

BUILD FOUNDATIONS WITH EARLY LEARNING



July 15, 2019

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

As parents, educators, caregivers, leaders of organizations and community advocates, we envision a future where every child has access to the quality early learning opportunities that will set them up to thrive throughout their lives. We cherish the potential in each one of our kids and want to see our community resources supporting them from the beginning. We believe that significant upstream investments from the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account (PSTAA) would provide a once in a lifetime opportunity to close the opportunity gap for kids of color and low-income children, while building lasting infrastructure for generations of King County residents.

In December 2017 the King County Council identified seven goals for PSTAA funding. Early learning, done well and with intentionality in addressing racial disparities, is essential to all of them. Systemic structural disadvantages start from the beginning, with disparities across cognitive, social, behavioral and health outcomes apparent at 9 months of age. A strong early start has a direct correlation with a child's likelihood to complete school, attend college, and be involved in the criminal justice system. Consistent, quality early learning can provide safety and stability for children in the child welfare system, and be a protective factor against the long-term impacts of trauma for children living in homelessness. Closing the opportunity gap for low-income children and children of color requires systems to work together to create access to upstream supports for kids and youth.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of early learning facilities as a strategy, and we urge you to make a significant investment to create a scalable impact. Facilities is an urgently needed component of expanding access to programs. The opportunity to partner with affordable housing projects and create multi-use spaces that can serve families across the education continuum would be a powerful anchor for economically vulnerable communities and those at risk of displacement. With innovative and thoughtful planning, the County could capitalize on a rare opportunity to drive meaningful and long-lasting change.

You have heard from parents who have had to forgo a paycheck or faced increased stress and worry as they welcomed a new baby into their family, because they could not find care, and child care providers who have had to make difficult choices about whether to pay their recycling bill or fix their playground to maintain their license. Child care center directors have shared their challenges of having a retail space sit empty for over a year because they could not find the capital funds to build the classroom. The child care crunch shapes not only our economy of today, but also opportunity for our future. PSTAA has the potential to yield the highest impact with the longest-term value by investing in early learning facilities to increase access to high-quality early learning in the county.

We urge you to support a robust allocation of PSTAA funds towards early learning facilities.

Sincerely,

Tony To	<i>HomeSight Executive Director</i>
Erin Okuno	<i>SE Seattle Education Coalition Executive Director</i>
Matt Griffin	<i>Pine Street Group</i>
Mary Jean Ryan	<i>Community Center for Education Results Executive Director</i>
Lois Martin	<i>Community Day Center for Children Director</i>
Jon Botten	<i>Childhaven Chief Executive Officer</i>
Kris Lambright	<i>YWCA Seattle King Snohomish</i>
Roxana Norouzi	<i>OneAmerica Deputy Director</i>
Bill Rumpf	<i>Mercy Housing Northwest President</i>
John Welch	<i>Puget Sound Educational Service District Superintendent</i>
Deborah Duitch	<i>Bellevue School District Director of Early Learning</i>
Michael Heinisch	<i>Kent Youth and Family Services Executive Director</i>
Judy Summerfield	<i>Sound Child Care Solutions Executive Director</i>
Deeann Burtch Puffert	<i>Child Care Resources Chief Executive Officer</i>
John Bancroft	<i>Columbia City Consulting, Retired Head Start Executive Director, Grandparent of 2-, 4-, 6-, 8- and 11-year olds</i>
Laurie Lippold	<i>Partners for Our Children Public Policy Director</i>
Molly O'Connor	<i>Thrive Washington Chief Executive Officer</i>
Jessica Galvez	<i>Save the Children Action Network, Parent of 22- and 12-year old students and grandparent to 4-year old</i>
Ana Bonilla	<i>Enterprise Community Partners</i>
Sara Givens	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of infant and 3-year old</i>
Stacey Dozono	<i>Parent of 3-year old</i>
Casey Osborn-Hinman	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 11-month old and 4-year old</i>
Jason Thibedeau	<i>Parent of 6- and 3- year old</i>
Staci Imwalle	<i>Parent of 3-year old</i>
Nathan Hinman	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 11-month old and 4-year old</i>
Adrienne Query-Fiss	<i>Community Advocate; Foster parent, special needs parent, and adoptive parent; Parent of 4- and 5-year old</i>
Hannah Lidman	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 3- and 5-year old</i>
Sara Stubbs	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 18-month and 4-year old</i>
Shana N Schasteen	<i>Parent of 4- and 2-year old, and 2-month old</i>

Maki Park	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 5- and 3-year old</i>
Karen Uffelman	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 5- and 9-month old</i>
Erica Leigh Slepak	<i>Parent of 3-year old and 9-month old</i>
Sandra Hoffmann	<i>Parent of 4- and 6-year olds</i>
Haydee Wali	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 7-month old</i>
Molly Firth	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 3-year old</i>
Dagny Hartmann	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 6-month old</i>
Erin Bogdanovich	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 14-month old</i>
Christine Alba	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 11-, 5- and 3-year old</i>
Sandhya Nayak	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 2-year old</i>
Sarabeth A Zemel	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 4-year old</i>
Wendy Leung	<i>Community Advocate and Parent of 2-year old</i>
Lynda Petersen	<i>Community Center for Education Results Chief Operating Officer, Parent of 18-month old</i>
Rebecca Mongrain	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 5- and 7-year old</i>
Leslie Dozono	<i>Ely Consulting, Parent of 6- and 3-year old</i>
Jacob King	<i>Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP Administrative Assistant</i>
Richard de Sam Lazaro	<i>Expedia Group Government Affairs Manager</i>
Claire Toaal	<i>Parent of 4- and 7-year old</i>
Alexandra Beth Friedman	<i>Consultant, Parent of 3- and 6-year old</i>
Alicia Brender	<i>Early Learning Child Development Coordinator, Parent of 5- and 10-year old</i>
Deborah Purce	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 1- and 4-year old</i>
Hayley Waltz	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 6-year and 21-month old</i>
Grace Rooney	<i>Parent of 6-month and 2.5-year old</i>
Nathalie Jones	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 6- and 3-year old</i>
Melyssa Lyons	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 1-year old</i>
Ruth Lett	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 19-month old</i>
Caroline VanHarmelen	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 3-year old</i>
Kelly Lynch Reimer	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 3- and 6-year old</i>
Debbie McCormick	<i>Early Childhood Educator, Parent of 1-year old</i>
Makeba R Greene	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 4-, 6-, and 8-year old</i>
Eunice Stanisci	<i>Parent of 2-, 4-, and 6-year old</i>
Mariah Rosenblum	<i>Seattle Public Schools School Nurse Team Lead, Parent of 1- and 3-year old</i>
Catherine Roth	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 3-year old</i>
Erin Murphy	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 10-month and 3-year old</i>
Nicole Comforto	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of infant and 4-year old</i>
Heather Hokamp	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 1-year old</i>
Tonya Ricks Sterr	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 2- and 5-year old</i>
Jessica McColgin	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 4- and 2-year old</i>
Jennifer Kelty	<i>The Children's Center at Burke Gilman Gardens Executive Director</i>
Mia Janelle Cruz	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 18-month old</i>
Litonya Lester	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 12-month old</i>
Jamie Prins	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 3- and 5-year old</i>
Dominique Alex	<i>Children's Home Society of Washington, Early Head Start/Head Start/ECEAP Director</i>
Alejandra Villa	<i>Community Advocate</i>
Rachel Haas	<i>Public Health Practitioner and Community Advocate</i>
Ryan Pricco	<i>Child Care Aware of WA Director of Policy & Advocacy, Parent of 9- and 6-year old</i>
Jill Sells, MD	<i>Pediatrician</i>
Nimco Bulale	<i>OneAmerica Education Program Manager</i>
Eli Goss	<i>OneAmerica Senior Policy Manager</i>
Laura Close	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 5- and 7-year old</i>
Erin Shinneman	<i>Parent of 18-month old</i>
Julie Ann campos	<i>Community Advocate, UW College of Education Graduate</i>

Aubrey Beals	<i>Child Care Resources Board Member, Parent of 9-month old</i>
Stacy Edwards	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 1-year old</i>
Bish Paul	<i>Washington STEM Policy Manager</i>
Sarah Brady	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Gretchen Stahr Breunig	<i>NW Stahr Principal, Early Learning Advisor to the Lake Washington Institute of Technology</i>
Joel Ryan	<i>WA State Association of Head Start/ECEAP Executive Director</i>
Julie Marl	<i>Zeno Executive Director</i>
Amy Corey	<i>Child Care Resources Board Member, Grandparent to 3-, 5-, 6- and 7-year old</i>
Evelyn Lemoine	<i>Community Advocate</i>
Claire Miccio	<i>Community Advocate, Parent to 3- and 1-year old</i>
Norma Renteria Lobo	<i>Child Care Resources Family Resource Specialist, Parent to 6-year old</i>
Kathryn Flores	<i>Child Care Resources Chief Administrative/Financial Officer</i>
Lorina Person	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Li Bernstein	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Katie Renschler	<i>Bainum Family Foundation West Coast Director</i>
Corey Snelson	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Ann Knutsen	<i>Community Advocate</i>
Breeann Marie Hufford	<i>Child Care Resources Early Achievers Technical Assistance Coach</i>
Robert Hufford	<i>Sturgeon Electric, Community Advocate</i>
Bridget Ioya	<i>Maggianos, Community Advocate, Parent to 5-year old</i>
Kathy Fisher	<i>Halcyon Skin Care, Community Advocate</i>
Beth Goss	<i>Parent Education Instructor</i>
Jeanne McGrady	<i>Community Advocate, Parent of 13- and 15-year old</i>
Phoebe Anderson	<i>Child Care Resources Chief Operating Officer, Parent of 10-year old</i>
Monica Harris	<i>Parent of 12- and 17-year old</i>
Sarah Crilley	<i>Child Care Resources, Parent of 17-year old</i>
Alexandra Barbaria	<i>Child Care Resources Homeless Family Engagement Specialist</i>
Hava Tursky	<i>Child Care Resources Homeless Family Engagement Specialist, Former Early Childhood Educator</i>
Sarah Gray	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Li Bernstein	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Savannah Stannard	<i>Child Care Resources, Parent of 11-, 8- and 3-year old</i>
James Siri	<i>Early Childhood Education Advocate</i>
Katie Kaiser	<i>Child Care Resources Homeless Child Care Subsidy Program Manager</i>
Janine Meyers	<i>Child Care Resources Early Achievers Manager</i>
Nichole Flores	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Rachel Kirby	<i>Child Care Resources, Parent of 16-year old</i>
Susan Leavitt	<i>Community Advocate</i>
Joanne Fong	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Marie Brain	<i>Child Care Resources Early Achievers Coach, Parent of 11-, 9- and 5-year old</i>
Christy Qualin	<i>Child Care Provider, Parent</i>
Deana Fanning	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
Kimberly Hoang	<i>Child Care Resources</i>
LaKecia Farmer	<i>Community Advocate, Aunt to 7-month old</i>
Caitlin Bailey	<i>Community Advocate</i>
Sandra Taylor	<i>Child Care Resources Seattle Preschool Program Coordinator</i>
Paula Steinke	<i>SOAR King County Early Learning Coalition Director</i>