



COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

PUGET SOUND TAXPAYERS ACCOUNTABILITY ACCOUNT

JUNE 2019 | EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT LLC



INTRODUCTION

This document serves as an introduction to the Community Input Summary. It contains background and explanatory information for the summary. Additionally, at the end of this document are brief summaries of the primary and secondary strategies (as defined in the community engagement process), which provide more details from the subject matter and youth development specialists interviews.

BACKGROUND

The Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Account (PSTAA) was created as an amendment to the 2015 State Transportation Revenue Package by the Washington State Legislature and directs that these Sound Transit-related funds be used for educational services to improve educational outcomes in early learning, K-12, and post-secondary education. The State's vision for PSTAA is described in RCW 43.79.520.

Three reports contracted by the county include:

- **Needs Assessment Report:** a compilation and review of existing education-related needs assessments done recently in King County.
- **Strategy Assessment Report:** an examination of the potential impact of, need for, cost, and implementation feasibility of each of the nine strategy areas.
- **Funding Level Options Report:** a look at how many students might be served in each education domain, at different funding levels.

Furthermore, the County collected input from community members through individual meetings, and at two County Council meetings focused on community concerns on the PSTAA Needs Assessment and Strategy Assessment Reports, described above. The Needs Assessment Report includes the viewpoints of hundreds, if not thousands, of King County residents about education needs, as expressed through various community needs assessment processes conducted in King County in recent years.



COMMUNITY INPUT AND ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Interviews

In January 2019, fourteen interviews of education and equity and youth development subject matter specialists were conducted from February through April 2019. The interviews were designed to solicit promising practices and program models that centered and addressed issues of equity. Information from the interviews show up in the Community Input Summary and were reflected in the writing of the survey questions.

Online Survey

From March 2019 through May 2019, an online survey provided respondents from across the county the opportunity to share additional information regarding the proposed strategies. A total of 122 responses from a variety of county districts, ages, and ethnicities provided detailed responses to ten questions.

Listening Session Information

From March 2019 through May 2019, community-based organizations hosted listening sessions throughout the county. Local leaders provided an opportunity for the county to hear from adults, youth, teachers, mentors, counselors, and organization leaders on what they believed the most important strategies to be, and what, if any, was missing from the originally proposed strategies. All sessions were posted on the public calendar on King County Council web pages and were advertised through social media of council members and the Executive office. Additionally, listening sessions emphasized hearing from marginalized communities, youth, and the target populations named in the PSTAA motion.

A total of 21 listening sessions conducted throughout the county, with approximately 650 participants, two sessions were conducted in three languages, two sessions conducted in Spanish, and one conducted in Somali; providing diverse community input. The following community input summary provides an overview of the feedback presented by the listening session participants. King County is deeply indebted to those who participated.



Listening Session Themes

Priority Levels

Communities prioritized each strategy's ability to provide educational services and meet educational outcomes. Consultants weighted community priorities as follows:

- a. **Tier 1** strategies were frequently named as a high priority, included all or most of the populations named in the motion, and additionally subject matter equity and education specialists described them as a promising practice.
- b. **Tier 2** strategies were less frequently named as a high priority, included some of the populations named in the motion, and subject matter equity and education specialists described them as strongly contributory to promising practices.

Priority Activities:

Communities described three activities described as follows:

- a. **Navigation Support:** Helping vulnerable students through critical transitions. For example, supporting foster youth when entering a new school/district, helping first generation students navigate financial aid, and assisting immigrant and refugee students transition into early education programs.
- b. **Support Services:** Defined by communities and present in several strategies are the need for supportive services. For example: housing supports for students transitioning to postsecondary education, transportation supports for families who do not have personal transportation to early learning facilities, and scholarship funds for career academy programs.
- c. **Systems Change:** Often mentioned by communities of color was the need for changing the education system. Described as a leaky pipeline by subject matter specialists, strategies were proposed to address the ineffectiveness of the education system in early learning, K-12, and postsecondary levels for youth of color. Promising practices addressed increasing the number of teachers of color throughout the county, and requiring districts to partner with community based organizations for navigation and supportive services.

Missing populations of concern:

Concern for several populations not mentioned in the proposed strategies were addressed in the listening sessions. Described as vulnerable populations, communities listed the vulnerable populations needing educational services. Subject matter specialists also suggested a more definitive description of "vulnerable and marginalized" populations. The Community Input Summary lists the missing populations and related input presented by participants.



Cross cutting themes:

Communities named a set of practices they believe are applicable to all strategies. The Community Input Summary lists the cross-cutting themes frequently named in the listening sessions. These themes represent a community effort to ensure the equitable allocation and implementation of the funds. The community voiced concerns that the funds would not address historic racial oppression and racial disparities.

New strategies

Communities and subject matter specialists offered additional strategies for consideration by the council.

- a. Provide targeted funding strategy for outreach and intervention** to gang-influenced youth in middle school through local community-based organizations to reduce drop-outs, support pathway navigation, and provide parent empowerment. Middle schools and community-based organizations work together to connect gang-influenced youth through inconsistent attendance and discipline challenges. Schools provide alternative discipline program requiring students to work with partnering organizations for tutoring, mentoring, leadership and empowerment programming.
- b. Create a strategy to directly impact the recruitment and retention of certified educators of color.** Work with universities to create pipeline. Support educators of color by providing a supportive cohort experience for educators of color. Such a strategy will increase the number of educators with the lived experiences of students of color. Evidence shows students respond better to those with the lived experience and/or ethnic identity of the students, particularly students of color.



AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Increasing access and success in postsecondary, via a “promise scholarship” program.

The community engagement process named this strategy as a priority citing the strategy has the ability to reach students who become disconnected after graduating from high school or drop-out of high school for a variety of reasons. Also, the strategy can connect students who need an alternative pathway to postsecondary education.

Implementing a promise scholarship program may require the council consider the need to connect or empower families through local community-based organizations. The traditional pathway does not work as well when the family experience is fractured, such as foster youth, youth experiencing homelessness, or children in the welfare system. Ensuring families and communities are able to access the promise scholarship also fills a gap in other scholarship programs for low-income students.

Lastly, research shows students of color experience higher rates of expulsion and suspensions for the same behavior as their peers. Additionally, once a person is in a diversion process, imprisoned, or otherwise unable to attend school due to legal system involvement; the opportunities to reconnect them to education opportunities is greatly diminished. Specialists interviewed suggested attention to the education of those in these circumstances may in fact reduce recidivism and community violence.

Strategy 2: Support career connected education in K-12 schools.

The community engagement process named this strategy as a secondary priority. There are historic concerns with career-related education programs and racial equity. Community input raised questions as to whether students of color would be led away from 4-year institutions by high school counselors. Youth asked if this strategy means they will lose the ability to choose their high school focus and will be required to follow the career-academy, leaving no ability to discover as they matriculate through the system.

Implementation challenges with this strategy questioned how career-connected programs would be accessible if not provided equitably by the school districts. Schools with high need and not considered highly capable may receive less rigorous career-related programming. While schools that are labeled as highly capable may receive engineering and technical career-related programming. How does the council ensure equity is accomplished in funding the development of career-academies?



Strategies 4 and 5: Supporting early learning center and collocating early learning centers with affordable housing and mixed-use spaces.

The community engagement process named this as a primary strategy. As reported in the Needs Assessment Report and equally expressed throughout the engagement process, there is a felt-need for early learning facilities. Yet, the engagement process also produced a set of concerns largely implementation related.

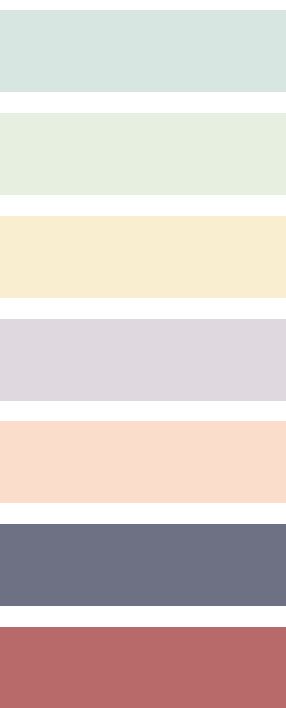
Families questioned how new facilities would change or address the economic model of early learning. While increasing the number of early learning facilities is important, additional concerns were noted regarding affordability and accessibility. The cost of property in King County means early learning centers are managing high lease rates. Service providers reported this creates a challenging economic model in serving low-income families. Implementing strategy 4 and 5 may require addressing the economic model experienced by service providers if new or redeveloped facilities are to be sustainable, accessible, and affordable. This in-part speaks to input regarding subsidizing costs for King County's low-income families, similar to the City of Seattle.

The effectiveness of strategy 4 and 5 are directly related to how it is implemented, and concerns stated above addressed. One level of impact is simply to increase the number of early learning facilities. Addressing accessibility and affordability may create an even deeper level of impact.

Strategy 6: Investments in programming or facilities to support children and youth experiencing homelessness, in foster care and child welfare systems, justice-involved, or otherwise vulnerable youth.

The community engagement process named this as a primary strategy. While input suggested the council define "vulnerable" more succinctly, allowing for a broader application of the strategy to other populations. Concerns for implementing this strategy largely questioned the type of programs and facilities the community and subject matter specialists believe qualify as educational services and thus produce educational outcomes. Broadly applied, PSTAA funding for this strategy may be used to fund youth development programs. How does the council assess if these programs are educational and will yield education outcomes?

Implementing this strategy requires a determination on how youth development programming may or may not accomplish or contribute education outcomes and how that programming should be structured. Suggested models by youth development specialist note "vulnerable" students need support for out-of-school related issues in order to graduate from high school. This is particularly



acute for foster youth, youth experiencing homelessness, and children in the welfare system. Program models that wrap-around the student and family shows promising results for improving the overall well-being of youth. Additionally, high school students proposed out-of-school services that directly support their ability to focus on school work as necessary (Highline High student proposal). Alternatively, middle school students and youth development specialists named in-school programming and supports as necessary. Research also supports the council may need to implement middle and high school programming, accordingly.

Strategy 8: Youth empowerment and organizing.

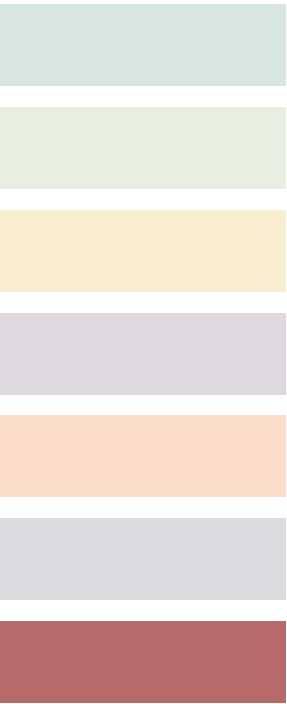
The community engagement named this as a primary strategy. In part the community and subject matter specialists believe the impact of asset-based approaches improve the overall ability of students, build resilience, and mediate negative influences. Research supports the importance of asset-based approaches that involve empowering youth as change agents through civic engagement. Also, the Strategy Assessment Report documented the impact of youth empowerment programming.

Implementing this strategy is largely related to ensuring community-based organizations are representative of the youth they are serving. Also, subject matter specialists in equity and education called out the need for ethnic specific curriculum and culturally responsive practices. Recent research demonstrates the improvement of education outcomes when students of color and low-income families are involved in ethnic and culturally responsive youth empowerment and organizing programs.

Educators are more aware of socio-emotional learning and the impact on learning, bullying, and increased sense of belonging. Youth empowerment designed as such promote socio-emotional well-being, reduce bullying, and increased sense of belonging. For students named in the motion and by the community, benefit more than other students from these types of programs. Current in-school programs exist in the Bellevue School District and Highline College, and by an organization supporting Pacific Islanders called Our Future Matters. Over 500 Pacific Islanders attended the most recent education empowerment conference.

Strategy 9: Training educators in the effects of poverty and institutional racism.

The community engagement process named this as a secondary strategy due to the lack of diversity in the teaching profession. As classrooms become more diverse in King County, spreading south and east, the lack of diversity of teachers and administrators greatly concerns the community. Refugee and immigrant families report a growing concern for schools unwilling to address language concerns in communicating with families.



Implementing this strategy will require a determination on whether resources should go to training a predominantly white teachers and administrators when the need for more diversity in teaching is required over the next 20 years. Of the growing diversity in King County, the majority of growth is estimated to be in communities where English is a second language. Additionally, it is assumed by the community that school districts can best deliver training to teachers and staff using current resources and professional development requirements. What school districts are unable to do is increase the pipeline of teachers of color.

COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY


TOP 5 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

 **Racial justice as a framework** and goal embedded into every strategy

 **Train and empower parents and families** to navigate the education system

 **Train and empower grass roots organizations** to support the education process and require all school districts to have a community engagement plan for collaboration with community-based organizations (CBO)

 **Social and emotional wellness for kids is key** in educational outcomes and incredibly difficult to find these resources and connect with them

 **One-time funding should empower local community-based organizations** to expand trauma-informed programs and mental and physical health services. Highlights the need for all strategies to be community-based and for CBO's to center relationships between families and schools.

STRATEGIES & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Strategies #3 & #7 are not listed. Feedback and support are low. Strong community priorities rated on level 1-2.

1. Increase access and success in postsecondary, via a "promise scholarship" program.

Improving pathway navigation is a priority strategy for multiple communities. College advisory capacity currently does not reach all students, especially students who do not go directly from high school to college.

S1	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
<p>Level 1 Priority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target first-generation students. First generation student's families expressed lack of knowledge about the process and access to information about getting their kids into college. Funds need to cover housing and transportation because these become barriers that burden students Locate mental and behavioral counselors in the community to help follow students and provide support. Focus on disconnected youth in particular youth who have dropped out of high school and are transitioning back into the education system. Increase 1:1 support and attention on these students Unlike Seattle Promise model, College Promise should not be a cohort model but help any disconnected youth finish school. Ensure dollars target students who are low-income. Disconnected youth and families require financial aid education. (FAFSA) Immigrant communities fear sharing financial and immigration background on FAFSA and other financial aid applications. Programs like Running Start do not support the most vulnerable students because there is not support and resources for students who need transportation, need to work and go to school, and need help navigating college system. Bi-lingual CBO's can deliver services and advocate for kids and families. 	<p>Mockingbird suggests there is limited pathway navigation beyond high school for foster youth.</p>	<p>Unstably housed youth (couch surfing) prohibits consistent delivery of any service.</p>	<p>Recent research supports alternative education opportunities not currently available in King County.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-lingual education advisors will help families and students navigate education system. Remove language barriers. Seattle Public School provides a model for transitioning immigrant and refugee families. Do all districts have an immigrant transition office? Providing education and assistance on financial aid process for immigrant families and communities. 	<p>There is a felt need by those who live with learning challenges to have postsecondary education better suit their needs. It is reported that postsecondary education has not done enough to incorporate students who need different types of testing services, for example. While schools must comply with ADA regulations, they often fail to center students who require different educational services.</p>

2. Support career connected education in K-12 schools.

Youth consistently shared the need for career related curricula. Community (youth) raised multiple questions and concerns. Will students of color be directed away from 4-year institutions? Who decides the careers? Does this include support for trade school and apprenticeship programs? How does strategy 1 and 2 work together?

S2	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 2 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure students have more career-related options. Include financial literacy in the curriculum. Can Strategy #1 and #2 work together for technical/vocation education? The bridge between high school and post-secondary education is critical. Strategies need to focus on following students and making this transition more successful and have services such as mental and behavioral health follow the students Disconnected youth and families require financial aid education. (FAFSA) provide this education to families in the last two years of high school. Latinx families expressed particular fears around all of the systems that required sharing their taxes and personally identifiable information 	<p>Frequent recommendation from foster advocates is to provide education pathway navigation for career connected learning programs.</p>	<p>Target career connected learning for disconnected young adults who are in short term residence programs. YouthBuild is an evidence-based, pre-apprenticeship program certified by the state and run out of South Seattle College's Georgetown Campus. Of the 260 nationally-affiliated YouthBuild programs across the country, YouthCare's YouthBuild is one of the only programs to specifically recruit homeless and court-involved youth.</p>	<p>Incarcerated college education and employment preparation program proposed because education and employment reduces recidivism.</p> <p>Traditional education uses alternative schools approach. This approach is not working and simply houses under performing and discipline problem students through graduation. Use career-connected approach as an alternative to the current alternative system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve bi-lingual capacity of K-12 counselors. 	

4. Support and maintain early learning center and programs.

Research shows economically vulnerable communities lack affordable and accessible high-quality early learning programs. Primary target population for this strategy includes immigrant and refugee communities.

S4	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 1 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase multi-lingual and multi-cultural programs. Can assessment of early learning programs be connected to kindergarten readiness data? Fund programs that provide after-hours services and increase subsidized enrollment. Streamline the certification process for early learning service providers that serve ELL communities. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request educational services be directed to the family and community-based organizations. 	<p>Subsidize childcare for county residents who qualify.</p>

5. Collocate early learning centers with affordable housing and mixed-use spaces.

Data shows a serious lack of early learning centers and fragility in housing market for young and immigrant families. Subsidizing early learning programs for low-income families can impact education outcomes long term. Greatest impact for this strategy includes immigrant and refugee families.

S5	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 1 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns early learning hubs will not be accessible and affordable for immigrant communities or young families. Lack of capital for low-income providers to rent/build new facilities. Address the need for capital with particular communities and ethnic groups. How might churches support the need for early learning facilities? How can these early learning hubs serve as sources of economic renewal in low-income neighborhoods? Can they be located near Sound Transit Stations around the county? 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of mixed-use space could also be used in the evening for educating family and community. 	

6. Investments in programming or facilities to support children and youth experiencing homelessness, in foster care and child welfare systems, justice-involved, or otherwise vulnerable youth.

Vulnerable populations are disproportionately students of color, either in foster care, experiencing homelessness, LGBTQIA, and/or justice involved. Using a racial justice framework will ensure the intersectionality is addressed. Additionally, the relationship between youth development sector and education services requires better navigation services for all vulnerable populations through the age of 21 – 24. Vulnerable populations access GED and career-employment options but lack housing and transportation services/supports similar to McKinney-Vento Act.

S6	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 1 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaggregation of the populations served under this strategy is needed. "Vulnerable" is too broadly defined. Questions from youth regarding LGBTQIA struggling with a variety of issues were regularly mentioned. Prioritize CBO's led by people of color that represent the lived experiences of those in the school to prison pipeline. 	<p>Foster youth have special needs for pathway navigation and supports.</p> <p>Suggestions to expand Treehouse family program model.</p>	<p>Many definitions of homelessness require a broader description of how different youth communities experience homelessness.</p> <p>Incarcerated college education and employment preparation program proposed because education and employment reduces recidivism.</p>	<p>Lack of group mentoring funding reduces opportunity for CBO's to address culture of violence and establish culture of care.</p> <p>Addressing culture of violence will improve education outcomes for SKC. Schools collaborating on student discipline will address culture of violence through group mentorship models that create a sense of belonging for the most vulnerable youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health issues impact learning of students struggling to learn the culture of education in America. 	<p>Wrap around education case management for the most vulnerable populations, including LGBTQIA and those with physical and mental learning needs. These particular populations require a greater emphasis on physical and emotional well-being due to historic trauma, societal rejection, and lack of capable support and advocacy.</p>

8. Youth Empowerment and Organizing.

Data shows the positive impact centering the voices of youth of color through empowerment and youth organizing programs. They have a holistic impact on youth of color. Programs tend to emphasize sense of belonging and healthy identity, which positively impact education outcomes by reducing student discipline issues and improves overall socio-emotional well being. A racial justice framework is required by representative CBO's to ensure historic education issues are addressed.

S8	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 1 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include in school and after-school programming options. Currently not all county districts provide after-school programming. Address the historic racism in education by supporting the development of ethnic-specific curriculum as early in K12 as possible. 	<p>Reducing the loss of class time when student transfers to a new family is important to improving education outcomes. Mockingbird and Kent District model seeks to reduce out-of-district transfers.</p>		<p>Program models for justice system involved youth should include positive ethnic identity development as a promising practice.</p>		

9. Training Educators in the effects of poverty and institutional racism.

Promising practices where educators access student's cultural funds of knowledge is desirable. Yet, community prioritized the lack of educators of color as a systems failure. Research shows increasing recruitment and retention of educators of color for K-12 positively impacts education outcomes for students of color.

S9	Feedback on targeting high-need groups	Foster youth	Youth experiencing homelessness	Youth with legal system involvement	Immigrant and refugee youth and families	What's missing? (Only most frequent included)
Level 2 Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevailing opinion is that school districts have resources to train educators and employ promising practices. Concerns for the teaching profession lacking diversity nationwide. Recent research questions impact on education outcomes for diversity training. 					<p>All teachers required training in trauma-informed practices and culturally responsive teaching.</p>