

WASHINGTON STATE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TABLE

April 7, 2023

Representative X
Washington House of Representatives
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Representative X,

Thank you for your work to support children and youth this legislative session. Both the House and Senate budgets have clear priorities to fund student learning, engagement, and basic needs.

One of the funding mechanisms—federal COVID-related Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) III funds—was proposed to be used for several programs and school-related efforts. **However, these ESSER dollars have already been obligated by OSPI and are currently under contract.** This includes many youth development providers that received funding through the Community-Based Organization (CBO) and Afterschool grants in the last budget cycle. These grants have been allocated to support student learning and engagement into the next school year and through summer 2024.

Given the large amount of funding related to ESSER and the end date for ESSER III funds (September 30, 2024), we support OSPI's efforts to extend the reach of these dollars for as long as possible. However, the balance sheet for ESSER III shows unfulfilled contract reimbursements as *unspent funds*. This is because providers cannot access their reimbursements until after services and supports are complete.

While we were thrilled to see additional funds in the CBO and Afterschool grants in both the House and Senate 23-25 budgets, we do not want ESSER funding to be taken away from current grantees. Our goal is to honor current contracts and continue to provide post-pandemic support to Washington youth, particularly those furthest from educational justice.

We'd be happy to chat further and connect you with current grantees for community-based context, please contact David Beard for more information: dbeard@schoolsoutwashington.org. Thanks for all your work this session and for your consideration.

African Young Dreamers
Empowerment Program
Altera
Asia Pacific Cultural Center
Boys & Girls Clubs of
Washington State
Committee for Children
Communities In Schools
Washington
DJH Kids and Community Center
Foundation for Tacoma
Students

Homage Senior Services
Housing Hope
Justice for Girls Coalition of
Washington State
League of Education Voters
MENTOR Washington
Northwest Community Action
Center
Reading Partners
Refugee & Immigrant Services
NW
Refugee Women's Alliance

Save the Children – Washington
State
School's Out Washington
Stand for Children Washington
Supportive Housing Association
Team Read
United Way of King County
Washington State Alliance of
YMCAs
Youth and Family Link
The ZONE at Northeast
Community Center