

Design, Resource & Track Inclusive Learning

Ramona Hattendorf, rhattendorf@arcofkingcounty.org

Who is working on this issue?

The Arc of King County

Advocacy areas

Early learning and K-12 education

The problem we are solving:

- Students with intellectual and developmental disabilities continue to be segregated from their peers at high rates, subjected to isolation and school removal, and moved into out-of-district placements.
- Autistic children are most likely to be moved into an out-of-district placement, including out-of-state.

We aren't designing and resourcing our public schools to support diverse students with sensory processing or learning differences, complex behavior, or support needs.



Our proposed solution:

- Continue funding the Inclusionary Practices Technical Network to build capacity among educators to support diverse students.
- Offer technical support to help schools create general education environments that are accessible, with attention paid to physical, emotional, and sensory needs of students.
- Simplify funding methodology to ensure special education funds follow students into general education settings.
- Promote autonomy by providing opportunities for all students to take ownership of their learning by making choices, setting goals, monitoring their progress, and actively engaging with the material.
- Embed social-emotional learning opportunities throughout school, including access to healthy relationships curriculum and support in resolving problems in increasingly independent ways.

- Add least restricted environment (LRE) data to school report cards posted on OSPI's website

Why is this a good solution?



Increasingly, school districts are tapping the Special Education Safety Net to remove students. In the 2021-22 school year, the state spent \$74 million on out-of-district placements for 922 high need students. That is a 77% increase from 5 years earlier.

Children with disabilities are also over-represented in exclusionary discipline and restraint and isolation. Too many are first marginalized, and then pushed out. Nationally, we are the bottom 10 for inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in general education.

In too many instances, the state and school districts are not making investments early on, at the student and school level, to ensure services and supports are in place. They are not communicating to families about evidence-based practices, or monitoring whether schools use them. In some cases, they are not enforcing the law around isolation and informal removals, and they allow unmet IEPs to displace students.

It is important that youth are in safe places where they can thrive, and some moves are initiated by families because local public schools have failed their children. Failure of our health system to provide necessary services also plays a role.

But our strategy can't be continued removal.

Children and their families need support. Schools need support.

We need to design, build, and resource what our children need. That includes changing practices in schools that harm students and investing in services that support them.

What is the fiscal impact?	Is there a bill number?	Is there a legislator working on this issue?
OSPI has requested 0.5% of state special education funding (or about \$15 million annually) be set aside to strengthen inclusionary practices, IEP development, and special education delivery	Not yet	Not yet