



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING

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October 1, 2015

David Schumacher  
Office of Financial Management  
PO Box 43113  
Olympia, WA 98504-3113

Dear David,

It is my pleasure to submit the Department of Early Learning's (DEL's) 2015-17 supplemental budget proposals for consideration during the 2016 legislative session.

Our work is focused on developing and enhancing high quality early learning programs and services throughout the state that prepare all Washington children for success in school and life. Our decision packages will:

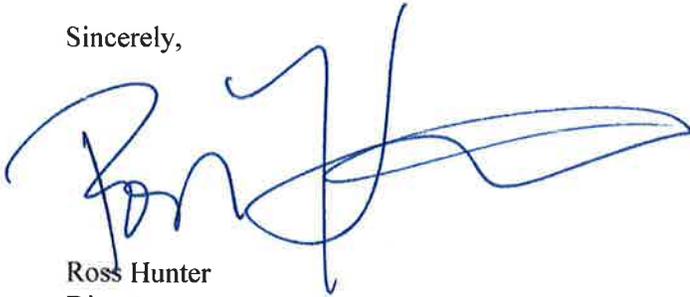
- Adjust the cost of required services to be consistent with the most current caseload forecast;
- Maintain consistent policy and rates between center and family home-based facilities by ensuring parity for centers with the newly negotiated contract with our family home providers.
- Enable the Department to comply with new federal requirements associated with the recently reauthorized Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), including;
  - Establishing a subsidy payment evaluation system in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) requirements;
  - Phasing in annual licensing visits to Family, Friends and Neighbor (FFN) facilities;
  - Improving data collection and reporting.
- Comply with the Early Start Act by;
  - Processing newly required fingerprint-based background checks for Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and FFN staff and volunteers providing instruction and program support.
- Responsibly manage the department by building financial and licensing infrastructure that will save employee time and improve the safety of children by;
  - Enabling the Department to continue to utilize the FamLink application, a critical state IT system managed by the Department of Social and Health Services, for child care licensing case management;
  - Allowing the Department to build and support an electronic time, attendance, and payment solution for subsidized child care;
  - Establishing an internal auditor within the Department to mitigate the potential for audit findings and ensure services and processes comply with state and federal regulations.
- Supporting the Department's ability to contribute to the implementation of the Healthiest Next Generation (HNG) initiative;
- Enabling the Department to begin implementing national race and equity standards within the "*Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services*" (CLAS) framework; and

- Maintaining current level of services provided by the Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services (ECLIPSE) program.

I've been director for less than a month and am still working on our IT infrastructure and our response to the Children's Administration changes around our use of FamLink, which is crucial to maintaining the safety of the children in our care. I expect to propose additional detail and perhaps changes to these items over the next several weeks.

These requests constitute a \$31 million dollar investment that will result in an additional 9 FTEs for the department. By investing in high quality early learning through the above proposed budget enhancements, Washington can improve educational and health outcomes for all of its youngest learners while dramatically reducing cost in the K-12 system, public assistance, and corrections.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ross Hunter", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ross Hunter  
Director

Cc: Mike Steenhout, DEL Chief Financial Officer  
Heather Moss, Deputy Director