

Youth Development and Schools: Partnering to Support Students

As the state and country move towards a whole-child approach to education, now is time to forge creative and innovative partnerships between districts and community-based service providers to support 21st century student needs and goals.

There are 295 [school districts](#) in Washington state, in addition to six state-tribal compact schools, charter schools, and other special state supported educational districts. While funding is an important collaboration opportunity, space (including use of kitchens), materials and virtual education tools, transportation, and program development offer other points of partnership.

Approaching Districts: Ideas and Tips

- Keep in mind that space and funding are always tight and come to the table with creative ideas.
- Decide if your organization is [ready to partner](#) and map out the existing ecosystem of [school-community partnerships](#) in the targeted school/district. Provide specificity and clarity on what you plan to do to support students. [Messaging for schools/districts](#) is different from other kinds of advocacy and this is not the same ‘sales pitch’ you might provide to parents and youth for your program.
- Focus on education, including [social-emotional learning](#), academic, and college/post-secondary pathways as well as any connections your program has with parents/families.
- Understand the demographics and background of kids in your program, especially the following constituencies:
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students with 504 plans/IEPs
 - English language learners
 - Students experiencing homelessness
 - Immigrant and refugee student
 - Students who are in foster care
 - Students of color
 - Students experiencing poverty
 - Students living in rural/remote areas
- Develop a brief proposal that you could provide to a superintendent; assistant superintendent; school board director; partnership director; principals; other district/building level leaders:
 - Describe your organization and previous partnerships with that district and schools and with other districts and schools.
 - Detail exactly what you need (funds, space, access to school kitchens, webtools, etc.).
 - Provide information on how your proposal improves outcomes and engages students.
 - Outline how your program/service fits into a [Multi-Tiered System of Supports](#) (most youth development programs fit into Tier I or II).
 - Speak school district language and how your program supports their educational goals
 - Be clear and specific about what the provider/s brings to the table.
- Remember that not all partnerships have to include a transfer of funds. Sharing space, supplies, food items, transportation, and even staffing do not always mean funds have to transfer from the district to a provider.

Check out additional [School-Community Partnership](#) resources from Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC).

Youth Development and Schools: Partnering to Support Students

K12 funding sources in Washington state that CBOs can use for youth development programming.

Funding is a critical component for any program. Below are some examples of K12 funding streams in Washington state that can be used with partners at community-based organizations (CBOs):

- [Learning Assistance Program](#) (LAP): State-level funding intended to support students not meeting academic standard and an additional pot of funding (known as high-poverty LAP) for districts with 50 percent or more of students qualifying for free and reduced meals. Up to 15 percent of school/district allotment can be used for CBOs for a range of uses.
- [Title I](#) and other federal funding: The federal government provides a substantial amount of funding to support students, mostly using targeted strategies. For example, Title I has two funding avenues – one supports students struggling academically and one for schools with 40 percent or more students on free and reduced meals. [Title IV A](#) provides additional resources to help with a ‘well-rounded education’ and technology improvement needs and the [Title IV - Full Service Schools Program](#) provides competitive grants for community school models. There is other funding districts may receive based on students that qualify for services such as Native American heritage, students from active military families, and students with disabilities.
- If your program is focuses on STEM or career connected/work-integrated learning, reach out to STEM and career and technical education staff about [Education, Innovation, and Research \(EIR\)](#) and [CTE funds](#). These funds can be used with community partners and in schools.
- [COVID-Related funding/ESSER](#): While most school districts have exhausted much of this federal funding, it is worth inquiring with districts about their COVID-era related goals, recovery plans, and related funding.
- [Local Levies](#): A local property tax passed by voters of a school district generates revenue for that district. The goal of levies is to enhance state and other funding. When requesting levy funding, it is important that your proposal be inline with the plan voters approved. One thing to note about local levies is voters approve a plan and what you are pitching needs to be related to that plan. Working with districts to include youth development services in future levies is a more sustainable funding option.
- [Other Funding](#): There are some other public-private funding sources available. One is from local, regional, or national private foundations—competitive public funding that often has a specific goal or focus on a particular group of students. Another is from local fundraising by parent-teacher-student organizations (PTSOs) or from foundations associated with schools. It is important to note that not all districts have this type of funding due to a variety of factors (ex. high number of students living in poverty, rural areas, etc.).

Funding note: Leveraging resources through [braiding funding streams](#) helps program sustainability. Some funding streams prohibit blending of funding or limit the demographics of students served, while other funders (public and private) require leveraging. Get to know the [ins and outs of each funding stream](#) with your district partners and maximize opportunities by diversifying the portfolio of funding supports for youth development and other programming for students by community-based organizations.