

TO: Governor Inslee

CC: Members of House Capital Budget and Senate Ways and Means Committees

Date: January 11, 2024

Governor Inslee,

Thank you for introducing a capital budget that prioritizes our students and invests in K-12 school facilities. We are particularly grateful for your investments in the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP), the Small District Modernization Grant Program, and clean classroom air. Your proposal funds a substantial increase to SCAP, the first funding increase the program has seen in over two decades. Thank you for recognizing the needs of our schools and prioritizing student health and safety.

Our associations are writing to you today to express our concern and opposition to funding SCAP almost exclusively with funds from the Common School Trust Account. Historically, SCAP has relied on bond funding, which provides school districts with financial stability as they attempt to pass costly and technical voter-approved capital bonds. We are particularly concerned that if bond funds are repurposed to other programs, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to get them back for school construction.

Without stable bond funding, school districts will rely on state budget forecasts and funding from cash accounts to support school construction projects. Cash-funded SCAP projects pose a high risk to school districts, as there is no guarantee the state will have the funding necessary to complete projects in conjunction with a district's capital plan and project timeline approved by voters. Without predictable and stable funding, districts could run out of resources to complete their capital projects or abandon projects entirely.

We respectfully request the Legislature return bond funding to the School Construction Assistance Program, ensuring our districts have the stability they need to pursue their capital projects. Thank you for your investments in our students and school facilities and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA)

Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA)

Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)

Alliance of Educational Associations (WA Association of Maintenance and Operation Administrators and WA School Nutrition Association)

Washington State Parent Teacher Association (WSPTA)

Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO)

Public School Employees of WA/SEIU 1948

The Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD)

