Since Summer 2024, the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) convened community members, institutional partners, and current grantees to inform the FEPP Levy renewal proposal and Implementation and Evaluation Plan legislation.

Visual 1. FEPP Engagement Timeline



Engagement Format and Participants

From July 2024 to March 2026, DEEL engaged more than 1,496 individuals to share their priorities for FEPP levy spending and implementation. Engagement occurred across two phases, with the first informing the FEPP Levy renewal proposal to invest \$1.3 billion over six years (2026-2031) and the second to allocate funds and shape implementation details following voter approval of Proposition 1 the Every Child Ready (ECR) FEPP Levy in November 2025 with 80% voter support.

Modes of Engagement

15	Partner Conversations
9	Levy Oversight Committee Member Interviews
8	Youth Focus Groups
7	Listening Tour Events
6	Community Conversations
6	Surveys

Phase 1

58	205	101	298	9
Childcare and Preschool Providers	K-12 School or Community-Based Organization Representatives	K-12 Students	Seattle Promise Scholars	FEPP Levy Oversight Committee Members

Phase 2

127	275	327	88	8
General Community Members	School or Community-Based Organization Representatives	Parents/Guardians	Youth	FEPP Levy Oversight Committee Members

Major Themes

Community priorities were similar across phases, with perspectives impacted by both international and national current events as well as local, regional, and state budget concerns. Across both phases, engagement was focused on FEPP Levy investments managed by DEEL. Phase 2 feedback was more focused on implementation due to the timing of conversations, and questions posed by DEEL. Community spending priorities and concerns from each engagement phase are listed below.

Phase 1: Before Ballot Referendum

- Affordable childcare and enrichment programs
- Persistent disparities in academic achievement
- Youth mental health services
- City and school district budget deficits
- State and federal policy changes
- Voter support for additional levies

Phase 2: After Voter Approval

- Expanded childcare access
- Stronger school and community partnerships
- Geographic equity, language access, and culturally responsive services
- Divergent views on how to promote student safety
- Holistic student and family supports
- Workforce capacity challenges in childcare, education, and mental health sectors

Findings

Overall, stakeholder engagement revealed strong alignment between stakeholder feedback and the stated purpose of the FEPP Levy to invest cradle-to-career and prioritize investments that advance racial equity, close opportunity gaps, and foster student success.

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Background

Education levies in the City of Seattle have a long history, dating back to the first Families and Education Levy (FEL) in 1990. This original levy focused on early childhood education, out-of-

school time programming, family support, and the first School Based Health Center (SBHC) in Seattle. City of Seattle education, or children’s levies, have been renewed approximately every seven years for the past three decades and provide critical resources beyond federal and state funding for social services and student supports.

In 2014, city voters established a rigorous, evidence-based preschool program by passing the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) levy, a step toward universal preschool access. The 2018 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) Levy merged the 2011 FEL with the expiring 2014 SPP Levy and expanding City investments to include postsecondary access with funding to establish the Seattle Promise Program, a universal college-access program.

The 2025 Every Child Ready (ECR)-FEPP Levy expanded city investment further to include supports for expectant parents, childcare, and career pathways. In November 2025, Seattle voters approved the \$1.3 billion ECR-FEPP Levy with 80% of voter support. City of Seattle education levies are administered by the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL), and other funded departments.



Strategies for Inclusive and Equitable Engagement

- **Language Accessibility:** We prioritized language accessibility by offering multilingual surveys, translated materials, and interpretation services at all events. This approach ensured that non-English speakers— including communities that speak Spanish, Tigrinya, or other languages—could fully participate and share their perspectives.
- **Children’s Activities:** Recognizing the importance of family involvement, we included interactive and age-appropriate children’s activities at events. This welcoming family atmosphere allowed parents to participate fully while their children were entertained and engaged.
- **Culturally Relevant Outreach Methods:** Our outreach strategies were rooted in cultural responsiveness. We employed culturally relevant materials and methods— ranging from tailored communication strategies to hosting events in familiar community spaces—to resonate with diverse populations. This approach was complemented by working with community liaisons who understood the unique cultural dynamics of each group.
- **Location and Accessibility:** Events were strategically held in community-based locations that offered ample parking and were accessible via public transit. By situating

activities in familiar, convenient settings, we reduced barriers to participation and encouraged a broad spectrum of community members to attend.

- **Collaboration with Trusted Community Partners:** We actively partnered with trusted local organizations and community leaders who have deep roots in the neighborhoods we served. These partnerships were critical in establishing credibility and trust, ensuring that our engagement efforts were seen as genuine and reflective of community needs.

How to Read this Report

This report outlines the approach and findings from stakeholder engagement conducted by DEEL staff and consultant South Sound Strategies. Phase 1 findings are organized by the major themes across all engagement sessions. Phase 2 findings are organized by Every Child Ready Initiative and FEPP Levy domains: Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch. Engagement methodology and a schedule of engagement activities are included for both phases; additional details are shared in the report appendix. Phase 2 findings also include an “Alignment Matrix” that compares planned FEPP investments against community priorities and ranks the level of alignment as high, moderate, or low. High alignment demonstrates consistency between planned spending and community feedback. Moderate alignment demonstrates a need to further explore how the investment can respond to community feedback. Low alignment signals that the planned investment may not match community needs and should be re-evaluated.

Phase 1 Engagement (July 2024 to March 2025)

Methods

- **Interviews**
 - **Targeted Stakeholder Engagement:** Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) members and key policy stakeholders had dedicated space in one-on-one meetings to discuss FEPP Levy investments, ensuring their perspectives were directly integrated into the renewal process.
 - **Deeper Exploration of Priorities:** These meetings allowed for tailored discussions on funding allocations, equity considerations, and long-term impacts, offering nuanced insights that may not have emerged in broader group settings.
 - **Building Trust and Transparency:** By fostering candid dialogue, one-on-one meetings reinforced stakeholder confidence in the levy renewal process and provided feedback that was both meaningful and actionable.
- **Focus Groups**
 - **Facilitated Discussions:** These small-group sessions created a space for dynamic conversation, specifically designed for language-based cultural and ethnic groups such as Black/African American, East African, Spanish speaking, and AANHPI communities. Participants were encouraged to discuss challenges and opportunities, providing a deeper insight into community sentiments.
 - **Thematic Exploration:** Skilled facilitators guided discussions on targeted themes—such as the quality of early education and safety in learning environments—to extract detailed feedback that might be missed in broader surveys.
 - **Documentation:** In lieu of recording sessions, our team took detailed notes using a note-taking template during each focus group. This approach respects participant privacy while comprehensively capturing key themes and insights for later analysis
- **Partner Conversations (In-person and Virtual)**
 - **Interactive Conversations:** Stakeholders shared and discussed ideas in real time through brainstorming sessions, small breakout groups, and roundtable discussions.
- **Surveys**
 - **Purpose and Design:** Surveys were used to capture quantitative data on stakeholder opinions, priorities, and perceived challenges. The survey instruments were designed with both closed-ended and open-ended questions to balance statistical rigor with narrative context.
 - **Digital platforms:** Web-based platforms (e.g., Microsoft Forms, SurveyMonkey) were utilized to reach a broader audience and ensure accessibility for community members with varying levels of digital proficiency. Where needed, we also offered multilingual surveys—in Spanish, Tigrinya, and other top spoken languages—to ensure that language was not a barrier to participation.
 - **Data Analysis:** The responses were analyzed using statistical software, with particular attention paid to disaggregating data by demographic factors such as age, ethnicity, and geographical location.

Timeline & Participant Summary

Date	Event	Stakeholder Group	Engagement Type
2024			
July 26	Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) directors feedback session	SPP directors	Virtual
August 29	SPP directors survey	SPP directors	Survey
August 30	SPP directors feedback session	SPP directors	Virtual
September 18	Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) engagement session	CCAP providers	Virtual
September 21	CCAP engagement session	CCAP providers	Virtual
September 27	SPP directors survey	SPP directors	Survey
October 11	CCAP engagement session	CCAP providers	In-Person
October 16	School-based Health Center (SBHC) engagement	SBHC providers	Virtual
October 28	School-based investment (SBI) professional development (PD) providers collaboration	SBI PD providers	In-Person
November 13	SBHC engagement	SBHC providers	Virtual
November 14	Seattle Promise listening session	College and Promise staff	In-Person
November 30	PD providers survey	SBI PD providers	Survey
December 5	SBI school staff listening session	SBI school leaders and staff	In-Person
December 9	Community Learning Center (CLC) youth focus group: Washington Middle School #1	Middle school youth	In-Person
December 10	Community-based Organization (CBO) partners engagement session	CBO Partners	In-Person
December 10	CLC youth focus group: Aki Kurose Middle School #1	Middle school youth	In-Person
December 12	SBI virtual engagement session	SBI school leaders and staff	Virtual
December 12	SBI virtual engagement session	SBI school leaders and staff	Virtual
December 16	CLC youth focus group: Aki Kurose Middle School #2	Middle school youth	In-Person
December 17	CLC youth focus group: Denny Middle School #1	Middle school youth	In-Person

December 19	CLC youth focus group: Denny Middle School #1	Middle school youth	In-Person
2025			
January 7	CLC youth focus group: Washington Middle School #2	Middle school youth	In-Person
January 14	CLC youth focus group: Mercer Middle School #1	Middle school youth	In-Person
January 16	CLC youth focus group: Mercer Middle School #2	Middle school youth	In-Person
January 17	SBI school staff survey	SBI school leaders and staff	Survey
February 4	SBI school staff survey	Students, alumni and families	In-Person
February 25	CBO partners engagement session	CBO partners	Virtual
February 26	CBO partners engagement session	CBO partners	Virtual
March 21	Seattle Promise survey	Students, alumni and families	Survey
March 28	CBO partners survey	CBO partners	Survey

Major Themes and Insights

1. Affordable Child Care and Enrichment Programs

Access to affordable before- and after-school programs, as well as summer learning opportunities, remains a top community need. Stakeholders emphasized that working families rely on these services to ensure safe, structured, and enriching environments for their children. Expanding these programs, particularly in underserved neighborhoods, will help bridge opportunity gaps and support students' academic and social development.

2. Persistent Disparities in Academic Achievement

Concerns over financial sustainability were a recurring theme, as stakeholders acknowledged the budget challenges facing both the City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools. Many expressed a desire for greater transparency and long-term planning to mitigate potential funding shortfalls. There was a strong call for leveraging partnerships and alternative funding sources, such as the levy, to sustain critical education services beyond the next levy cycle.

3. Youth Mental Health Services

Expanded access to mental health supports in schools and community settings was a common concern. Families, educators, and service providers highlighted the increasing mental health challenges faced by students, exacerbated by the pandemic and economic stressors. Stakeholders called for investments in school-based mental health professionals, trauma-informed care, and culturally competent counseling services to support students' social-emotional well-being.

4. City and School District Budget Deficits

Stakeholders underscored the ongoing achievement gaps affecting students from historically underserved communities, particularly Black, Indigenous, and students of color, as well as those from low-income backgrounds. Participants emphasized the need for culturally responsive programming, increased access to advanced coursework, and targeted interventions that support students at risk of falling behind. Ensuring that equity remains a central tenet of the FEPP Levy investment implementation will be essential in addressing these disparities.

5. State and Federal Policy Changes

Shifts in state and federal education policies were identified as key factors that could impact local funding priorities. Stakeholders encouraged proactive advocacy to ensure that Seattle programs remain aligned with evolving state and federal mandates. Flexibility in funding allocations and strategic planning were highlighted as ways to navigate these policy changes effectively.

6. Voter Support for Additional Levies

Discussion around voter support for the FEPP Levy renewal reflected broader concerns about the increasing tax burden on Seattle residents; during this nine-month engagement period, three levies appeared on voter ballots for transportation and education-related priorities. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of clearly communicating the tangible benefits of the FEPP Levy to sustain public support. Transparent messaging, impact-driven narratives, and community engagement efforts were mentioned as ways to share the story of levy impact.

Phase 2 Engagement (December 2025 to March 2026)

Methods

Phase 2 engagement was structured in three formats: (1) Community Conversations, (2) Listening Tour, and (3) Multi-lingual Community Survey

1. Community Conversations

Through this universal strategy, DEEL convened community members to discuss topics across the three Levy domains: Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch. Events were held at familiar locations (community centers, libraries, schools, etc.) to ensure ease of access. All events featured interpretation services provided by the Department of Neighborhoods Community Liaison Program that allowed interpretation in 7 languages: Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Amharic, Oromo, and Somali. Dinner was provided by local women and minority-owned business enterprises, and children’s activities were supervised by DEEL staff. Director Chappelle emceed all events alongside a member of the Seattle Youth Commission and presented an overview of the FEPP Levy signature investments. DEEL staff facilitated break-out groups to dig deeper into community perspectives on the three domains. Facilitation centered youth and parent voices.

2. Listening Tour

The Listening Tour strategy allows community groups such as community-based organizations or school Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSA), to invite DEEL representatives into their meetings and spaces to engage with FEPP planning. This format was used for general groups, as well as for an intentional engagement strategy with Native and Indigenous communities. In partnership with the Department of Neighborhoods’ Indigenous Advisory Council and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Tribal Nations unit, DEEL leadership participated in four engagements for Native/Indigenous community members.

3. Community Survey

To complement in-person engagement strategies, DEEL launched a multi-lingual survey opportunity available in Amharic, Chinese, English, Oromo, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The survey invited community members to share their perspectives and priorities across FEPP investments, Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch. The survey was distributed across DEEL-owned channels, through community partner networks, and outreach conducted during engagement events. The survey was live for 6 weeks, February 10 through March 27, 2026.

Timeline & Participant Summary

Date	Event	Stakeholder Group	Engagement Type
2025			
December 2	Magnuson Community Conversation	FEPP Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) members and General Community	In-Person
December 10	Ballard Community Conversation	Parents/ Guardians and CBO-Staff	In-Person

December 11	Denny Community Conversation	Seattle Public School (SPS) Staff, Parents/Guardians and General Community	In-Person
December 16	Rainier Community Conversation	Youth, CBO-Staff and Parents/Guardians	In-Person
2026			
February 24	Langston Hughes Community Conversation	CBO-Staff and Parents/Guardians	In-Person
February 26	Magnuson Community Conversation	CBO-Staff and Parents/Guardians	In-Person
March 2	Washington Middle School PTSA Listening Tour	Parents/Guardians and Youth	Virtual
March 17	El Centro De La Raza Listening Tour, In-language	Parents/Guardians	In-Person
March 18	Southeast Seattle Education Fundraising Alliance Listening Tour	SPS Staff and Parents/Guardians	In-Person
March 12	Chinese Information and Service Center Listening Tour, In-language	Parents/Guardians	Virtual
March 13	Chinese Information and Service Center Listening Tour, In-language	Youth and Parents/Guardians	Virtual
March 23	King County Early Learning Coalition Listening Tour	CBO-Staff	Virtual
March 24	Chief Sealth PTSA Listening Tour	Youth, SPS Staff and Parents/Guardians	In-Person
March 26	Seattle School Meals & Food Education Working Group Listening Tour	Youth and CBO-Staff	Virtual
February 10, – March 27	Multi-lingual Community Survey	Youth, Parents/Guardians, SPS Staff, CBO-Staff, General Community, College/University Staff	Online

Department of Neighborhoods Collaboration

DEEL partnered with the Department of Neighborhoods to strengthen youth-voice, language access, and inclusion of Indigenous communities during FEPP engagement.

Seattle Youth Commission

When launching its community engagement efforts, DEEL immediately reached out to key



partners to ensure the engagement design was youth informed. The Seattle Youth Commission (SYC) has been an important partner and advisor across DEEL’s portfolio of services. To promote the ability of youth attending Community Conversations to really lean in and share their voice, SYC members stepped in as co-emcees for the six events. By having a youth representative on the microphone, DEEL and SYC hoped to convey to audience members the central importance of youth in FEPP funding conversations.

Seattle Youth commissioners Bill Chen (At-Large), Sabi Yoon (District 6), Audrey Mai Trinen (District 2), and Mohini Kaplan (At-Large) stood alongside the DEEL Department Director, Dr. Dwane Chappelle and Seattle City Council officials to welcome attendees and facilitate question and answer sessions, keeping youth voice at the center of each event. During Native and Indigenous community events, Commissioner Aicha

Sinha-Khan (District 5), led a focus group comprised of Urban Native Education Alliance interns ranging from 11-18 years of age.

Since DEEL’s inception Seattle’s youth have been explicit of “nothing for us without us” frame when it comes to building policies around the issues that directly impact their lives. With the Seattle Youth Commission’s collaboration, DEEL is closer to ensuring that is and remains true.

Community Liaisons

Trusted messengers are essential to ensuring the community feels safe in providing true and accurate feedback to the City. DEEL’s utilization of the Community Liaisons program was crucial to eliminating the language barrier for Seattle families whose voices may have otherwise gone unheard. Independent contractors who act as a neutral bridge between people and city government, each Liaison promoted and attended the community events, provided photos, translation support, and summary notes from each event.



Indigenous Advisory Council

During FEPP 2018 implementation, participation rates among Native and Indigenous children and youth has consistently been below 1%. To begin to address this gap in access and ensure FEPP 2025 planning included priorities from Native/Indigenous youth and families, DEEL built relationships with the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) and Seattle Public School’s Native Education Program. What began in June of 2025 as a series of levy renewal updates to the IAC, developed into a community-specific engagement effort implemented through March 2026.

IAC members highlighted food insecurity, access to childcare and culturally specific trades and careers as key priorities and areas of interest related to FEPP levy renewal. At the September 2025, City of Seattle | Tribal Nations Summit, wrap-around supports and substance abuse prevention and recovery were elevated as priorities.

In consultation with the IAC and City’s Office of Intergovernmental Relations, Tribal Relations unit, DEEL partnered with three trusted urban Indian organizations—Urban Native Education Alliance, Seattle Indian Health Board, and Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services—and Seattle Public School’s Native Education Program to engage Native families on their priorities for children, youth, and families. Across four engagements, more than 60 individuals representing youth, families, and partner Native/Indigenous service providers shared their perspectives with DEEL. Participants represented a range of tribal affiliations reflecting the diversity of American Indian and Alaska Native people in Seattle, including but not limited to Blackfeet, Chehalis, Cherokee Nation, Diné, Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Snohomish, Suquamish, and Tulalip.

Priorities for investment emerging from these engagements included:

1. Ready to Start: Access to childcare
2. Ready to Learn: Wrap-around supports, substance abuse prevention and recovery, and culturally relevant out-of-school time options
3. Ready to Launch: Culturally relevant postsecondary opportunities

Full schedule of engagements:

- Thursday, February 12, 2026 – Seattle Public School’s Native Education Program - Indian Parent Advisory Committee
 - Focus: Ready to Learn
 - Location: Virtual
- Tuesday, March 3, 2026 – Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services-
 - Co-Host and Co-MC: Tia Yazzie (Diné)
 - Focus: Ready to Start
 - Location: Seattle Rainier Lion’s Club, 98118
- Wednesday, March 4, 2026 – Every Child Ready Virtual Listening Session for Native and Indigenous Service Providers
 - Co-Host: Indigenous Advisory Council and Co-MC: none
 - Focus: Start to Launch,
 - Location: Virtual
- Thursday, March 5, 2026 – Urban Native Education Alliance
 - Co-Host and Co-MC: Aicha Sinha-Khan, Seattle Youth Commission
 - Focus: Learn and Launch
 - Location: North Seattle College, 98103

DEEL would like to thank IAC members, including Tia Yazzie, for co-developing and emceeding events alongside DEEL. DEEL also extends appreciation to Kolbi Monasmith and Lydia Faitalia with DON, and Francesca Murnan with OIR for their partnership and collaboration.

Major Themes and Insights by Domain

Ready to Start

The Ready to Start Domain supports the Early Childhood Investment area, and supports strategies such as home visiting, health, childcare, and preschool access. Stakeholders were informed that investments in this domain were planned to expand in the FEPP 2025, including doubling the number of families served annually by the Child Care Assistance Program to 1,400, expanding the Seattle Preschool Program from 2,500 to 3,100 seats by 2032, and sustaining child care worker retention incentives first funded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Across engagement methods, stakeholders were asked questions such as:

- What has your experience been with the Child Care Assistance Program or Seattle Preschool Program?
- If you haven’t used these services, what early learning or childcare programs have been helpful to your family?
- Finding licensed infant/toddler care can be challenging. What matters most to you when choosing care for children under 5?
- When the school year ends, what types of summer programs do you look for? What challenges or barriers have you faced when trying to find or access summer care?

Home Visiting and Health

Home Visiting and Health investments were planned to continue in the 2025 levy without expansion. When discussing these investments, respondents spoke of them as the gateway or entry point to other supportive services for families and stressed the importance of building trusting one-on-one relationships with home visitors, or other social service workers. Discussion elevated that families are more likely to engage with the public school system if they have a positive home visiting experience that lays a strong foundation for parental involvement in their child's success. The need for early intervention and applied behavior services for children with developmental needs was also affirmed across conversations.

"Home visiting programs are very helpful for families in terms of resources, but also provides the families a pathway to receive supports to sign up for future childcare and preschool services." -Childcare Provider, Denny

Childcare and Workforce Supports

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) is a longstanding City of Seattle program that helps families pay for the cost of child care. CCAP subsidies are calculated based on family size, income, hours of care needed, and age of the child. The program specifically serves low-to-middle-income families who earn too much to qualify for Washington State's Working Connections Child Care or the King County Best Starts for Kids program but still struggle with Seattle's high child care costs. CCAP families can receive an average of \$10,000 in annual cost savings.

In October 2025, DEEL announced expanded income eligibility for CCAP, increasing the threshold to 110% of the State Median Income (SMI) and making 2,000 Seattle families newly eligible for co-pay support. The FEPP Levy increases funding for the program and is expected to reduce childcare costs for 1,400 children annually.

By increasing childcare affordability for families and making direct payments to providers, CCAP also supports childcare providers in Seattle—the majority of whom are women, minority, or small business owners. Beginning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Child Care Staff Workforce Supports program has provided childcare workers citywide with stabilizing payments. Among 2025 recipients, workers were 71% people of color and represented 608 provider agencies, including center-based, school-age, and family child care programs. Planned investments under the 2025 FEPP Levy renewal would support for 5,000 childcare workers annually with the goal of retaining qualified educators.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Critical Financial Lifeline:** CCAP was described as essential for families experiencing unexpected life events such as illness and job loss
- **Eligibility Confusion:** Families report frustration when qualifying for SPP but not CCAP due to different income thresholds
- **Middle-Income Gap:** Strong advocacy for expanded eligibility for families who earn too much to qualify but still face significant childcare cost burden
- **Administrative Burden:** Providers report extensive paperwork requirements compared to State subsidy programs
- **Culturally Relevant Outreach and Navigation Support:** Families named a need for information and communication that match community language, technology, and cultural norms in addition to having individualized support to determine options and complete applications
- **Critical Workforce Shortage:** Providers emphasized inability to attract qualified staff at \$21/hour when public school positions pay more

- **Expansion Concerns:** Expanding seats without addressing workforce instability creates an implementation risk
- **Insurance Barriers:** Family Child Care (FCC) and small providers face prohibitive insurance costs that cause closures
- **Pathway Development:** Request for competency-based training and certification pathways for current early childhood education (ECE) workers

"CCAP is wonderful. Child care is critical. They are the first educators. Families need a meaningful opportunity to support their children financially; they can't if they can't work." - Parent, Ballard

"Not enough translated materials... paper translated materials are preferred." – Translator/School Staff, Magnuson

"We have lots of kids, we have lots of families, we need staff. If someone is graduating from UW Education, why would they go into a preschool program, instead of a public-school program?" -Childcare Provider, Magnuson

Seattle Preschool Program (SPP)

The Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) is a nationally recognized, award-winning early learning initiative that began in 2015 with just 280 seats in partnership with four providers. Over the past decade, SPP has grown dramatically and has prepared more than 11,000 Seattle children for kindergarten. The program operates in partnership with community-based organizations, FCCs, and Seattle Public Schools. SPP offers dual-language classrooms in languages including Spanish, Mandarin, Somali, Arabic, and Vietnamese. In April 2025, DEEL announced a planned expansion of SPP from 2,500 seats annually to 3,100 by 2032.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Highly Positive Reception:** Parents consistently reported excellent experiences with SPP, noting children were well-prepared for kindergarten transition
- **Dual Language and Special Needs Support Gap:** Conversation across multiple events identified insufficient support for children with developmental delays, behavioral needs and from multilingual households; FCC providers serving Somali, Amharic, Oromo, and Vietnamese-speaking families are experiencing a greater need for dual language instruction supports
- **Family Child Care Expansion Demand:** Providers reported FCCs fill first due to family preference for smaller, culturally matched settings
- **Curriculum Flexibility:** Request for expanded curriculum options beyond Creative Curriculum and HighScope (e.g., Montessori, Waldorf)

"Phenomenal – so happy with the childcare, teachers, staff, administration – it was a great experience, and my daughter was definitely ready for kindergarten. Highly recommend." -SPP Parent, Denny

"SPP is an exceptional program... Went with Pinehurst because of 7 years plus of staff being together...They provided a welcoming environment for our daughter." -SPP Parent, Magnuson

"Children with special needs is something we need help with." -SPP Provider, Langston Hughes

"My highest values were around the culture and the language [for a Spanish Dual Language program]. It was missing in terms of mission." -SPP Parent, reflecting on the predominance of English in a dual language SPP program, Ballard

Ready to Start Alignment Matrix

Home Visiting and Health investments are not included in the matrix due to level funding in levy, and low discussion among stakeholders.

Strategy	Planned Investment	Community Priorities	Alignment Level	Rationale
Childcare	Double capacity to serve 1,400 children annually	High demand for expanded access to co-pay support among middle-class families and infant childcare seats	Moderate	Planned investment will benefit more families and providers by covering childcare costs; however, it does not establish new licensed childcare businesses or increase overall supply in the City
Preschool	600 New SPP seats to serve 3,100 three- and four-year-olds annually by 2032	Strong support for SPP Expansion	High	Strong alignment with community sentiment; Additional seats will address waitlist concerns
Preschool	Expand funding for dual-language classrooms	Dual language & cultural responsiveness	Moderate	Planned dual language expansion should consider tailored approach to support FCC model and experience
Preschool	Maintain Seattle Public Schools SPP-Plus inclusion classroom and comprehensive support funding	Center- and Family Child Care Center (FCC)-provider supports for children with special needs	Low	Planned expansion maintains SPP-Plus at SPS sites only and status quo funding for comprehensive supports

Ready to Learn

The Ready to Learn Domain supports two investment areas: K-12 Student Supports and K-12 Health and Safety. Planned investments include academic support, enrichment and out-of-school time programs, whole-child supports such as health, safety, food and housing resources, and transportation, family engagement, and community partnerships. Stakeholders were informed that investments in this domain would emphasize out-of-school time supports over school-day interventions, and that the levy would sustain existing youth mental health funding and expand the existing School Based Health Center network funded by the levy by adding five new SBHCs, for a total of 34 SBHCs citywide, in the 2027-2028 school year. Stakeholders were asked to inform the design of new investments in student safety, in addition to sustaining existing supports implemented by the Human Services Department (HSD) and Restorative Practices services already funded by the FEPP 2018 levy.

Across engagement methods, stakeholders were asked questions such as:

- What learning supports or after-school programs would make the biggest difference for your child? For example, is tutoring, homework help, or enrichment important to your family?
- For elementary school families, do you have a preference for licensed childcare settings compared to enrichment or expanded learning programs?
- What makes it hard to access health supports when you need it? (Consider time, transportation, food resources, housing navigation, case management support)
- What would help your child feel more supported, confident, or safe at school? Are there specific safety improvements — inside or outside of school — that would help your family feel safe in or around school?

Expanded Learning Opportunities

2018 FEPP Levy investments in expanded learning opportunities were structured through two types of grants: grant to schools or “School-Based Investments” and grants to community-based organizations. Throughout the course of FEPP 2018 implementation, internal DEEL evaluation as well as external evaluations found mixed results on impact.

Through existing School-Based Investments, the Levy provides intensive, supplemental support to select Seattle Public Schools with high concentrations of historically underserved students and those not yet meeting grade-level standards. These investments focus on expanded learning, targeted academic support, social-emotional skill development, college readiness, and career exploration. Currently, 30 partner schools—serving 28% of SPS K–12 enrollment—participate in SBI, with 82% of students identifying as students of color compared to 54% districtwide. Complementing school-based programming, community-based investments extend learning and development beyond the school day and into the broader community. These opportunities include academic enrichment, arts and culture education, STEM programming, sports, health and wellness activities, and leadership development during afterschool hours, school breaks, and summer.

Together, these school- and community-based investments can create a seamless ecosystem of support that surrounds students with consistent, culturally responsive opportunities to learn and thrive. However, an external process evaluation found that FEPP-funded school and CBO grants are not currently structured to achieve this vision. Additionally, internal analyses found that while some schools or CBOs demonstrate academic improvement among participants, others lagged.

For these reasons, during planning for the 2025 Levy, DEEL began researching evidence-based models to support student academic achievement in partnership with schools and community-based organizations. This research elevated the Community Schools Framework, which recognizes student success as the shared responsibility of schools, families, and community partners.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Geographic Inequity:** There was consistent feedback that South Seattle lacks afterschool programming compared to North Seattle where private options exist
 - Many parents strongly advocated for existing school-based investment schools to retain funding and shared anecdotes of the impact the grant, as well as Seattle Public Schools employees funded by the grant—make to their school communities

- Other parents conveyed that their schools were not receiving levy funding—either because a former principal didn’t apply or because they applied and weren’t funded—despite high need among students
- **Middle School Gap:** Parents identified middle school as underserved demographic compared to elementary children who have access to licensed childcare, and high school students who are more likely to participate in clubs, sports, or other enrichment options
- **CBO Partnership Value:** Strong support was voiced for community-based organizations to provide tutoring, homework help, and culturally responsive programming, especially during out-of-school time hours
- **COVID Learning Loss:** Urgent emphasis on literacy and math interventions for students most impacted by pandemic-era disruptions continued to be a major theme
- **Childcare Cost Burden:** Families report paying \$2,000 a month or more for afterschool care for multiple children, creating strain on their household budgets
- **Out-of-School Time Enrichment:** Afterschool enrichment was identified as key driver of improved school attendance and keeping students engaged, while summer programming serves to reduce learning loss between school years and provides interest area focused activities for youth

"I recommend supporting CBOs to help students with afterschool programming, [such as] homework, tutoring, sports activities." -Community member, Ballard

*"After the pandemic children are being overwhelmed by mental health messaging"
- Parent and CBO Representative, Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute*

"Middle school kids are getting lost." – Parent, Rainier

Student Physical and Mental Health

Building on earlier education levies, FEPP funding primarily invests in the SBHC model, which supports the whole child as well as the broader school community to strengthen access to school-based health services, mental health supports, and culturally responsive wellness programming. The proposed 2025 renewal continues this trajectory, reinforcing health investments as a core pillar of student success and recognizing that physical, mental, and emotional health are foundational to learning. School- and community-based investments with a discrete focus on youth mental health began in 2025 with Payroll Expense Tax; these services are now moving to the Levy. Through these partnerships, tens of thousands of students participate annually in health-related services, including physical and behavioral health care, mental health counseling, health education, and trauma-informed supports. By embedding health services within schools and trusted community organizations, the FEPP Levy reduces barriers to access, supports families, and helps ensure that students are healthy, supported, and ready to learn.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Counselor Shortage Crisis:** Youth emphasized a 5:1,000 Seattle Public School counselor-to-student ratio that is insufficient to meet their needs, reporting months-long wait time for services that is further strained by counselors splitting their time between mental health support and college/academic advising
- **Culturally Responsive Services:** Need for mental health providers who reflect student demographics and understand racial dynamics

- **Group-Based Approaches:** Youth of color shared a preference for group therapy, that they can engage in alongside friends; restorative practices was named as a group model that students are comfortable and familiar with, even if it is not explicitly clinical therapy
- **Tier 1 Prevention:** Mental health strategies need to be universal, not just intervention for those who seek it; Participants stressed that it can be hard for youth to recognize they need something and then even harder to go seek out the service, it should come to them and be low-barrier to access
- **SBHC Impact:** Students report School-Based Health Centers influenced career aspirations (one student wants to become a therapist because of SBHC access)

"We talk about individual counseling for students, but we know that youth of color do better in group situations. We also know restorative practices are huge and need to be embedded. Kids have a lot of trauma from the violence they've witnessed in their lives and need less individual and more collective supports." -Community Member, Rainier (received strong consensus)

School Safety

School safety is a new and intentional investment area in the proposed 2025 FEPP Levy spending plan, reflecting the City's commitment to student well-being as a prerequisite for learning and belonging. This new area responds to growing concerns from students, families, and educators about safety, mental health, and crisis prevention in and around schools, and serves as a direct response to homicides and other gun-violence related incidents occurring in, on, or around school campuses.

Rather than relying on punitive approaches, FEPP school safety investments are grounded in prevention, relationship-building, and culturally responsive practices that strengthen trust and connection within school communities. Through partnerships with Seattle Public Schools and community-based organizations, school safety investments will support strategies such as violence prevention and de-escalation programming, restorative practices, mentoring, and family and community engagement. These efforts are designed to reach students across K–12, with a focus on schools and communities experiencing the greatest needs, as well as justice-involved youth and youth who are disconnected from school.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Community Violence:** Parents expressed significant concern about shootings near schools, particularly in South Seattle
- **Immigration Concerns:** Students and families expanded upon the prevailing concept of safety as specific to gun-violence, but elevating the need to ensure students of all immigration statuses feel safe attending school as these concerns impact learning as well
- **Prevention Over Intervention:** Strong preference for addressing root causes rather than reactive security measures was elevated across events and age-groups engaged
- **Mixed Views on Officers:** Some families support community safety guards; others report students feel unsafe when seeing police
- **Physical Security:** Youth requested basic improvements to SPS building infrastructure such as locking doors and hall monitors
- **Parent Engagement:** Suggestion for parent co-parenting circles as conflict mitigation strategy
- **Food Access:** CBO staff voiced a need for better food education. They emphasized equitable access to healthier food options, including universally free meals.

"Mental health concerns; having a security guard is not that supportive of feeling safe – which ties back to mental health part of things. Youth need a place to go in school when they're upset or when they need a break." -High School Student, Community Conversation

"{School Safety} investing in existing CBO restorative programs, such as CHOOSE 180, Community Passageways, and RBAC" – Community Survey

"SPS programs are very accessible though some might have immigration concerns" – Community Survey

Ready to Learn Alignment Matrix

Home Visiting and Health investments are not included in the matrix due to level funding in levy, and low discussion among stakeholders.

Strategy	Planned Investment	Community Priorities	Alignment Level	Rationale
Expanded Learning Opportunities	Minimum 30 Community School Grants and minimum 15 Community Supports grants to CBOs to provide academic, enrichment, and integrated supports	High value placed on school partnerships with community-based organizations to deliver student supports during all times (school-day, afterschool, and summer programs) as well as ensuring more school communities and students receive support under the new Levy	Moderate	Planned investment will address the desire for school-CBO partnerships and an increase in out-of-school-time services to support both students and working families who need supervised care for their child; however, funding for this investment strategy is now growing and to serve additional schools while also adding minimum standards for out-of-school time dosage will require a reduction in funding to others
Health	Five SBHC expansion and sustained Youth Mental Health investment in prevention, early	Universal access to health care was important in discussion to increase ease of access and reduce stigma; Being able to	High	Planned investments in additional SBHCs align with community feedback about funding universal access strategies; however, youth concerns about SPS counselor capacity

	intervention, and treatment	get an appointment soon is important and worker shortages in addition to lack of cultural responsiveness among providers were cited as reasons youth don't access care		as well as cultural responsive should be further explored to better understand if SBHC- or SPS-delivered care best meets youth needs or is perceived differently
Safety	Sustained CBO-led student supports implemented by HSD and sustained restorative practices in schools in partnership with SPS and CBOs, as well as a new mentoring program for justice-involved or impacted youth up to age 24	Community discussed a range of infrastructure and support service-related strategies to promote student safety, and aligned on a sentiment of not introducing officers with weapons onto campuses; Student immigration concerns were also named as a safety concern	Moderate	Proposed FEPP invests all focus on non-punitive strategies to promote student safety; however, they do not address immigration related sentiments
Basic Needs	Access to services meant to eliminate non-academic and socioeconomic barriers to educational achievement and career readiness by offering homelessness and housing supports and	The need for holistic student supports was raised by students, families, CBO-Staff and other community members. Transportation challenges were consistently raised as a barrier to	High	The proposed FEPP investment is designed to address non-academic barriers to student success by focusing on the needs of students and families outside the classroom that enable youth to attend school and out-of-school enrichment programming

	providing access to transportation services, summer food programs and school meals	accessing services. CBO-Staff also voiced a need for better food education and access to healthy food options		healthy, engaged and better prepared to learn.
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Ready to Launch

The Ready to Launch Domain represents the Postsecondary Investment area, and is anchored in Seattle Promise, a citywide initiative that provides Seattle Public Schools graduates with free tuition, personalized advising, and financial support at Seattle Colleges to remove barriers to enrollment and persistence. In addition to the FEPP '25 commitment to continuing the Seattle Promise program in support of college and career access and preparation, two additional strategies have been added to the Levy to enhance Seattle Promise Scholar’s experience by providing access to high-quality pathways that expand postsecondary opportunities and reduce inequities in skilled trades and related industries. The Path to Trades investment is intended to deepen career exploration and exposure in high-demand trades and related industries, while the Path to University of Washington aims to prioritize access for first-generation and historically underrepresented students to a highly competitive 4-year institution.

Across engagement methods, stakeholders were asked questions such as:

- For those who have participated in Seattle Promise, what has your experience been like?
- How can we get students more excited about exploring college, trades, and career options?
- What types of future college or career goals do you (or your child) currently have?
- How can schools better connect young people to careers where jobs are available and employers are eager to hire?

Seattle Promise

Since the Levy’s initial approval in 2018, The Seattle Promise Program, a 2-year postsecondary pathway established in partnership with Seattle Colleges and Seattle Public Schools, is the cornerstone of the Ready to Launch Domain. Seattle Promise reflects FEPP’s commitment to educational equity by prioritizing students historically underrepresented in higher education and by pairing financial assistance with sustained, relationship-based guidance that helps students navigate the transition from high school to college.

Seattle Promise is designed as more than a scholarship—it is a comprehensive college access and persistence initiative that supports students from high school transition through college completion. Since its inception, Seattle Promise has served approximately 7,000 students, helping thousands of young people enroll in college, persist in their studies, and move toward degrees or career pathways that support long-term economic stability.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Transformative Impact:** Alumni report Promise helped them find purpose and direction for careers

- **Geographic Limitations:** Students express frustration that Promise requires staying in-state; some want transfer supports even if attending out-of-state schools
- **Running Start Interaction:** Students completing 90+ Running Start credits may be ineligible for Promise, creating confusion
- **Financial Aid Changes:** Parents report Promise financial packages have decreased from previous years; better communication needed
- **Basic Needs Beyond Tuition:** Higher education staff emphasize basic needs supports are primary retention strategy
- **Immigration Status Barriers:** Documentation requirements restrict access for some students

"2-year promise college pathway is a good pathway. Upper classmen later decided to transfer to local UW. College preparation: I feel like middle school is too early for students to decide what they want to do in life but make opportunities available for students to explore and switch pathways and leave options open." — High School Student, Ballard

"Need for additional and whole family focused assistance in the navigation of financial assistance." – Participant

Path to Trades

Path to Trades expands Seattle Promise commitment to include high-quality career pathways that lead directly to family-wage jobs in the skilled trades and related industries. This pathway will support more students interested in engineering technology, biomedical technology, welding technology, pipefitting, and construction and building. Path to Trades investments focus on career exploration, pre-apprenticeship preparation, navigation support, and barrier reduction—such as access to tools, transportation, and certification costs. By elevating trades as a valued and viable postsecondary option, Path to Trades ensures Seattle students can pursue multiple definitions of success and launch into stable, in-demand careers without requiring a traditional four-year degree.

Community feedback themes include:

- **Reduced Stigma:** Students report trades stigma has decreased; seeing economic opportunities makes trades appealing
- **Skills Center Barriers:** Limited slots, scheduling conflicts with AP/IB courses, transportation challenges, and parking costs
- **Maritime Opportunity:** Silver tsunami in maritime industry presents opportunity; interest in specialized maritime high school model
- **Exposure Timing:** Early exposure (8th-9th grade) recommended to earning potential, union membership, and career options
- **Job Shadow Access:** Students report difficulty finding opportunities independently; school-year options preferred over summer-only
- **Gender Dynamics:** Question raised about who is being told about trades opportunities and potential gender bias in outreach

"Only a select amount of people can do the skills center pathway at SPS. Students often have to make a choice to do skills center and not take IB/AP courses." — High School Student, Rainier Beach

"No clear pathway for students to go into trades unless they are going into a family business or already connected in the industry." -- Community Member, Magnuson

Path to University of Washington

Path to UW strengthens clear and supported routes for Seattle students to access the University of Washington through both direct-entry and transfer pathways. As part of the FEPP Levy's Ready to Launch investments, Path to UW partners with Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Colleges, and the University of Washington to provide early outreach, academic preparation, and sustained advising that helps students navigate a highly competitive higher-education system. The pathway prioritizes first-generation students and those historically underrepresented at four-year institutions, ensuring equitable access to information and support beginning in high school and continuing through college transition. To date, hundreds of students have been served through Path to UW, helping more Seattle Promise graduates successfully enroll in and persist toward degrees at the University of Washington.

Community feedback themes include:

- **High Interest:** Multiple students expressed interest in UW, particularly engineering and STEM programs
- **Transition Support Need:** Parents report insufficient hand-holding during transition from community college to 4-year institution
- **Alignment Gaps:** Request for better coordination between City, SPS, Seattle Colleges, and UW
- **Peer Mentorship:** Interest in culturally-matched mentors closer in age (e.g., PhD students mentoring high schoolers)

"Mentorship models. Pairing students with matched mentors closer in age. Mentor supports students going into college. PhD students mentor high school students – teach STEM in high school. Culturally responsive match."— Community Member, Rainier

“Transition after community college to 4-year institution... How do we coordinate with other programs?”

– Executive Director, College Possible

Ready to Launch Alignment Matrix

Strategy	Planned Investment	Community Priorities	Alignment Level	Rationale
Seattle Promise	Maintain 2-year/90 credit Promise program including comprehensive supports such as, tuition, Equity Scholarship, and college enrollment, retention, persistence and completion advising	Alumni articulated the transformative impact of the Promise program, while families and other community members voiced a need for more holistic supports to remove barriers to retention. Parents/Guardians also requested better integration with programs like Running Start	High	Planned investment will continue to provide a 2-year college pathway for students, including financial and advising support, however, funding limits are being stretched due to rising college enrollment, making it difficult to offer additional supports to students. Efforts to connect students to other existing City investments will be strengthened
Path to Trades	FEPP Levy investment provides Seattle public high school students, grades 9-12, with career exposure and exploration services in Trades and related industries. In addition, this investment offers Seattle	Community feedback indicated a reduction in the stigma associated with Trades careers and a need for early career exposure and exploration opportunities. Students and families also expressed limited access to Skills Center and difficulty identifying job shadowing	High	With the stigma reduction in Trades careers, this FEPP Levy investment can capitalize on increasing interest in Trades related pathway supports. Additionally, this investment provides high school students with early career

	Promise participants interested in Trades and related industries, program completion and career supports	opportunities without additional support.		exposure and exploration opportunities. Though not explicit, high-quality advising regarding career exposure and exploration for high school student will likely streamline and optimize access to the Skills Center with earlier and improved planning support
Path to University of Washington	Planned investment offers pre-transfer advising and other transfer supports, including credit-bearing summer seminars, \$1000 stipend to offset education related expenses, a seamless handoff from transfer advisor to UW program of study advisor, and peer mentoring from former Path to UW students	Students and families indicated high interest in UW and a substantial need for transfer supports for students. Community also raised concerns about the lack of alignment and coordination between partner organizations to streamline the transfer experience. Culturally matched peer mentorship was also named as another way to effectively support students navigate the transition from 2-year to 4-year institutions	High	This planned investment provides students with advising and financial support for those interested in a pathway to UW. It includes access to peer mentorship and a streamlined advising handoff between institutions. Partner institutions have an opportunity during the implementation phase of this investment to address concerns related to alignment and coordination
Public Sector and tech pathways	Path to Tech offers support for 65 Seattle Promise and	Community members named paid internships (89%) and	Moderate	Planned investments respond to community

	<p>Path to UW scholars annually to complete short-term IT training in AI, coding, and software engineering. Public Sector Pathways supports career exposure through Seattle Fire (Fire Cadet, Fire Prep, Fire Connect) and Seattle Police (Police Explorers), with \$1,250–\$2,250 stipends and year-round programming for up to 90 youth annually beginning in Year 2.</p>	<p>mentorship (77%) as top career-learning experiences, with strong appetite for STEM (51%) and career/life skills (70%) programming. Students expressed high interest in UW STEM pathway. Community members also identified public sector workforce diversification as a priority, so that City service better reflects Seattle's communities</p>		<p>interest in technology careers and family-wage public service jobs by combining short-term credentials with financial support and structured career exposure. These provide the path, yet there is more engagement to be done to get students with these experiences to the city workforce</p>
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Cross-Cutting Themes

Several themes emerged across all investment areas reflecting a need to address systemic challenges to improve program implementation and enable long-term impact. Parents and community members articulated the need for cultural and needs-based differentiation of services and communication to ensure equitable access and utilization of all programmatic investments. While there was a clear appreciation for the holistic approach to serving Seattle youth and families by offering in-school and out-of-school supports, health and safety services, and expanded access to childcare and other family focused needs, improvements in coordination and alignment across partner organizations would help to enhance the overall impact of available programs and services.

Equity and Geographic Distribution

- Title I schools reported nearly all enrichment funded by Levy, highlighting need
- Request for needs-based allocation ensuring high-poverty schools receive priority funding

Language Access and Cultural Responsiveness

- Demand for services in Somali, Amharic, Oromo, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Chinese
- Written materials insufficient for oral cultures; videos and in-person outreach preferred
- Community liaisons identified as critical bridge to immigrant and refugee families
- Language barriers compound parents' ability to help children with applications and navigation

"What does SPP social media look like? There should be an SPP TikTok in different languages. Some communities are more oral." — SPP Provider, Ballard

"At our school, we have 21 languages...but don't have access to interpreters." — Parent, Rainier

"Not enough translated materials... paper translated materials are preferred." — Translator/School Staff, Magnuson

Workforce Capacity

- ECE workforce shortage threatens ability to implement expanded preschool and childcare seats
- Counselor-to-student ratios inadequate across K-12
- Family Support Workers and social workers identified as critical but understaffed positions
- Teacher diversity investment needed to reflect student demographics
"Teacher diversity is important and supporting educators is important so that they can serve students across Seattle and reflect the students they serve."
— Community Member, Ballard

Program Navigation and Communication

- Families report fragmented systems difficult to navigate without dedicated support
- Direct email and school-based information sharing most effective for students
- Word of mouth through trusted community members reaches families traditional outreach misses
- Request for social media presence (TikTok) in multiple languages
- Immigration enforcement fears create reluctance to engage with government programs

"We need more easily accessible information online. The internet is really big." — High School Student, Denny

Implementation Recommendations

Community participants offered several recommendations focused on implementation strategies to improve equitable access to programming for high needs populations, diversify outreach and communication content, and strengthen the coordination and alignment of partnership efforts. Feedback regarding implementation enhancements revealed the need to ensure broader accessibility and utilization of Levy funded programs and services and to provide a more streamlined and efficient experience for youth and families who are trying to navigate multiple investments. Although there was significant alignment between City investments and community priorities, participants voiced concern about the absence of integrated and coordinated implementation strategies creating barriers and challenges that could hinder the success and impact of Levy investments.

High-Priority Implementation Enhancements

1. **Establish Navigation and streamlined systems:** Fund dedicated family navigators to assist with CCAP, SPP, and Promise applications across languages
2. **Geographic Equity Formula:** Develop transparent allocation methodology prioritizing South Seattle and high-poverty schools
3. **Dual Language Investment:** Expand dual language curriculum support for FCCs serving immigrant and refugee communities

4. **Middle School Focus:** Prioritize enrichment funding for middle school gap identified across multiple events
5. **Workforce Pipeline:** Coordinate workforce supports with expanded capacity goals to prevent implementation bottlenecks

Communication Strategy Recommendations

6. **Multilingual Video Content:** Develop video-based outreach materials for oral culture communities
7. **Community Liaison Expansion:** Increase community liaison capacity and hours for program outreach
8. **Social Media Presence:** Establish social media channels in target languages for City programs (e.g., SPP, CCAP, Mental Health, Afterschool, etc.,)
9. **School-Based Information:** Ensure counselors and school staff have current, accurate program information

Partnership Coordination Recommendations

10. **SPS Alignment:** Coordinate levy investments with SPS to reduce student program fatigue and maximize impact
11. **CBO Integration:** Streamline processes for CBOs to offer services in schools during school hours
12. **Cross-Department Collaboration:** Partner with FAS, SPU, and other City departments on workforce development and community engagement
13. **Higher Education Coordination:** Strengthen transition supports and communication between SPS, Seattle Colleges, and UW

“We don’t want to compete with each other; would love for the City, SPS, and CBOs to work together.” -CBO Leader, Rainier

Conclusion

The Every Child Ready Community Conversations revealed strong community support for the FEPP 2025 Levy investment framework. Community priorities align well with proposed investments across all three domains, affirming alignment with the community priorities while surfacing important implementation considerations.

Across the Ready to Start, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Launch alignment matrices, ratings ranged from high to moderate, with no domain showing fundamental misalignment between planned investments and community priorities. Where alignment was rated moderate, the matrices identify specific implementation refinements, such as tailored support for Family Child Care providers, expanded dual language access, and stronger coordination across postsecondary partners, rather than redirection of strategy.

The most significant themes requiring attention during implementation planning include geographic equity in program distribution (particularly addressing South Seattle underinvestment), workforce capacity constraints that may limit program expansion, navigation and language access barriers that prevent families from accessing available services, and mental health service capacity that lags youth need.

Community feedback consistently emphasized the value of relationship-based, culturally responsive services delivered by educators, school staff, and community-based partners that students and families already trust. The preference for prevention-oriented approaches over reactive interventions was evident across all discussion groups.

"If we want to really make practical investments, education is key to build ready to start, learn, launch, and beyond." -Parent, Ballard

DEEL is grateful to the community members, partners, and youth who shared their time and perspectives to inform this work. This report will inform the Implementation and Evaluation Plan scheduled for transmittal to City Council in April 2026, with particular attention to recommendations identified through community engagement.

Appendix

1. Phase 1 Stakeholders Engaged
2. Phase 1 Audience-Specific Summaries
3. Phase 2 Community Conversation Facilitation Guide
4. Phase 2 Community Survey Aggregate Responses

Phase 1 Stakeholders Engaged

Academy for Creating Excellence	Little Jewel Daycare LLC
Adam Home Day Care	Marsin Child Care
Aisha Family Childcare	Maymun Home Childcare
Asha’s Family Child Care	Moyale Home Family Childcare
Associated Recreation Council	Neighborcare
Atlantic Street Center	Neighborhood House
Azhar Family Child Care	Northwest Center Kids
BrightSpark	Odessa Brown Childrens Clinic
Causey’s Learning Center	OneWorld Now!
Childcare Resources	Praxis
City Year	Public Health - Seattle & King County
Creative Kids	Puget Sound ESD - Educare
Denise Louie Education Center	Rahma Home Daycare
El Centro de la Raza	Refugee Women’s Alliance
Empowering Youth and Families Outreach	School Connect WA
FEEST	Sea Mar
Filipino American Educators of Washington	Seattle Children’s Theater
Filsan Family Early Learning Program	Seattle Colleges
Friends of The Children Seattle	Seattle Public Schools
Geeking Out Kids Of Color	Seattle Roots Community Health
Girls on The Run	Seed of Life
The Good Foor Arts Collective	South End Stories
Hallowell Todaro	South King County Discipline Coalition
Hearing, Speech and Deaf Center	Swedish Hospital
Hilltop Children’s Center	Tawakal Home Child Care
Huayruro	Team Read
International Community Health Services	Tiny Tots Development Center
Kaiser	Truss Leadership
Kandelia	University of Washington, Center for Educational Leadership
Kids Club After School Program	WA-BLOC
Kidus Montessori	West African Community Council
Kiki Family Childcare	WSA Headstart
La Escuelita Bilingual School	YMCA
LASER	Young Women Empowered
Launch	

Phase 1 Audience-Specific Summaries

Child Care Assistance Program Providers

Introduction: Seattle’s CCAP plays a vital role in ensuring that working families have access to quality early learning and school-age care. Through a series of engagement sessions with CCAP providers, key insights emerged on the challenges, opportunities, and priorities for improving the program. Providers shared firsthand experiences of supporting diverse families while navigating financial, staffing, and regulatory hurdles. Across discussions, common themes centered on funding gaps, workforce challenges, support for children with special needs, and the need for a more accessible and inclusive system.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- What specific challenges do you have in providing care for infants, toddlers, and/or school-age children?
- For those of you who don’t have infants/toddler/school-age children, what are your barriers to serve that age group?
- How can we better support your program in preparing children for kindergarten?

Key Insights:

- A. Sustaining Quality Care
- B. The Staffing Crisis
- C. Supporting Every Child
- D. The Enrollment Puzzle
- E. Strengthening Connections

A. Sustaining Quality Care: Addressing Financial Gaps

A major concern raised by CCAP providers was the ongoing struggle with funding shortfalls. While CCAP supports tuition for eligible families, providers noted that reimbursement rates do not fully cover operational costs. Expenses such as meals, transportation, and enrichment activities—critical to a well-rounded early learning experience—are often left out of funding considerations, forcing providers to make difficult financial decisions.

Additionally, some providers reported subsidizing care themselves when families could not afford co-pays, creating financial strain. Those who serve diverse linguistic communities, particularly African and immigrant families, face additional challenges in offering culturally responsive programming without dedicated funding. The providers overwhelmingly called for a more holistic funding approach that accounts for the full cost of care.

“DEEL provides enough for salaries, but there’s not enough for food, field trips, and the other things that make a good learning experience.”

B. The Staffing Crisis: Retention, Training, and Compensation

CCAP providers struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff, mirroring broad workforce challenges in early education. Competitive wages from public schools and other industries make it difficult to keep educators, particularly for school-age programs. Many providers are left short-staffed, leading to burnout and turnover, which affects the stability of care for children.

Providers also highlighted disparities in training opportunities. Unlike their counterparts in early learning programs like the SPP, CCAP providers lack access to the same professional development resources. Training on trauma-informed care, behavioral supports, and early childhood development is critical, but often unavailable or too expensive. Providers called for more accessible and language-specific training, especially for dual language and culturally diverse settings.

“Staffing, staffing, staffing—it’s one of the biggest challenges we face. Without competitive wages and benefits, we can’t keep people in these roles.”

C. Supporting Every Child: Expanding Resources for Special Needs Care

Providers expressed significant concerns about the availability of support for children with special needs. Many programs are seeing an increase in children who require individualized attention, yet funding and staffing models do not reflect this growing demand. In particular, one-on-one support for children with developmental delays or behavioral challenges is often unavailable, forcing providers to stretch their already limited resources.

Gaps in access to special education services, such as speech therapy and behavioral support, were also raised as a major issue. Families often experience long wait periods for evaluations and services, leaving providers without the tools needed to properly support children. Some providers have resorted to hiring additional aides out of pocket to maintain inclusive classrooms, but this is not sustainable without dedicated funding.

“We can’t do it with two teachers anymore. I’m paying out of my own center fund for a third person because it’s necessary for the children we serve.”

D. The Enrollment Puzzle: Capacity, Demand, and System Navigation

Despite the high demand for child care, many providers reported under-enrollment in certain age groups, particularly preschool, while facing long waitlists for infants and toddlers. This mismatch in capacity and demand stems from a variety of factors, including staffing shortages, space limitations, and shifting family preferences post-pandemic.

Gentrification and rising living costs have also played a role in enrollment declines, with families moving further south, or out of Seattle altogether. Providers serving historically underserved communities emphasized the need for more outreach and equitable funding distribution to ensure families in all neighborhoods have access to care.

Additionally, providers expressed frustration with the complexity of CCAP’s subsidy system, which can be difficult for families to navigate. Long processing times and unclear eligibility criteria often lead to delays in enrollment. Providers called for a more streamlined and transparent system to better support both families and child care businesses.

“Families need care, but they can’t always navigate the system. The process should be clearer so we can actually connect with the families who need us.”

E. Strengthening Connections: Collaboration and Community Partnerships

A recurring theme across all engagement sessions was the need for stronger collaboration between CCAP providers, City agencies, and other early learning systems. Providers emphasized that a more coordinated approach—especially between CCAP and programs like the SPP—would create a smoother experience for families and a more equitable funding landscape for providers.

Providers also expressed interest in partnerships that could help expand services, such as working with local colleges to create teacher training pipelines or developing shared resources for professional development. Expanding language access services and culturally responsive outreach was also cited as a priority to ensure that families from all backgrounds can fully participate in CCAP.

“We want to work together to create solutions. If we can connect with more partners, we can build a system that really supports families and providers alike.”

Summary: The engagement sessions made clear that CCAP providers are deeply committed to the families they serve, despite the operational challenges they face. By addressing funding shortfalls, investing in workforce development, expanding special needs support, and improving accessibility, CCAP can continue to evolve as a strong pillar of Seattle’s early learning landscape.

The feedback from providers underscores the importance of ongoing dialogue and partnership. As the City moves forward with its levy renewal and early learning investments, ensuring that CCAP providers have the resources and support they need will be critical to deliver high-quality, equitable care for all children.

“We need to invest in the whole system—families, providers, and teachers—so that child care can be sustainable and accessible for everyone.”

Seattle Preschool Program Directors

Introduction: Seattle has long recognized that early childhood education is a critical foundation for lifelong success. Through the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP), the City has made strategic investments to expand access, improve quality, and support early learning providers. However, as SPP continues to evolve, educators, providers, and community stakeholders have raised key insights about how the program can be strengthened to meet the diverse needs of families and children.

Engagement sessions with SPP directors surfaced a strong commitment to the success of the program, alongside candid discussions about the structural and financial challenges that must be addressed to sustain and expand high-quality early learning services. From workforce retention and comprehensive classroom supports to dual language programs and equitable access, providers underscored the need for strategic investments that are flexible, inclusive, and responsive to the realities of early childhood education.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- What is working well with this strategy currently?
- What could be better in the next levy? Consider ways to expand or strengthen these strategies

Key Insights:

- A.** Strengthening Comprehensive Supports
- B.** Investing in Dual Language Learning
- C.** Kindergarten Readiness
- D.** Workforce Retention
- E.** Expanding Access

A. Strengthening Comprehensive Supports: Addressing the Needs of Every Child For children to thrive in preschool, they need environments that offer not only strong academic foundations, but also social-emotional and behavioral supports. While the current comprehensive support funding provides essential resources, directors emphasized that historically, the process for accessing funds has been cumbersome. Many expressed optimism

about the shift to a plan-based funding model, which promises to ease administrative burdens and offer greater flexibility in how resources are allocated.

A significant concern remains regarding the disparity in funding rates between City programs and state early childhood programs administered by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (WA DCYF); namely Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program 33 (ECEAP). According to providers, these differences across programs as well as delayed payments create financial barriers to ensuring all children, especially those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), receive the support they need. Many directors emphasized the need for additional staff in classrooms, particularly advocating for a three-teacher model to provide adequate attention to children with diverse learning needs.

“Having a third [teacher] inside the classroom would definitely benefit the teachers inside the classroom as well as the students and the parents.”

Directors also noted that while family involvement is crucial, cultural barriers sometimes make it difficult for families to engage with support services. They called for more mental health resources and collaboration with public schools to improve early intervention efforts.

B. Investing in Dual Language Learning: A Pathway to Cultural and Linguistic Equity

SPP’s commitment to dual language programs has been widely celebrated, yet directors highlighted key challenges in expanding these efforts. Funding restrictions and rigid certification pathways limit the ability of diverse early learning programs to receive City recognition and support. Directors stressed the value of cultural identity and language development, particularly for immigrant and refugee communities.

“We just want them to be proud of their identity... We know the more they grow, the more they’re going to receive prejudice for how they look, how they dress, or their religion. But we want them to have a solid base first, before they go to SPS... That’s what we’re trying to show them—that we are a little more than daycare—that we’re going to be here for your kids.”

A recurring point of feedback, was that SPP’s current certification requirements are restrictive and allow for only a single City-approved curriculum which excludes alternative dual-language models. Providers also called for more equitable teacher compensation to retain bilingual educators. Directors emphasized that a more inclusive approach to recognition and funding would allow programs to better serve children and families in their home languages, ensuring that more children have access to culturally relevant early learning experiences.

C. Kindergarten Readiness: Building Stronger Bridges for Early Learners

The transition from preschool to kindergarten is pivotal for children and families. While SPP programs work diligently to prepare students, lack of dedicated transition funding, and tracking difficulties have created significant obstacles. Many programs noted that they are not currently required by DEEL to follow children’s progress after they leave SPP, which makes it challenging to understand long-term outcomes—particularly when children enter private schools or transfer out of Seattle Public Schools. Providers emphasized the importance of building stronger partnerships with K-12 schools to facilitate seamless transitions and ensure that the progress made in preschool continues into elementary education.

“A thing that DEEL could do is help us partner more directly with the school. I mean, right now, we’re all doing that authentically on our own, but it should be a nice transition that DEEL has established for us... I mean, I know they’re going to all do their training, all the schools, at the last week of August. Maybe DEEL could go in and explain to them that there’s preschool programs out here that want to partner with you, or something.”

Family engagement remains a critical factor in successful kindergarten transitions, yet many parents face barriers in navigating the kindergarten enrollment process. Educators called for culturally responsive outreach and dedicated transition support staff to assist families through this process.

“Because we try to get them empowered to go into that meeting, and have that meeting with your kindergarten teacher, because you know, all of them are close to us. But then when they go to the school district, they get scared. And we’re like, ‘You cannot be scared. You gotta go in and be just as strong of an advocate for your child as you were in preschool.”

D. Workforce Retention: Addressing Burnout and Supporting Educators

Early learning providers consistently emphasized that staffing challenges pose one of the greatest threats to program sustainability. Competitive compensation, access to professional development, and support for teacher well-being are essential for retention. However, many directors expressed concern that current funding structures do not fully account for the operational costs of running a high-quality early learning program.

“If we don’t invest financially into it, we’re going to start to lose some of our providers.”

Providers also noted that early childhood educators, particularly those from immigrant communities, often struggle to meet rigid education requirements while balancing work and family obligations.

“Many of my [longtime educators] are fantastic as teachers; they’re the best, most loving people. But asking them to go back to school is really, really difficult, because they have a family they need to take care of.”

Recommendations included paid professional development days, streamlined training requirements, and flexible pathways for teacher credentialing to retain experienced educators.

E. Expanding Access: Ensuring Equitable Growth

As SPP expands to serve more children, geographic equity has become a pressing concern. Many providers expressed frustration that expansion efforts have focused on the North and East, while communities in the South End, where families of color are being pushed further out due to rising living costs, remain underserved.

Additionally, families in areas like Skyway, which have Seattle addresses but fall outside of City service areas, face unique barriers in accessing early learning resources.

“We have a hard time explaining the limitations to our families in Skyway who have Seattle addresses but aren’t eligible. It’s really confusing for them—they think they live in Seattle, so they should qualify. It would be nice to have money for those families, too. We don’t want to turn them away, but we don’t have the resources to serve them under the current funding.”

Providers also called for greater flexibility in class size, particularly for classrooms with children who have special needs. They emphasized that rigid student-to-teacher ratios can result in environments that do not adequately support students.

“Why are we choosing 20 as the golden standard? When you have children with special needs, you don’t want to be at the max.”

Summary: Engagement with SPP providers reinforced that Seattle’s early learning investments are making a difference, but significant structural improvements are needed to ensure sustainability and equity. Across all themes, providers emphasized the need for greater funding flexibility, administrative efficiency, and inclusive policies that reflect the diverse realities of early childhood education.

Investments in early learning must be holistic, workforce-centered, and community-driven, ensuring that every child—regardless of language, ability, or zip code—has the opportunity to thrive. By prioritizing equity, supporting educators, and expanding access in a meaningful way, Seattle can continue to lead the way in building a strong foundation for the city’s youngest learners.

K-12 Community-Based Organizations

Introduction: CBOs are essential partners in advancing educational equity and supporting the whole child across Seattle’s learning ecosystem. Through culturally responsive programming, mentorship, and enrichment services, CBOs play a critical role in meeting the academic, social-emotional, and developmental needs of students and families.

Between December 2024 and February 2025, DEEL convened a series of engagement sessions with CBO partners—including one in-person gathering, two virtual discussions, and a survey. These sessions provided a space for CBOs to share reflections on their experiences collaborating with schools and the City, while also offering concrete action steps to strengthen alignment, streamline funding processes, and build trust.

Across conversations, CBOs expressed a deep commitment to student success and highlighted key themes such as the importance of long-term partnerships, culturally grounded programming, equitable funding practices, and system-level coordination that honors the lived experience and expertise of community organizations.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- There has been a lot of emphasis on student mental health and community safety in Seattle of late. From your perspective, what are the top 3 challenges facing your community right now?
- Considering DEEL’s desire to improve student’s academic and social emotional outcomes, how would your organization recommend prioritizing investment in the following areas: physical health, mental health, tutoring, social emotional learning or college and career readiness? Are there additional investment areas we should consider to meet the needs of youth and families?
- What supports and resources are needed to offer enriching, safe afterschool programming to students in your community during the school year? What supports and resources are needed for summer programming?

Key Insights:

- A. Need for Sustainable Funding**
- B. Barriers to Access**
- C. Strengthening Partnerships**
- D. Improving Collaboration and Reducing Competition**
- E. Streamlining Processes**
- F. Expanding Career Readiness**

A. The Need for Sustainable, Long-Term Funding

One of the most consistent messages across all engagement formats was the need for stable, multiyear funding rather than short-term project-based grants. Many organizations expressed frustration with unpredictable funding cycles, which make long-term planning and sustainability difficult.

“What we’re facing as a challenge is the continuity of resources. It’s not about writing another grant; it’s about building on existing grants to create sustainable partnerships.”

“Right now, it feels like a ‘Hunger Games’ for funding. Instead of competing, we need to educate and lift each other up.”

Stakeholders emphasized that short-term grants hinder their ability to build strong partnerships, retain staff, and maintain consistent programming. The uncertainty of future funding limits their ability to serve students effectively. Participants in virtual sessions also recommended the introduction of mini-grants to support collaborative projects between CBOs and schools to spark and scale partnerships more equitably.

B. Barriers to Access: Transportation, Language, and Basic Needs

Across all engagement sessions, transportation emerged as the most significant barrier to student participation in after-school and summer programming. Many CBOs struggle to provide adequate transportation options, making it difficult for students—especially those from low-income or immigrant families—to attend programs.

“We could have served so many more students, but they didn’t have transportation. It’s the number one barrier.”

“It’s wildly expensive to provide buses, and public transit doesn’t work for many of our families.”

Participants in February sessions further emphasized that transportation burdens often fall on program staff, contributing to burnout, and that legal constraints (e.g., age limits for rideshare apps) and safety concerns (e.g., harassment on public transit) compound the challenge. Stakeholders strongly called for flexible, dedicated transportation funding, including stipends, gas cards, shuttle services, and paid drivers. In addition to transportation, language barriers and a lack of culturally responsive outreach prevent many families from accessing expanded learning opportunities.

“Translation services aren’t just nice to have, they’re essential. Some families don’t even know these programs exist because information isn’t in their language.”

“We need a centralized resource hub where families can find programs in their language.”

Basic needs like food, housing, and access to health care remain foundational. CBOs highlighted that addressing these needs is critical to ensure students can meaningfully engage in learning and enrichment programs.

“We have to feed the people first. Meet basic needs before we can educate them.”

“Mental health and food security are not separate from academic success. They are the foundation for it.”

C. Strengthening School-CBO Partnerships

A major theme across the discussions was the need for stronger, more intentional partnerships between CBOs and schools. Many CBOs reported challenges in navigating school bureaucracies and accessing space for programs.

“We’d love to partner with more schools, but the process is unclear. One principal says yes, another says no, and we don’t know where to go.”

“Schools have after-school programs, but many are disjointed. A centralized coordination system would help.”

The February virtual sessions reinforced this theme and introduced concrete recommendations, such as creating a standardized school-CBO partnership framework, modeled after Creative Advantage, and designating liaisons at each school to facilitate consistent communication and reduce gatekeeping. Participants also recommended year-round partnership models that account for summer and break periods, ensuring youth receive continuous support beyond the academic calendar.

D. Improving Collaboration and Reducing Competition

Several participants raised concerns about the competitive nature of current funding models, which often pit organizations against each other rather than encouraging collaboration.

“We live in a society that incentivizes competition. What if we instead incentivized collaboration?”

“We’re all serving the same kids—why aren’t we working together more effectively?”

Stakeholders recommended creating networking opportunities, shared professional development, and cohort-based funding models to encourage collaboration rather than rivalry. Participants also highlighted a need for structured convenings—not just listening sessions, but spaces where CBOs, families, youth, and schools can share learning and collectively build trust and strategy.

E. Streamlining Administrative Burdens and Evaluation Processes

Many CBOs, particularly smaller organizations, expressed frustration with the administrative burdens associated with grant reporting and evaluation. Organizations working with multiple funders (City, King County, philanthropic) often face duplicative reporting requirements.

“Evaluation is a major hurdle, especially for smaller organizations. The requirements from different funders are similar but slightly different—it’s a nightmare to manage.”

“We need standardized reporting tools across funders to reduce redundancy.”

Attendees of the virtual sessions added that capacity-building support for data and evaluation is a key need, especially for organizations trying to better measure impact without full-time evaluation staff.

F. Expanding Career Readiness and Youth Employment Opportunities

Stakeholders emphasized the need to invest in workforce development, paid internships, and alternative career pathways for students, particularly those who may not pursue traditional college tracks.

“Young people want to work, but they need meaningful opportunities that fit their interests.”

“Let’s expose students to careers beyond college—trades, entrepreneurship, arts, and community leadership.”

The February discussions expanded this theme, with CBOs underscoring the need to reimagine career readiness in light of economic and technological shifts. They called for increased hands-on and career-connected learning opportunities, and partnerships with local businesses, technical programs, and alternative education providers.

Summary: Stakeholders emphasized the critical role DEEL can play in centralizing resources, reducing barriers, and fostering collaboration between schools and CBOs. Across engagement sessions, participants called for the creation of a centralized resource hub, technical assistance for smaller organizations, transportation solutions, multilingual outreach, and more consistent, equity-focused funding strategies. There was a shared vision for stronger, more direct school-CBO partnerships that reduce bureaucratic obstacles and reflect community priorities. By addressing these systemic challenges and centering the lived experiences of CBOs and the families they serve, DEEL can deepen its impact and ensure that every student has access to the culturally responsive, community-rooted supports they need to thrive.

“At the end of the day, we’re all here for the same reason—to make sure our kids thrive. If we work together, we can build something truly transformational.”

K-12 School-Based Investment Partners

Introduction: K-12 School-Based Investment (SBI) grantees play a vital role in advancing equity by supporting whole-child development, academic engagement, and restorative school culture. These partners, representing 30 SPS elementary, middle, and high schools, —deliver critical services such as mental health support, enrichment programming, and culturally responsive wraparound care alongside CBO subgrantees. Through dedicated investments, the FEPP Levy has fostered meaningful school-community collaboration across the city.

To better understand current challenges and opportunities, DEEL convened a series of engagement sessions with K-12 SBI partners. Stakeholders shared perspectives on how to strengthen implementation, reduce barriers, and expand access for students and families. Across conversations, participants emphasized the need for greater resource alignment, sustainable staffing, and stronger coordination with school leaders and systems.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- SBI grants are currently in their 5th year of implementation. What are the strengths and challenges of this investment design?
- The City has heard from young people and families about the need to invest in community safety and student mental health. What are the top 3 needs for your students? What are the top 3 needs for your school community?
- What out of school time (afterschool and summer) programs are currently accessible to students at your school, and how are they funded? Does this meet student and family needs for afterschool care, or do gaps exist?

Key Insights:

A. Expanding Whole-Child Supports

B. Reducing Administrative Burden

C. Ensuring Equitable Access to Services

D. Strengthening School Partnerships

E. Investing in Mental Health and Restorative Practices

A. Expanding Whole-Child Supports: Meeting Students Where They Are

SBI partners shared that their work addresses a range of student needs—from academic tutoring and mentoring to trauma-informed care and behavioral health. Participants emphasized that sustainable and flexible funding is essential to continue providing these comprehensive supports. However, partners noted that program quality can be impacted by inconsistent staffing, unclear roles, and short-term grants that hinder long-term planning.

“There’s no way to provide continuity when funding is year to year. We need stability to build real relationships with students.”

B. Reducing Administrative Burden: Aligning Systems to Support Educators and Partners

Many school staff reported that managing community partnerships requires significant time and coordination. Without dedicated roles to oversee these partnerships, responsibilities often fall to principals or educators already balancing multiple priorities. Partners recommended creating school-based coordinators who can align CBO programming with academic calendars, track outcomes, and maintain consistent communication.

“Schools need support managing all these partnerships. A dedicated point person would make a 39 huge difference.”

C. Ensuring Equitable Access to Services: Prioritizing High-Need Schools

Stakeholders emphasized the need to distribute resources based on student need—not just geography or school size. Equity-focused funding strategies were seen as essential to ensure that schools serving historically marginalized communities receive robust, sustained support. High staff turnover among partners and rigid program models were cited as additional barriers to equitable access.

“Some of our highest-need schools still don’t have enough mental health or after-school support. We need to fund based on need, not just enrollment.”

D. Strengthening School Partnerships: Building Trust and Communication

Partners expressed a desire for deeper collaboration with school leaders and district staff. Participants shared that relationship-building is key to aligning goals, co-developing

programming, and navigating logistical challenges. Inconsistent communication and gatekeeping were identified as major obstacles, particularly for newer or smaller organizations.

“CBOs need to approach schools as collaborators, not just service providers. Programs should be co-designed with input from educators to ensure they meet the real needs of students.”

E. Investing in Mental Health and Restorative Practices: Shifting School Culture Across all sessions, mental health emerged as a top priority. Stakeholders called for investments in trauma-informed practices, consistent school-based counselors, and dedicated time for social-emotional learning. Many participants highlighted restorative justice as a promising strategy to reduce punitive discipline and strengthen student belonging—but noted that success depends on sustained staffing, training, and leadership buy-in.

“Mental health services for students and families are a necessity—but we need these services to be high-quality and consistent.”

Summary: SBI partner insights reflect a deep commitment to equity and holistic student support—and a call for stronger alignment, stable funding, and intentional collaboration with school systems. By addressing administrative burdens, investing in mental health, and ensuring equitable access to services, DEEL can deepen the impact of school-based investments across Seattle’s K-12 landscape.

“We’re here to support the whole child—but we need systems that support us too.”

K-12 Professional Development Partners

Introduction: Professional development (PD) and capacity-building providers play a crucial role in supporting FEPP Levy partners and advancing equity by supporting educator growth, school culture transformation, and restorative practices. As part of DEEL’s Systems and School-Based Investments (SBI) strategy, PD providers deliver tailored learning experiences for SPS educators, school staff, and community members that address mental health, culturally responsive practices, and trauma-informed instruction. Engagement with this group revealed a deep alignment with levy goals, as well as thoughtful recommendations for improving collaboration, outcome measurement, and system-wide support for effective adult learning.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- How do you see professional learning and other capacity building initiatives as contributing to Levy priorities and outcomes?
- What emergent professional learning needs and capacity building opportunities have you seen in your work thus far? What do you anticipate will be needs in the future?
- In what ways has the Restorative Justice Investment helped with school culture improvement, community safety, mental health, and student’s sense of belonging?

Key Insights:

- A. Aligning PD Services with FEPP Measurement**
- B. Scheduling and Systemic Barriers to Effective PD**
- C. Restorative Justice as Cultural Transformation**
- D. Strengthening Collective Impact and Transparency**

A. Aligning PD Services with FEPP Measurement: Shared Values and Trust-Building

Providers affirmed strong alignment with the FEPP Levy’s priorities—especially around skill-building, mental health supports, and foundational capacity development. However, they expressed concern that outcomes for PD are difficult to measure using traditional levy indicators like academic proficiency or college readiness.

Capacity-building efforts—particularly in restorative practices and SEL—were viewed as essential but often under-recognized in outcome metrics. PD providers emphasized the need for DEEL to co-design outcome measures that reflect adult learning’s impact on student outcomes (e.g., climate surveys, reduced bullying). Building trust through shared language and values with school leaders was also cited as essential to sustaining alignment.

“Capacity building is how we protect our investments—ensuring adults feel supported and know how to deliver high-quality programming.”

B. Scheduling and Systemic Barriers to Effective PD

Scheduling constraints, particularly the reliance on SPS early release days (Wednesday afternoons) for PD, limit school-wide participation. Providers called for expanded clock-hour flexibility and recognition of non-traditional staff (e.g., custodians) as key school culture contributors.

Stakeholders encouraged DEEL to facilitate stronger alignment with SPS regional directors and principal coaches to reduce misalignment and bureaucratic barriers. Participants highlighted a need for more trust-based partnerships with school leaders, as PD providers are often seen as outsiders. Ongoing PD for regional leaders and administrators was seen as vital to ensure coherence across decision-making levels.

“Restorative justice work is grounded in love and accountability—not punishment—and it must extend to staff, not just students.”

C. Restorative Justice as Cultural Transformation

Restorative justice investments are transforming school culture by promoting healing, belonging, and teacher empathy. Providers viewed this work as a long-term mindset shift rather than a quick fix.

Teachers’ own sense of belonging was emphasized as foundational for creating student-centered environments. Alignment between DEEL, school leaders, and district agencies was seen as a prerequisite for sustainable restorative work. Providers advocated for restorative practices to become a distinct levy investment area, with clear outcomes and cross-sector commitment.

“Changing school culture is a long-term investment. It’s about shifting mindsets over time—not just quick fixes.”

D. Strengthening Collective Impact and Transparency

To support greater collaboration and alignment, providers recommended creating a centralized portal for monthly updates and stronger communication between DEEL, PD providers, and school leaders. Regional directors were identified as critical players in ensuring school alignment but often lack awareness of on-the-ground work. A unified narrative—backed by case studies and clear goals—was seen as necessary to align stakeholders. Providers also called for

more transparent communication on PD outcomes and how their work contributes to FEPP goals.

“This levy has potential beyond politics—it’s a chance to coordinate the city, district, and providers around a shared mission for sustainable, impactful change.”

Summary: PD providers view their work as essential to achieving the FEPP Levy’s long-term vision for equity, student success, and inclusive school environments. However, traditional outcome frameworks have often overlooked this impact. Providers identified an opportunity for DEEL to strengthen its role as a convener and connector—facilitating trust-based partnerships, co-developing outcome measures, and addressing systemic barriers to professional learning.

Investments in PD must be accompanied by structural supports: dedicated time, aligned leadership, and shared accountability for results. By elevating restorative justice and adult capacity building as strategic priorities, DEEL can ensure that school staff are equipped not only with skills but with the mindsets and relationships needed to transform student experiences.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs)

Introduction: The renewal of the FEPP Levy presents an opportunity to invest in the health and well-being of students by expanding and enhancing School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs). Through targeted stakeholder engagement, including discussions with SBHC managers, school health teams, and CBOs, a set of core priorities and recommendations have emerged to guide this investment.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- SBHCs are closed afterschool and during summer months. What opportunities or ideas do you have to maintain continuity of care?
- What factors should be considered as the City explore SBHC expansion options?
- Who else do we need to talk to? What are the best ways to engage them?

Key Insights:

- A. The Need for Expansion and Enhanced Access**
- B. Building Effective Partnerships and School Integration**
- C. Continuity of Care: Addressing Seasonal Gaps**
- D. Expanding Mental Health and Dental Services**
- E. Engaging Families, Youth, and Community Partners**

A. The Need for Expansion and Enhanced Access

Stakeholders consistently emphasized the importance of expanding SBHCs, particularly in elementary and middle schools, to address critical gaps in access to health care. The transition between grade levels presents unique health challenges, including the need for consistent asthma management, mental health support, and preventive care.

“We see a critical need to expand SBHCs, especially at the elementary and middle school levels. Ensuring continuity of care as students transition is essential for managing chronic conditions like asthma and providing early, consistent health care support.”

The geographic distribution of SBHCs is another key consideration. North Seattle, in particular, lacks elementary school-based health services, leading to increased referrals to overburdened community clinics. Expanding SBHCs in underserved areas would help bridge this equity gap.

B. Building Effective Partnerships and School Integration

Effective SBHCs are more than just health care access points—they thrive in schools that integrate them into broader educational and community goals. Collaboration between school staff, health providers, and administrators was highlighted as critical to creating welcoming and trusted environments for students.

“The success of SBHCs isn’t just about the health centers themselves; it’s about creating a school culture where staff, from teachers to counselors, are actively engaged in supporting student wellbeing.”

Administrative support, particularly at the elementary level, is essential to fostering trust between families and SBHC staff. Additionally, ensuring that families, particularly those who are new immigrants or face language barriers, are aware of available services is a key challenge to address.

C. Continuity of Care: Addressing Seasonal Gaps

A recurring theme in discussions was the need for solutions to ensure continuity of care when schools are closed after hours, on weekends, or during summer months. Many families rely exclusively on SBHCs for their health care needs, and they struggle to access community-based alternatives when these centers are unavailable.

“Families often struggle to navigate care outside of school hours or during the summer. Without the same cost protections and accessibility, many just delay care until school resumes.”

Proposed solutions include strengthening referral pathways to community health centers, developing summer SBHC programming, and improving communication strategies to inform families about health care options during closures. Additionally, leveraging telehealth options with dedicated confidential spaces within community centers could support continuity.

D. Expanding Mental Health and Dental Services

The growing need for mental health services, particularly in response to increased incidents of gun violence and trauma among students, was widely discussed. SBHCs have become essential in addressing student mental health concerns, and stakeholders emphasized the need for additional mental health providers, particularly in middle and high schools.

“We need to ensure that mental health services are a core part of SBHCs, not an afterthought. Students need trusted spaces where they can seek support, especially in communities impacted by violence.”

Similarly, dental services were highlighted as a critical yet often overlooked component of student health. Many SBHCs that offer dental care report being at full capacity, with high demand particularly among newly-arrived immigrant families and low-income students. Expanding dental services could have a significant positive impact on school attendance and overall health outcomes.

E. Engaging Families, Youth, and Community Partners

A strong theme throughout discussions was the importance of inclusive engagement in shaping the future of SBHCs. Families, particularly those from historically marginalized communities,

need meaningful opportunities to provide input on how services can best meet their needs. Youth voices are equally important in ensuring services are responsive and accessible.

“We can’t forget the voices of the students themselves. Youth engagement is essential to ensure that SBHC services are meeting their needs, and we should provide them with multiple avenues to share their thoughts.”

Proposed engagement strategies include:

- Partnering with cultural navigators to support outreach to families with language barriers.
- Establishing a youth advisory panel to provide direct input on SBHC services.
- Conducting multilingual focus groups to capture diverse family experiences.
- Leveraging school events such as back-to-school nights and PTA meetings to share information and collect feedback.

Summary: Stakeholders emphasized the importance of expanding School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) in underserved areas, particularly in North Seattle and the Central District, to address longstanding gaps in access. They called for stronger integration between SBHCs, schools, and community partners to ensure seamless support for students, as well as improved care continuity through referral systems and summer programming. Increased investment in mental health and dental services was a top priority, alongside deeper community engagement in SBHC planning and evaluation. By centering community voice and addressing systemic barriers, the expansion of SBHCs presents a powerful opportunity to advance equity in student health outcomes and strengthen school-health partnerships across Seattle.

Youth Participants

Introduction: As Seattle prepares for the renewal of the FEPP Levy, ensuring that young people have a voice in shaping future investments is a key priority. DEEL and SSS developed a youth engagement approach that recognizes young people as the best advocates for their own experiences. This strategy prioritizes listening to youth where they are, in spaces where they feel comfortable, and using engagement methods that resonate with them.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- What do you like to do when you’re not in school?
- How do you hear about activities you can join?
- What do you think you might want to do for a career or job as an adult?

Key Insights:

- A. Diverse Interests, Meaningful Engagement**
- B. Safe and Welcoming Spaces**
- C. Trusted Adults and Youth-Adult Relationships**
- D. Career Exploration and Real-World Readiness**
- E. Centering Youth Voice in Program Design**

A. Diverse Interests, Meaningful Engagement: Programming That Resonates

Students expressed a wide range of interests—from gaming, sports, and cooking to poetry, science, and entrepreneurship. They shared that fun, food, and flexibility are motivating factors to participate in programs, and emphasized that services should be responsive to both their passions and their schedules. Youth also pointed out the importance of choice, explaining that being required to join clubs by parents sometimes reduced their enthusiasm.

“We like having options. Not everyone wants to do sports—some of us want to write or create stuff.”

B. Safe and Welcoming Spaces: Emotional Safety Matters

While logistical barriers like transportation were raised, students also described emotional barriers—such as fear of judgment or discomfort in unfamiliar settings—that impacted participation. Youth identified community centers, parks, and classrooms as welcoming spaces and described environments where they feel heard, respected, and connected to peers as the most meaningful.

“A welcoming space is where people understand you and let you be yourself.”

C. Trusted Adults and Youth-Adult Relationships: Supportive Connections

Students spoke highly of teachers, staff, and family members who made them feel supported and understood. Humor, empathy, and consistency were traits they valued in trusted adults. These relationships helped students navigate personal challenges and made school feel more like a community.

“He jokes around, but he knows when to be serious. That’s why we trust him.”

D. Career Exploration and Real-World Readiness: Preparing for the Future

Youth shared ambitious and diverse career goals—ranging from law and science to gaming, and owning a business. They expressed strong interest in learning about jobs, wages/salaries, taxes, and real-world skills. Students also expressed a desire for flexible, part-time work and early exposure to career pathways that align with their interests.

“I want to work, but I also want to do something I enjoy.”

E. Centering Youth Voice in Program Design: From Participation to Partnership

Youth made clear that they want to be part of shaping the programs that affect them. They value environments that reflect their identities and lived experiences and want to be involved in decision-making processes. Participants offered feedback on school safety, mental health, technology use, and what helps them thrive in and outside the classroom.

“When we talk, we want to know someone’s listening—and that it’s going to make a difference.”

Summary: Youth participants offered powerful reflections on what helps them feel engaged, safe, and supported. They called for diverse programming, trusted adult relationships, accessible spaces, and opportunities for real-world learning. Emotional safety, cultural pride, and autonomy emerged as central themes. As DEEL continues to invest in youth-focused strategies, centering young people as co-creators of their educational experience will be key to designing programs that are inclusive, impactful, and grounded in community.

Seattle Promise Scholars, Families, and Staff

Introduction: Seattle Promise offers tuition-free access to Seattle Colleges for graduates of Seattle public high schools. As part of the broader FEPP Levy Renewal stakeholder engagement process, DEEL gathered feedback from Promise students, families, and staff to better understand how the program is working and where it can grow.

This engagement included a citywide survey in March 2025 with over 270 respondents, and a dedicated staff session in November 2024, and a session for scholars, alumni and families in February 2025. Together, these inputs reveal a story of positive impact—alongside recommendations for how to improve support systems, reduce systemic barriers, and ensure every Promise student can succeed.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- For staff: What have been the biggest successes you’ve observed in supporting Seattle Promise Scholars?
- For students and alumni: What academic, financial, and personal resources or supports have you used that have positively impacted your college experience?
- For families: What resources, if any, would help you help your student to identify their plans after Promise?

Key Insights:

- A. The Power of Financial Support and Academic Guidance**
- B. Career and Transfer Planning**
- C. Communication and Navigation**
- D. Relationship-Based Support**
- E. Equity-Centered Program Design**

A. The Power of Financial Support and Academic Guidance: Reducing Barriers and Expanding Possibility

Stakeholders emphasized the life-changing impact of Seattle Promise’s tuition assistance and equity scholarships. For many students, the program makes college possible—particularly for families without generational wealth or familiarity with higher education systems. Among survey respondents:

- 89.3% of students and 88.3% of families rated financial support as important
- 82.1% of students agreed Promise positively contributed to their future goals
- 83.9% of families reported that the program had a positive impact on their household

Families noted reduced financial stress, while staff highlighted the essential role of retention specialists in providing academic and personal guidance. Students described these specialists as trusted adults who helped them persist through crises, build confidence, and connect with resources like mental health services, tutoring, and community supports.

“Seattle Promise made college a real possibility for our family. It took a huge weight off our shoulders and gave our child the chance to dream bigger.” — Family respondent

B. Career and Transfer Planning: Bridging the Gap Between College Access and Long-Term Success

While Promise has succeeded in improving college access, stakeholders pointed to a persistent gap in career and transfer planning. Among survey respondents:

- 73.2% of students intend to transfer to a four-year institution
- 66.3% of families rated career planning resources positively
- Students called for earlier and more structured career exploration
- Staff cited successful models like “Path to UW,” and requested expansion to other colleges and employers

Suggestions provided for enhanced services included embedding career planning into first-year coursework, formalizing alumni mentorship, and increasing access to internships and technical training. Stakeholders also emphasized the need to align Promise supports with students' postsecondary aspirations—whether university, trade school, or workforce entry.

“We need to ensure that students leave Promise with a clear plan—whether that’s university, technical careers, or employment. The structure exists, but we need more capacity to make it real.” — Promise staff

C. Communication and Navigation: Helping Students and Families Understand the System Families and students described confusion around program requirements, key deadlines, and how to access support. Staff echoed these concerns, emphasizing that students often struggle with the transition from the structured environment of high school to the self-directed nature of college. Among survey respondents:

- 61.2% of families rated communication positively
- Staff described misalignments between Promise and college systems—especially around financial aid and disability services
- Families expressed a need for clearer communication and more consistent updates on student progress

Multilingual family communications, regular progress check-ins, Promise-specific orientation sessions, and proactive reminders built around key milestones were noted as suggestions to improve program navigation.

“Often, students don’t realize what’s available until they’re already struggling—even after mandatory events and multiple reminders. The system is just hard to navigate.” — Promise staff

D. Relationship-Based Support: Centering Retention Specialists and Mentorship One of Promise’s greatest strengths is its focus on individualized support. Students described their retention specialists as lifelines, helping them navigate not just academics, but personal and emotional challenges. Scholars consistently identified retention specialists as their most trusted advisors. Staff reported caseloads of 1:300, which they acknowledged limits their capacity for individualized support. Overall, stakeholders called for more staff, culturally specific mentorship, and long-term alumni engagement.

Staff shared stories of helping students facing domestic violence, homelessness, and mental health crises. Given unique student experiences and increasing need for staff support, current staffing levels are not sustainable. Additional investments in personnel are needed to preserve the depth and quality of support that students rely on.

“That kind of support isn’t a ‘service,’ it’s a lifeline.” — Promise staff

E. Equity-Centered Program Design: Meeting the Needs of Marginalized Students Students from underrepresented backgrounds—including first-generation college-goers, multilingual learners, and young men of color—face systemic barriers that require tailored supports. ESL programs are often misaligned with the needs of multilingual students coming from high school. Disability accommodation processes require quarterly reapplication, burdening neurodivergent students. Financial aid delays and rigid deadlines disproportionately impact students with unstable housing or mixed-status families.

Staff and families urged the City to design systems that anticipate these barriers and respond to students' lived realities. Recommendations included expanding dual-language technical programs, piloting culturally specific mentorship initiatives, and streamlining financial aid and disability services.

“The current processes aren’t designed for students like mine—they’re designed for students who already know the system. We need to reverse that.” — Promise staff

Summary: Seattle Promise has had a transformative impact on students across the city, expanding access to higher education, reducing financial strain, and fostering a culture of possibility. Scholars, families, and staff consistently affirmed the program’s value—particularly its wraparound supports and trusted relationships with retention specialists. These connections help students navigate academic, financial, and personal challenges, enabling many to become the first in their families to attend college.

To meet the evolving needs of Seattle’s young people, stakeholders emphasized the importance of deeper investments in transfer and career planning, stronger communication systems, family engagement, increased staffing, and equity-centered design. Seattle Promise is more than a scholarship—it is a community of care and a bridge to opportunity. With sustained commitment and strategic improvements, it can continue to serve as a national model for inclusive, student-centered higher education.

Levy Oversight Committee Members

Introduction: The FEPP Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) plays a vital role in ensuring accountability, transparency, and community voice in the implementation of levy-funded investments. Composed of diverse leaders from education, advocacy, philanthropy, and CBOs, LOC members bring a wide range of expertise and perspectives to the oversight process.

As part of the stakeholder engagement for the FEPP Levy Renewal, DEEL conducted in-depth interviews with eight current LOC members to better understand their reflections on the committee’s structure, their perspectives on levy impacts, and their recommendations for future investments. The following summary draws from interviews conducted between August and September 2024.

Sample Engagement Questions:

- What aspects of the LOC structure are working well, and where could it be improved?
- How well does the levy support students across early learning, K-12, and postsecondary pathways?
- What programs, services, or investments should be prioritized in the next levy?
- How can the public better understand the role and impact of the levy?

Key Insights:

- A. Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities**
- B. Investing in Data and Accountability**
- C. Supporting the Full Educational Continuum**
- D. Strengthening Mental Health and Wraparound Services**
- E. Elevating Equity and Community Engagement**

A. Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities: Improving Committee Function and Impact

While most members feel empowered in their LOC roles—especially when voting or advocating—many expressed a desire for greater clarity about how and when they should offer recommendations. Suggestions included creating subcommittees focused on specific areas such as mental health, Seattle Promise, or dual language learning.

- LOC members requested more time to review materials before decision-making
- Some proposed mentorship or orientation programs to support new members
- Calls to streamline documentation and improve communication about LOC decisions

“I feel empowered, but I want to be more useful. We need guidance on how to make a bigger impact.”

B. Investing in Data and Accountability: Making Outcomes Accessible and Actionable

LOC members appreciated DEEL’s commitment to transparency and the quality of data presentations at retreats. However, several noted that the data can be overly complex and difficult to interpret for those without technical expertise.

- Desire for simplified presentations and visuals that connect data to student outcomes
- Requests for clear, trackable goals that can be revisited annually
- Interest in learning from what has and hasn’t worked—especially in K-12 education

“We need more specific targets and ways to measure success—not just data for data’s sake.”

C. Supporting the Full Educational Continuum: From Early Learning Through Postsecondary

Across interviews, members emphasized the importance of a seamless pipeline from preschool to college and career. Many advocated for stronger investment in early childhood education, as well as a clearer understanding of how levy funds are supporting K-12 students.

- Strong support for expanding Seattle Promise and introducing more postsecondary options like apprenticeships
- Interest in ensuring continuity between early learning and elementary education
- Concerns about truancy, student engagement, and gaps in family awareness of available supports

“The levy should help connect the dots—early learning, K-12, Promise—it’s all one journey.”

D. Strengthening Mental Health and Wraparound Services: Supporting the Whole Student

Members expressed deep concern about student mental health and the lack of accessible, coordinated support services. Several called for clearer definitions of responsibility between the City, Seattle Public Schools (SPS), and King County.

Mental health and wraparound supports were viewed as essential investments

Some suggested models like year-round after-school programs and academies for counselors

Interest in ensuring agency accountability and service coordination

“If we want students to succeed, we need to support their mental health and their lives outside the classroom.”

E. Elevating Equity and Community Engagement: Centering Voices and Reducing Barriers

Members highlighted the need for more intentional community engagement, especially from

students, families, and providers who are furthest from opportunity. Several emphasized the importance of equity in both process and outcomes.

- Calls for increased public awareness of the levy and its role in shaping educational opportunity
- Recommendations to provide feedback to applicants who are denied levy funding
- Desire for expanded supports for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and youth of color

“The FEPP Levy is changing lives. We just need to make sure the people it’s helping know it—and have a say in it.”

Summary: The FEPP Levy Oversight Committee serves a critical function in shaping and sustaining Seattle’s investments in student success. Committee members expressed gratitude for DEEL’s responsiveness and transparency, while offering thoughtful recommendations to strengthen the LOC’s effectiveness. Future improvements may include creating dedicated subcommittees, improving access to and understanding of data, expanding mental health and postsecondary supports, and ensuring equity is embedded at every level. By fostering a committee that is inclusive, empowered, and well-resourced, Seattle can deepen its commitment to public accountability and shared responsibility for student outcomes.

“The levy is one of the most important tools we have to support our students. We need to keep improving how we use it—and who gets to shape it.”

Phase 2 Community Conversation Facilitation Guide

ECR Community Conversations – Facilitator’s Guide and Questions

READY TO START

Intro: This part of the levy supports families with young children by expanding access to affordable, high-quality childcare, preschool, and early childhood support programs. Investments include CCAP (childcare assistance), adding more Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) seats, and continuing home-visiting programs for new parents. The goal is to help children get a strong start and ensure families have the support they need from birth to age five so children are kindergarten ready.

Getting to Know Audience: I'd like to get a sense of who is here today. Please share your name, if you're a parent or guardian what are the ages of the children, and the schools they attend.

Prior Experience & Current Supports:

- Show of hands, who has participated in CCAP or SPP?

Childcare (CCAP):

- For those who have used CCAP, what has your experience been like?
- What has worked well?
- What ideas or improvements would you like to see?

Preschool (SPP):

- What has your experience been with the Seattle Preschool Program?
- What do you appreciate about the program?
- What changes or additions would strengthen it?

If you haven't used these services:

- What early-learning or childcare programs have been helpful to your family?
- Are there supports DEEL should consider investing in?

Access & Communication:

Preschool and CCAP will be able to serve more families starting in 2026.

- How can we make sure families know about this?
- What are the best ways to share information about childcare, preschool, and home-visiting opportunities in your community?
- What barriers might keep families from accessing these programs?

Infant & Toddler Care Birth–5

- Finding licensed infant/toddler care can be challenging. What matters most to you when choosing care for children under 5?
- *Probes: cost, location, hours, cultural fit, learning environment, trust, availability*

School-Age Care (Ages 5–12)

- What do you look for when choosing childcare or afterschool options for school-aged children?
- How do childcare needs connect with your child's elementary or middle school?

- Do you prefer licensed childcare, afterschool programs at school, or another type of supervised care? Why?
- *Probes: Challenges and ideas for improving access to before/after school and summer care; How transportation affects access to child care; Co-location at elementary school; Licensed vs. enrichment/expanded learning*

Summer Care & Programs

- When the school year ends, what types of summer programs do you look for?
- What factors matter most? (Focus/activities, food, safety, cost, location, hours)
- What challenges or barriers have you faced when trying to find or access summer care?

READY TO LEARN

Intro: The FEPP levy provides extra supports beyond basic education — like tutoring, academic enrichment, food resources, health services, family activities, and emotional support — to help students and families thrive. We want to know which of these are most important to you. We will discuss these with 4 themes: 1) Academic support & enrichment, 2) Whole-child supports, 3) Family engagement and community building, and 4) community partnerships.

Getting to Know Audience: I'd like to get a sense of who is here today. Please share your name, if you're a student – please share your grade and school. If you're a parent or guardian, please share the ages of your children and the schools they attend.

Academic Support & Enrichment:

These are programs that help students learn, grow, and explore their interests beyond regular class time. Every child learns differently, and some may need extra help to feel confident and keep up. Supports like tutoring, homework help, reading or math assistance, and weekend learning labs help close learning gaps. Enrichment activities—such as STEM or robotics clubs, art, music, and other hands-on programs—give students chances to discover new skills and connect with peers around shared interests. Academic Support and enrichment activities aim to improve school attendance and academic outcomes.

- What learning supports or after-school programs would make the biggest difference for your child? For example, is tutoring, homework help, or enrichment important to your family?
- Do you like to access services at your school or in community settings? When do you like to access services?
- What activities do you wish the school offered more of or provided (before, during, afterschool, and summer programming)?
- For elementary school families, do you have a preference for licensed childcare settings compared to enrichment or expanded learning programs?
- Have you experienced any barriers to accessing academic or enrichment supports? (Focus/activities, food, safety, cost, location, hours, transportation, etc.)
- *Probes: Elementary/middle school needs; Preference for kinship care or at-home supports;*

Whole-Child Supports:

Whole-child supports are the services and programs that help meet *all* of a student's needs— not just academics. This includes access to health care at School Based Health Centers,

mental-health support including telehealth services, safety measures, food and housing resources, reliable transportation, sports and physical activity, and positive relationships with caring adults like mentors or coaches. These supports help students feel healthy, safe, connected, and ready to learn.

- What kinds of basic needs supports would make the biggest difference for your family? What would help your child feel more supported, confident, or safe at school?
- What makes it hard to access health supports when you need it? (Consider time, transportation, food resources, housing navigation, case management support)
- Are there barriers that make it hard to use these supports when needed?
- Are there specific safety improvements — inside or outside of school — that would help your family feel safe in or around school?
- ALT: What safety concerns do you have, and what would make you feel better supported in addressing them?

Family Engagement & Community Building:

When families feel connected to their child’s school, students do better. Strong family-school relationships help improve attendance, academic success, emotional wellbeing, and trust. When families feel welcomed and heard, they’re more able to partner with teachers, participate in decision-making, and access the supports their child needs. A connected school community also reduces isolation, strengthens relationships among families, and creates a more supportive environment for every student.

- What would help you feel more connected to the school and able to participate?
- What types of events would you be interested in attending?
- How can the schools or community organizations communicate or involve you more effectively?

Community Partnerships:

Schools often work with community organizations to bring in extra support—things like tutoring, after-school programs, childcare, health clinics, food resources, transportation help, or family engagement activities. We want to hear what partnerships matter most to you.

- What community services or partnerships are available at your child’s school that are working well, or that you wish were available?
- *Examples: tutoring, afterschool academic enrichment, childcare, health clinics, food access, workforce support, transportation, family programs.*
- How could schools partner better with community organizations to meet your family’s needs?
- What else should we know about the needs of students and families in your school community?
- Student Version (if applicable): What kinds of community programs—like mentors, internships, or clubs—would make school more helpful for your future?

READY TO LAUNCH

Intro: This part of the levy focuses on helping students successfully transition from high school into college, apprenticeships, trades, or careers. FEPP levy funding supports access to college readiness programs, financial aid guidance, apprenticeship pathways, and career exploration so every student—no matter their background—has real choices after graduation. The goal is to

ensure students are prepared, confident, and supported in pursuing whatever path fits their interests and future goals.

Getting to Know Audience: I'd like to get a sense of who is here today. Please share your name, if you're a student – please share your grade and school. If you're a parent or guardian, please share the ages of your children and the schools they attend.

Prior Experience & Current Supports:

- Show of hands, who has participated in the Seattle Promise program?

Seattle Promise:

- For those who have participated in Seattle Promise, what has your experience been like?
- What has worked well?
- What ideas or improvements would you like to see?
- ALT: Here are examples of what we currently offer to help Promise students stay on track (college coaching, financial aid help, persistence supports). What else could help students succeed once they enter college or a post-secondary program?

Access & Communication:

- How can we get students more excited about exploring college, trades, and career options?
- What kinds of support would help you, your friends, or your child feel more prepared for life after high school?
- What barriers do you think students face when trying to access these opportunities?

Youth Interests:

- What types of future college or career goals do you (or your child) currently have?
- When you think about trade careers—there are 100+ options—what supports do students need to explore these paths? Some examples include construction, manufacturing technology, and maintenance technicians. What would be helpful in creating awareness and exploration of these kinds of careers? In navigating postsecondary pathways? In being placed in a job/position?
- What kinds of experiences (mentors, job shadows, internships, career fairs) would be most helpful?
- How can schools better connect young people to careers where jobs are available and employers are eager to hire?
-

Phase 2 Community Survey Aggregate Responses

Q1. Please select the identities that best represent you. (Select all that apply)	Percent	N
Youth (K-12 or college student, ages 5-24)	12.12%	32
Parent or Guardian	60.98%	161
General community member	19.32%	51
Early childhood and learning staff	11.36%	30

K-12 public, private, or charter school staff	15.53%	41
Community-based organization staff (including health services, youth development, academics, enrichment, etc.)	19.70%	52
Colleges or University staff	1.89%	5
Other (please specify)	4.17%	11
	Answered	264

Q2. What is your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply)	Percent	N
Prefer not to answer	6.44%	17
American Indian or Alaska Native	4.55%	12
Asian	14.39%	38
Black or African American	20.45%	54
Hispanic or Latino/X	8.71%	23
Middle Eastern or North African	1.14%	3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.14%	3
White	52.65%	139
Another race or ethnicity (please specify)	1.52%	4
	Answered	264

Q5. Would you like to provide feedback on Ready to Start?	Percent	N
Yes	74.81%	202
No	25.19%	68
	Answered	270

Q6. What are the best ways to share information about early childhood services in your community? Select up to 3.	Percent	N
Ads on public transit	48.17%	79
Faith Leaders	12.20%	20
In-person community events	51.22%	84
Virtual community events	25.00%	41
TikTok	17.07%	28
Flyers in libraries or clinics	64.63%	106
Facebook or Instagram ads	55.49%	91
Radio ads	8.54%	14
TV ads	7.93%	13
Magazine or newspaper ads	9.15%	15
Another way (please specify)	18.90%	31
	Answered	164

Q7. What barriers prevent families in your community from accessing early childhood support programs? Select all that apply.	Percent	N
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I'm not sure	6.55%	11
Cost	70.24%	118
Safety concerns	19.64%	33
Location or Transportation (too far, not accessible, etc.)	47.62%	80
Hours offered did not work for our schedule	50.60%	85
Language barriers	33.93%	57
Distrust of government programs	20.24%	34
Immigration concerns	28.57%	48
Assume they don't qualify	45.24%	76
Another barrier (please specify)	19.64%	33
	Answered	168

Q8. What matters most to you when choosing care for children under 5 years old? Select up to 3.		
	Percent	N
Not sure or doesn't apply to me	8.33%	14
Cost	67.26%	113
Location close to home	52.98%	89
Location close to work	19.64%	33
Hours	54.17%	91
Cultural fit	21.43%	36
Learning environment	41.07%	69
Trust and comfort with caregivers after meeting them	58.93%	99
Competency in caring for children with special needs	19.05%	32
Something else (please specify)	7.14%	12
	Answered	168

Q9. What does "affordable" childcare cost look like for your family? Think about the combined cost for all your children.		
	Percent	N
Not sure or doesn't apply to me	22.89%	38
<\$100/month	9.04%	15
\$100-\$500/ month	19.88%	33
\$500-\$999/ month	18.67%	31
\$1000-\$1499/ month	13.25%	22
\$1500-\$1999/ month	6.02%	10
\$2000-\$2499/ month	4.82%	8
\$2500-\$2999/month	1.81%	3
\$3000+/ month	1.20%	2
Another amount	2.41%	4
	Answered	166

Q10. Which DEEL program(s) have you participated in?		
	Percent	N
None	49.06%	78

Subsidized childcare through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	9.43%	15
Preschool through the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP)	34.59%	55
Home visiting through Nurse Family Partnership or Parent-Child+	2.52%	4
Developmental Bridge	4.40%	7
Another early learning program (please specify)	7.55%	12
	Answered	159

Q11. Based on your experience, what level of improvement is needed?	Major improvements needed		Minor improvements needed		No improvements needed		Don't know	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Subsidized childcare through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	20.00%	3	40.00%	6	13.33%	2	26.67%	4
Preschool through the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP)	7.14%	4	58.93%	33	30.36%	17	3.57%	2
Home visiting through Nurse Family Partnership or Parent-Child+	50.00%	2	50.00%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
Developmental Bridge	0.00%	0	57.14%	4	28.57%	2	14.29%	1
[Insert text from Other]	16.67%	2	25.00%	3	50.00%	6	8.33%	1
							Answered	82

Q12. Would you like to provide feedback on Ready to Learn?	Percent	N
Yes	82.08%	197
No	17.92%	43
	Answered	240

Q13. Academic Supports	Percent	N
Tutoring (individual or in small groups)	75.32%	116
Extra school-day classes in core subjects like reading and math	37.66%	58
Support for English learners	50.65%	78
Access to a study/homework space with adult support	41.56%	64
	Answered	154

Q14. Enrichment	Percent	N
Arts, music, or cultural programs	83.87%	130
Sports or physical activity	52.26%	81

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)	50.97%	79
Career or life skills (leadership, financial literacy, etc.)	70.32%	109
	Answered	155

Q15. When should academic or enrichment supports be offered?		
	Percent	N
Not sure or doesn't apply to me	1.27%	2
Before school	23.42%	37
During school	58.23%	92
After school	82.91%	131
Weekends	33.54%	53
Summer	63.92%	101
Another time (please specify)	3.80%	6
	Answered	158

Q16. Where should academic or enrichments services or programs be offered? (Select top 3)		
	Percent	N
Not sure or doesn't apply to me	2.53%	4
At my child's school	87.34%	138
At a nearby school	41.14%	65
At a community center	64.56%	102
At a cultural or faith-based organization	17.09%	27
At a licensed childcare site	15.19%	24
Online/virtually	13.29%	21
Another location (please specify)	6.96%	11
	Answered	158

Q17. Program Features										
	Very important		Somewhat important		Neither Important nor Unimportant		Somewhat Not Important		Not Important at all	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Staff and program materials match the culture and ethnicity of students (Culturally relevant programming)	51.61%	80	32.26%	50	10.97%	17	2.58%	4	2.58%	4
More adults in the room (High	49.02%	75	43.79%	67	5.88%	9	1.31%	2	0.00%	0

adult-to-student ratio)										
Focus on academic support	55.24%	79	35.66%	51	7.69%	11	1.40%	2	0.00%	0
Focus on enrichment (arts, sports, STEM, etc.)	55.84%	86	32.47%	50	8.44%	13	2.60%	4	0.65%	1
Focus on student supports (mental health, social and emotional wellness)	73.03%	111	20.39%	31	5.26%	8	0.66%	1	0.66%	1
Licensed childcare for kids 5-12, meaning that the program meets requirements established by the state Department of Children Youth and Family	44.81%	69	30.52%	47	14.29%	22	6.49%	10	3.90%	6
Another Program Feature (please specify)									Total	12
									Answered	155

Q18. Accessibility										
	Very important		Somewhat important		Neither Important nor Unimportant		Somewhat Not Important		Not Important at all	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Free or low-cost	78.67%	118	16.00%	24	3.33%	5	1.33%	2	0.67%	1
Public transportation is nearby (bus, within walking distance, etc.)	54.00%	81	32.00%	48	10.00%	15	1.33%	2	2.67%	4
School bus transportation home is provided	43.33%	65	41.33%	62	10.67%	16	2.67%	4	2.00%	3
Another Accessibility feature (please specify)									Total	12

								Answered	155
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Q19. How, if at all, are your needs for summer programs different from the school year? (Select all that apply)	Percent	N
Not sure or doesn't apply to me	14.29%	22
We need longer hours	29.87%	46
Academic learning is more important	16.88%	26
Enrichment and recreation are more important	56.49%	87
Transportation needs are different	25.32%	39
Preferred locations are different	16.88%	26
Our needs are mostly the same	25.32%	39
Other (please specify)	6.49%	10
	Answered	154

Q20. What barriers prevent students and families in your community from accessing K-12 support programs? Select all that apply.	Percent	N
I'm not sure	11.92%	18
The activities do not meet child's needs/interests	34.44%	52
Food was not offered or didn't meet needs	20.53%	31
Cost	55.63%	84
Safety concerns	17.22%	26
Location or Transportation (too far, not accessible, etc.)	49.67%	75
Hours offered do not work for schedule	49.67%	75
Language barriers	27.15%	41
Distrust of government programs	11.92%	18
Immigration concerns	18.54%	28
Assume they don't qualify	26.49%	40
Another barrier (please specify)	13.25%	20
	Answered	151

Q21. Health & Wellness	Percent	N
Physical health (medical) services offered at school	50.67%	76
Mental health therapy services at school	82.00%	123
Mental health therapy offered online (Telehealth)	24.00%	36
Help finding a primary care provider (doctor) or dentist	17.33%	26
Vision/hearing screenings	26.00%	39
Food resources (school meals, pantry, weekend food, summer meals)	74.00%	111
Housing support or help navigating housing systems	44.00%	66
Help connecting to other services	41.33%	62
Another health & wellness support (please specify)	7.33%	11
	Answered	150

Q22. Safety & School Climate	Percent	N
Anti-bullying supports	51.70%	76
Support with digital/internet safety	54.42%	80
Conflict resolution or restorative practices	68.71%	101
Support with physical safety or school security	42.86%	63
Attendance support	32.65%	48
Another safety & school climate support (please specify)	8.84%	13
	Answered	147

Q23. Community Partnerships: Which community services or partnerships at your child's school work well, not well, or would you like to see added?	Working Well		Not Working Well		Wish it were Available		Not Sure	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Tutoring	20.14%	28	7.91%	11	20.86%	29	51.08%	71
Afterschool academic enrichment	32.37%	45	8.63%	12	28.06%	39	30.94%	43
Childcare	28.68%	39	9.56%	13	17.65%	24	44.12%	60
Health clinic or school-based health center	41.61%	57	5.11%	7	20.44%	28	32.85%	45
Mental health or counseling supports	32.37%	45	14.39%	20	15.83%	22	37.41%	52
Food access	51.43%	72	10.71%	15	2.14%	3	35.71%	50
Housing or family support services	17.78%	24	8.15%	11	11.11%	15	62.96%	85
Workforce support	12.50%	17	5.88%	8	13.24%	18	68.38%	93
Transportation assistance	20.59%	28	9.56%	13	11.03%	15	58.82%	80
Family programs	21.48%	29	9.63%	13	13.33%	18	55.56%	75
Another Program (please specify below)	9.68%	6	4.84%	3	4.84%	3	80.65%	50
						Answered	144	

Q24. Would you like to provide feedback on Ready to Launch?	Percent	N
Yes	47.29%	96
No	52.71%	107
	Answered	203

Q25. Have you or a family member participated in Seattle Promise, which provides tuition and academic advising supports at Seattle Colleges?	Percent	N
Yes, as a student	3.06%	3
Yes, as a parent or family member	10.20%	10
No	81.63%	80
Not Sure	5.10%	5
	Answered	98

Q26. Overall, how satisfied were you with the Promise experience?	Percent	N
Very satisfied	40.00%	4
Satisfied	40.00%	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10.00%	1
Dissatisfied	10.00%	1
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
	Answered	10

Q27. What areas of the program worked well? Select up to 3.	Percent	N
Tuition scholarship	70.00%	7
Equity Scholarship	0.00%	0
Promise retention specialists and academic advising	30.00%	3
Seattle Colleges Faculty or non-Promise staff	40.00%	4
Promise outreach specialists who help in high schools	10.00%	1
Financial aid support	30.00%	3
	Answered	10

Q28. What could get students more excited about exploring college pathways? Select up to 3.	Percent	N
Virtual college tours	14.29%	12
In-person college campus visits)	57.14%	48
Financial aid knowledge (for example, FAFSA/WASFA)	53.57%	45
Paid internships with employers	64.29%	54
Guest speakers	23.81%	20
Financial aid & scholarships	63.10%	53
Mentorship	58.33%	49
Something Else (please specify)	9.52%	8
	Answered	84

Q29. What barriers prevent students and families in your community from accessing college? Select all that apply.	Percent	N
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I'm not sure	6.02%	5
Cost	87.95%	73
Safety concerns	9.64%	8
Location or Transportation (too far, not accessible, etc.)	22.89%	19
Hours offered do not work for schedule	16.87%	14
Language barriers	24.10%	20
Distrust of government programs	14.46%	12
Immigration concerns	18.07%	15
Assume they don't qualify	48.19%	40
Another barrier (please specify)	21.69%	18
	Answered	83

Q30. Which of the following describes your (or your student's) future college or career goals after high school? Select all that apply.		
	Percent	N
Doesn't apply to me	14.81%	12
Attend a 2-year college (non-Promise)	8.64%	7
Attend Seattle Colleges through the Seattle Promise program	24.69%	20
Attend a 4-year college	62.96%	51
Skilled/vocational training	19.75%	16
Starting working right away	4.94%	4
I'm still (or my student is) exploring my future plans	35.80%	29
Something else (please specify)	2.47%	2
	Answered	81

Q31. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following:										
	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Somewhat disagree		Strongly disagree	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
I understand the trade career opportunities available in Seattle after high school	7.59%	6	26.58%	21	21.52%	17	37.97%	30	6.33%	5
I feel confident about my (or my child's) future college or career plans	14.29%	11	27.27%	21	29.87%	23	27.27%	21	1.30%	1
I feel confident about my (or	7.79%	6	35.06%	27	16.88%	13	32.47%	25	7.79%	6

my child's) future job opportunities										
									Answered	79

Q32. What kinds of experiences would help students learn about careers in skilled trades such as welding, firefighting, auto mechanic, electrician, or construction? Select all that apply.		
	Percent	N
Mentorship	77.11%	64
Field trips to visit job sites	80.72%	67
Guest speakers	53.01%	44
Paid internships	89.16%	74
Career fairs	45.78%	38
Something else (please specify)	7.23%	6
Answered		83

June 26, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Select Committee on the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) Levy 6-Yr. Implementation and Evaluation (I&E) Plan
From: Jasmine Marwaha and Traci Ratzliff, Analysts
Subject: FEPP Levy I&E Plan Policy Considerations

At its June 10 meeting, the Select Committee on the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) Levy 6-Yr. Implementation and Evaluation (I&E) Plan received a presentation from the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) on the FEPP Levy I&E Plan. The FEPP Levy supplements education services and programs, both in and out of schools, to help children and youth succeed through a continuum of investments organized around four education support services: (1) Early Childhood, (2) K-12 Student Supports, (3) K-12 Health and Safety, and (4) College and Career Supports.¹

This memorandum provides background on the 2026 FEPP Levy I&E Plan, including a high-level summary, describes pre-introduction changes, and presents seven policy considerations.

Background

In June 2025, the Council approved [Ordinance 127238](#) submitting a proposition to voters to fund education support services with a property tax levy generating approximately \$1.3 billion over a six-year period. The proposition was subsequently approved in November 2025 with support from approximately 80 percent of the voters. Section 7 of [Ordinance 127238](#) states that levy proceeds shall be spent in accordance with an I&E Plan approved by ordinance, with the following elements required to be in the I&E Plan:

1. Priority criteria, including type of educational support;
2. Methodology and process by which levy-funded strategies will be selected;
3. The procedure for regularly monitoring and evaluating overall impacts and outcomes of each of the individual investments; and
4. A summary of stakeholders consulted.

In addition, during the annual budget process in Fall 2025, Council adopted two Statements of Legislative Intent (SLIs) regarding the I&E Plan. DEEL-001S-A requests DEEL to report on how Council priorities listed in the SLI would be incorporated into the I&E Plan. DEEL-002S-A requests the department to develop specific, measurable data and outcomes for programs as part of the FEPP I&E Plan, with quarterly reports regarding activities and outcomes provided to the Chair of the Council Committee overseeing DEEL.

Council Bill 121240, transmitted by the Executive on April 29, proposes an I&E Plan intended to meet the requirements of the levy ordinance and respond to the Council SLIs. The proposed I&E Plan maintains

¹ While Washington State and Seattle Public Schools are mandated by the State constitution to provide basic education to K-12 students, local governments may provide supplemental funding to support students.

the broad investment areas approved in the levy ordinance and adopted in the 2026 Budget, though they have been renamed as “domains.” Additionally, during last fall’s budget deliberations process, DEEL provided to Council cost estimate for the 6-year spending plan that served as a starting point for I&E Plan development, and the spending amounts have shifted slightly among the investment areas/domains. Table 1 illustrates these changes below.

Table 1. Comparison of Fall 2025 Spending Plan Estimates to Proposed I&E Plan

Fall 2025 Spending Plan Estimates		Proposed FEPP I&E Plan	
Investment Area	6-Year Total	Domain	6-Year Total
Early Childhood	\$658,244,525	Ready to Start	\$ 656,779,835
K-12 Health and Safety, K-12 Youth Supports	\$510,729,458	Ready to Learn	\$ 478,052,730
College and Career	\$82,438,948	Ready to Launch	\$ 113,042,670
Leadership and Administration	\$78,840,116	Operations	\$ 82,157,909
Total	\$1,330,253,047		\$1,330,033,144

The proposed changes to the spending plan are primarily due to the following:

- Risk Reserve changes to accommodate the new universal school meals proposal;
- Shifting certain Human Services Department (HSD) programs from Ready to Learn to Ready to Launch domain;
- Shifting some labor costs from specific domains to Operations;
- Reduction in total spending projections due to minor adjustments in labor across the levy

The FEPP I&E spending plan also reflects some changes within each domain regarding specific programs that were outlined in the Fall 2025 budget process. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Addition of Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Waitlist Voucher Pilot and Opportunity-Based Mentoring Program;
- Expanded Learning Opportunities splitting into “School-Based Investments” and “Community-Based Investments,” with specific requirements regarding the types of support provided;
- Mental Health staffing supports added to the School-Based Health Center program; and
- Reallocation of proposed additional Seattle Youth Employment Program funding to Police and Fire Career programs and “Path to Tech” program.

Changes from Transmitted I&E Plan to Introduced Version

As noted above, the Executive transmitted the I&E Plan on April 29. The I&E Plan is expected to be introduced on June 30, and the introduced version will include significant changes to address clarity, funding details, and Council’s role. Changes include, but are not limited to:

1. *Clarification Edits.* The transmitted I&E Plan lacked complete program descriptions, reporting indicators, timelines, and evaluation expectations. The transmitted plan also included “dosage” descriptions, such as how often a community-based organization was expected to meet with a participant, that were more appropriate to be determined at the administrative level. The introduced version will have more detailed descriptions of funded programs and additional

reporting indicators, as well as provide clarity on implementation timelines and evaluations, and eliminate the dosage details.

2. *Funding Details.* The transmitted I&E Plan included a spending plan that did not always break funding down by program. The introduced version will have a line item for every funded program, and it will provide more details on spending for Council priorities, such as youth mental health.
3. *Modifications to the Plan.* In the transmitted I&E Plan, Council oversight of the plan was functionally delegated to the Executive, allowing them to modify policies and funding priorities to maintain or create alignment with equivalent County, State, and Federal programs and ensure service targets are achieved. Changes would be reported in the FEPP Levy annual report after implementation, but without advance notice to Council. The introduced version will allow some flexibility for the Executive to modify policies relating to participant eligibility, enrollment prioritization, and implementation standards, but all other policy and funding modifications will require Council approval.
4. *Underspend.* In the transmitted I&E Plan, allocation of underspend would also have been left to DEEL's discretion, with vague priorities. This is in contrast to the 2019 FEPP Levy I&E Plan, which provided very specific direction regarding the use of underspend to prioritize increasing the number of available preschool slots for three- and four-year old children. The introduced version will state that underspend allocation must be approved by Council and prioritized for evidence-based services supporting positive impacts on levy goals. Additionally, underspend may only be used to fund new or expanded programming if it can be sustained for the remaining life of the levy.

Policy Considerations

1. New Programs to be Developed

The I&E Plan includes two new programs that will be designed in the 2026-2027 school year and be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year. These programs are:

- SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot, providing vouchers for preschool services for families that are unable to access the SPP program due to long waitlists; and
- Opportunity-Based Mentoring, serving students involved in, or at elevated risk of, criminal justice system involvement. Services will pair young people with trained mentors, including those with lived experience navigating the justice system and school disconnection, to provide consistent, relationship-based support anchored in school reconnection and career exploration.

While both of these programs reflect Council priorities, several questions remain about the details of implementation, including, but not limited to, how recipients for services will be chosen or prioritized. And while changes to funded services and spending plan modifications in the plan require Council approval, program elements such as implementation standards and participant eligibility can be changed by the department without prior Council approval. If

Council wishes to have more oversight of final design of these new programs, Council could require review or approval before implementation in advance of the 2027-2028 school year.

2. Universal School Meals

In addition to the new programs mentioned above, the I&E Plan includes a new school meals program. Of SPS's 109 schools, 56 already provide free meals to all students through federal and state funding. The Executive is proposing additional funding that will provide meals for all students, regardless of income, at the remaining 53 schools in SPS. These schools currently receive federal funding to support free and reduced-price meals for eligible low-income students, but other students must still pay. The new program will be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year and be funded for two years with funding from the Cost and Risk Reserve Funds. The estimated cost of the program is \$3.6 million in 2027 and \$4.1 million in 2028. After the initial two-year period, DEEL expects the State to fund this program with proceeds from the recently adopted Washington Senate Bill 6346, commonly known as the Millionaire's Tax, which includes funding for free K-12 school meals.

This proposal is a new Executive initiative that was not specifically identified as a Council priority during adoption of the new FEPP Levy. This proposal reduces the Cost and Risk Reserve Funds for two years to about \$642,000 in the 2026-2027 school year and \$884,000 in the 2027-2028 school year, representing a .35% average reserve for the first two years, increasing to an average of 2.5% for the final four years. In contrast, the cost assumptions presented to Council during the adoption of the FEPP Levy ordinance included a 2.5 percent risk reserve for each of the six years on average. Cost and Risk Reserve Funds are used to cover unexpected cost increases such as higher-than-expected inflation, reductions in external funding sources, and transition costs related to reducing or discontinuing programs.

In addition, long-term funding for this program is at risk given the legal challenge to the state's Millionaire's Tax. If the legal challenge is successful, or if there is not a resolution within the next two years, there will either be a dramatic drop in services to students, or pressure to continue City funding, potentially at the expense of other Council priorities.

If Council would like to provide greater protection against the risks of unexpected cost increases or a successful challenge to the Millionaire's Tax, Council could retain more funding for Cost and Risk Reserve Funds and prioritize a smaller number of schools to receive school meals funding.

Finally, while there is evidence to suggest that a universal subsidy benefiting higher-income families would also benefit food-insecure students, this program may not benefit those most in need as much as direct food assistance. If Council priorities regarding food assistance were not addressed by the Executive's universal school meals program, Council may wish to prioritize direct food assistance for students and families in need, such as providing evening and weekend meals, or expanding the summer meals program.

3. HSD Programs and Alignment with FEPP

The I&E Plan includes several programs that have historically been funded by and contracted through HSD. The 2026 Adopted Budget changed the fund source of these programs to the FEPP

Levy, and the programs are anticipated to undergo competitive processes at the end of their funding cycles, during the course of the FEPP Levy. These investments are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

HSD Program	FEPP Domain	Description	FEPP 6-year total	Planned Funding process
Youth Behavioral Health	Ready to Learn (K-12)	High quality, clinical and non-clinical, culturally responsive services and resources addressing behavioral health barriers to participation and completion of school, training programs, and career pathways.	\$9,291,507	2027
School-Based Safety	Ready to Learn (K-12)	Case management services, therapeutic support, family engagement, violence interruption/ conflict mediation and deescalation services, safe passage to school.	\$30,212,376	2029
Gender Based Violence (GBV) Prevention	Ready to Learn (K-12)	In-school and afterschool educational programming that raises awareness around dating/sexual violence, promotes healthy relationships, increases positive support networks through adult and peer mentorship, and helps change social norms and conditions in which GBV happens.	\$3,428,256	2028
Youth Development Programs	Ready to Launch (Post-Secondary)	Mentoring, leadership development, college and career exploration, pre-employment and career readiness training, entrepreneurship opportunities, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math learning, and postsecondary navigation.	\$29,971,601	2027

The FEPP Levy Ordinance includes clear goals and guidelines regarding the use of levy proceeds, yet the HSD contracts were created without FEPP Levy goals in mind. And while the proposed I&E Plan contains reporting indicators for these programs to measure the success of the programs in achieving levy goals, it is unclear whether these programs as currently conceived are the best fit for levy resources.

The I&E Plan notes that the HSD programs will be re-bid at the end of their funding cycles, after assessing program performance and impact related to levy outcomes. If Council would like to provide greater oversight in this area, Council may wish to request a report from DEEL and HSD

on these assessments, and any program redesigns, before their competitive funding processes are released.

4. Program Outcomes

The I&E Plan provides for a robust process to ensure continuous quality improvement of investments, with reporting indicators disaggregated by demographic characteristics. The FEPP Levy Ordinance states that an implementation principle of the levy is to “achieve levy outcomes that advance educational equity.” The evaluation framework described in Section 1 of the I&E Plan further includes the question: “To what extent, and in what ways, do FEPP investments improve educational equity, close opportunity gaps, and build a better economic future for Seattle children and youth?” However, the goals and desired outcomes within each domain in the I&E Plan are neutral when it comes to serving populations with the greatest need. The goals for FEPP-funded strategies are:

- Children are ready for Kindergarten
- Students achieve academically throughout elementary school
- Youth attend school regularly
- Children and youth demonstrate academic progress toward HS graduation at 3rd, 6th, and 9th grade milestones
- Youth start a college or credential pathway within one year of graduation
- Youth earn a degree or credential before age 26

These goals do not reference closing opportunity gaps for those populations furthest from educational milestones, as a measure of success for the levy. Council may wish to provide further direction on goals or outcomes included in the I&E Plan to reflect the desire to close opportunity gaps for those furthest from levy goals, and provide clearer consistency with the FEPP Levy Ordinance.

5. Path to Trades Priorities

The I&E Plan includes funding for programs that create career awareness and provide exploration and preparation support for Seattle youth interested in careers such as public service and trades. The Path to Trades Program Expansion at Seattle Colleges, and the Path to Trades Non-Colleges program are two such programs supported by the levy. These programs will provide support for prospective students in the trades at Seattle Colleges or other state-accredited educational institutions, state-registered apprenticeship programs, or state-accredited training providers. It will offer a one-time scholarship of up to \$1,500 for tools, supplies, or other required program and professional items, as well as other financial and academic supports. Ideally, these programs will provide information, encouragement, and support to students who might be interested in City careers for which there is a demand for workers and available apprenticeship programs, such as City Light line workers, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) water pipe workers, and SPU drainage and wastewater collection workers. Additionally, careers in certain construction trades could provide job opportunities at companies participating in the City’s Priority Hire program.

If Council would like to provide further direction to DEEL regarding strengthening partnerships between the Path to Trades programs and other City departments and programs, Council could amend the I&E Plan to provide more clarity for DEEL priorities in this regard.

6. School Safety Investments

The FEPP Levy includes investments to “support youth with non-punitive strategies to promote physical and emotional safety.” The I&E Plan includes funding for Restorative Practices, the new Opportunity-Based Mentoring Program described above that will serve students involved in, or at elevated risk of, criminal justice system involvement. The I&E Plan also includes existing HSD investments in School-Based Safety that have historically been supported by General Fund dollars, but that will now be levy-funded.

HSD completed a competitive funding process earlier this year that resulted in awards to six organizations to advance school-based safety, as a component of a \$14.7 million multi-pronged investment to increase community safety and reduce gun violence. These school-based awards support onsite safety teams at Seattle high schools and middle schools to provide mediation, case management, safe passage to and from school, and financial resources to support the needs of students and families.

Levy-funded school safety interventions, existing HSD awards, and the new Restorative Practices body of work, are likely to have some overlap in terms of services offered, individuals served, and desired outcomes. The I&E Plan does not include an articulation of the desire for coordinated services, or for an overarching framework to guide these investments.

If Council would like to provide direction for such a framework, Council can amend the I&E Plan to require or request a report on systems-level coordination for the totality of school safety investments, as well as other City-funded youth-focused efforts that are not explicitly framed as promoting safety or gun violence reduction, but that will nonetheless benefit from coordination with these efforts, such as behavioral health and wellness activities.

7. Contextual Policy Consideration: K-12 School-Based Investments

In the I&E Plan, the Executive has modified the approach to funding School-Based Investments and services beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. In the prior levy, funding was provided to selected schools that offered specific programs and services, and those schools could choose to contract with community-based organizations and departments such as Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), to offer services.

According to DEEL, allowing FEPP-funded schools to independently determine the programs and services offered to students has shown mixed results and made it difficult to track which types of interventions are working. DEEL now plans to implement a new model for delivering services based on a national, evidence-based program called “Community Schools.” The Community Schools model is a long-term, systemic approach to education that integrates learning with social, health, and family supports. The program calls for four pillars of support: 1) academic and enrichment support, 2) integrated student supports, such as family case management and

referrals, 3) active family and community engagement, and 4) collaborative leadership and practices. Under this model, schools will still apply for funding for specific services, some of which will be delivered by community-based organizations or departments such as SPR, but their application must include interventions that advance all four pillars. A Request for Proposals process will be conducted in 2026. There is no guarantee that programs and services receiving funding under the current program will be awarded funding under this new model. This could result in reduced funding for community-based organizations that receive funding under the current program, as well as SPR’s Community Learning Center program. If SPR’s funding for Community Learning Centers are reduced from FEPP Levy, it is unclear whether another source of funding would be available to sustain the program given the projected General Fund deficit.

Next Steps

The upcoming schedule for Select Committee consideration of the FEPP Levy I&E Plan is shown below.

June 30 – 9:30am	Discussion of Central Staff Policy Considerations
July 8 – 9:30am	Discussion and possible vote on amendments, Final Select Committee Vote on FEPP Levy I&E Plan
July 22nd – 9:30am <i>(if necessary)</i>	Discussion and possible vote on amendments, Final Select Committee Vote on FEPP Levy I&E Plan

If a Councilmember is interested in pursuing amendments, please contact Central Staff by no later than noon on July 2, 2026. Councilmembers are strongly encouraged to engage Central Staff as soon as possible to shape potential amendments.

cc: Lish Whitson, Director
Calvin Chow, Deputy Director



FEPP Levy Implementation & Evaluation Plan Policy Considerations

JASMINE MARWAHA AND TRACI RATZLIFF

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILIES, EDUCATION, PRESCHOOL, AND PROMISE (FEPP) LEVY 6-YR.
IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION PLAN

JUNE 30, 2026

Background

- In June 2025, the Council approved [Ordinance 127238](#) submitting a proposition to voters to fund education support services with a property tax levy generating approximately \$1.3 billion over a six-year period. The proposition was subsequently approved in November 2025.
- Proceeds must be spent in accordance with an Implementation & Evaluation (I&E) Plan approved by ordinance, which is required to include:
 - Priority criteria, including type of educational support;
 - Methodology and process by which levy-funded strategies will be selected;
 - The procedure for regularly monitoring and evaluating overall impacts and outcomes of each of the individual investments; and
 - A summary of stakeholders consulted.
- In addition to these required elements, the Plan also includes responses to two SLIs adopted by Council: 1) requesting how Council priorities listed in the SLI would be incorporated into the I&E Plan; and 2) requesting DEEL to provide quarterly reports regarding specific, measurable data and outcomes to Council.

Council Bill 121240, as transmitted

The Plan maintains the investment areas approved in the levy and adopted in the 2026 Budget, renamed as “domains.” Spending has shifted slightly from the cost estimates provided during budget deliberations, primarily due to the following:

- Risk Reserve changes to accommodate the universal school meals proposal;
- Shifting certain HSD programs from K-12 to College and Career;
- Shifting some labor costs from specific domains to Operations;
- Reduction in total spending projections due to minor adjustments in labor

Fall 2025 Spending Plan Estimates		Proposed FEPP I&E Plan	
Investment Area	6-Year Total	Domain	6-Year Total
Early Childhood	\$658,244,525	Ready to Start	\$656,779,835
K-12 Health & Safety, K-12 Youth Supports	\$510,729,458	Ready to Learn	\$478,052,730
College and Career	\$82,438,948	Ready to Launch	\$113,042,670
Leadership and Administration	\$78,840,116	Operations	\$82,157,909
Total	\$1,330,253,047		\$1,330,033,144

Council Bill 121240, as transmitted

The I&E spending plan also reflects some changes within each domain regarding specific programs that were outlined in the Fall 2025 budget process. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Addition of Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) Waitlist Voucher Pilot and Opportunity-Based Mentoring Program;
- Expanded Learning Opportunities splitting into “School-Based Investments” and “Community-Based Investments,” with specific requirements regarding the types of support provided;
- Some mental health staffing supports shifting to the School-Based Health Center program; and
- Reallocation of proposed additional Seattle Youth Employment Program funding to Police and Fire Career programs and “Path to Tech” program.

Council Bill 121240, as introduced

The introduced version will include significant changes to address clarity, funding details, and Council's role. These changes include but are not limited to the following:

1. Clarification Edits – Adds more detailed descriptions of funded programs and additional reporting indicators, clarity on implementation timelines and evaluations.
2. Funding Details - Provides line item break down for every funded program and more details on spending for Council priorities, such as youth mental health.
3. Modifications to the Plan – Limits DEEL's authority to modify plan except for specific policies - all other policy and funding modifications require Council approval.
4. Underspend – Requires Council approval of underspend allocation, prioritizes funding for evidence-based services supporting levy goals, and may only be used to fund new or expanded programming if it can be sustained for the remaining life of the levy.

Policy Considerations (1/2)

- 1. New Programs to be Developed** – Two new programs being designed for implementation in 2027-2028 school year - SPP Waitlist Voucher Pilot and Opportunity-Based Mentoring – with limited details available, including how recipients for services will be chosen or prioritized.
- 2. Universal School Meals Program** – New program provides two years of funding for free meals at 53 schools for students not otherwise supported by Federal free and reduced-price meal program. Reduces Cost and Risk Reserve Funds to support this program. Assumes State Millionaire’s Tax will fund program after first two years.
- 3. HSD Programs and Alignment with FEPP** – HSD programs previously funded with other sources now FEPP supported were not developed in alignment with FEPP Levy goals. Programs will be re-bid at end of funding cycle and provide opportunity to better align with FEPP goals and outcomes.

Policy Considerations (2/2)

4. **Program Outcomes** - The FEPP Levy Ordinance states a key implementation principle is to “achieve levy outcomes that advance educational equity.” Goals and desired outcomes in each domain in the I&E Plan do not reference closing opportunity gaps for populations furthest from educational milestones, as a measure of success for the levy.
5. **Path to Trades Priorities** – I&E Plan includes funding for Path to Trade programs that create career awareness and provide exploration and preparation support for Seattle youth interested in careers such as the trades and public service, including (but not prioritizing) City jobs for which there is a demand for workers and available apprenticeship programs.
6. **School Safety Investments** – The I&E Plan includes funding for several programs that will serve students involved in, or at elevated risk of, criminal justice system involvement. It also includes funding for existing HSD investments in School-Based Safety that have historically been supported by General Fund dollars. It is likely some overlap in terms of services offered, individuals served, and desired outcomes exists with these programs.

Contextual Policy Consideration

- 7. K-12 School-Based Investments** - The Executive is implementing a new evidence-based approach to funding School-Based Investments and services beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. The current model has shown mixed results and made it difficult to track which types of interventions are working. New Request for Proposal process will be conducted in 2026. There is no guarantee that programs and services receiving funding under the current program will be awarded funding under this new model.

Next Steps

July 2nd at Noon

- Amendment proposals due to Central Staff

July 8th at 9:30 a.m.

- Discussion and possible vote on amendments, final Select Committee vote on FEPP Levy I&E Plan

July 22 at 9:30 am. (If necessary)

- Discussion and vote on amendments, final Select Committee vote on FEPP Levy I&E Plan

Questions?