

# A Call to Action

## FROM ROOTS OF INCLUSION

Roots of Inclusion, a Non-Profit Organization founded by Sarah Butcher and Jennifer Karls, is sharing information with our community related to proposed legislation in Washington State focused on improving outcomes for students.

There are more bills in our legislature this session around special education than there have likely ever been. Your voice and your action are needed now, so we can fully realize the opportunity before us to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in Washington State.

For ease of action, we have drafted language below that you can cut and paste into an email or use when you call your legislator. Please feel free to edit and personalize this language to your liking.

### **A Call to Action**

Dear *{Name of Legislator}*,

A strong education is the foundation upon which individuals build their lives. Every student in every school is an asset to our state and deserves an equitable opportunity to reach their full human potential.

Increasing special education funding alone won't automatically change the reality students with disabilities experience every day in their classrooms and schools. There are steps you can take this session that will have far reaching impact on improving outcomes for every learner and strengthen the investments you make in special education funding. I urge you to support the following priorities:

1. Support a Demonstration Project: Schools need support and guidance on how to implement inclusive practices and Universal Design for Learning to ensure equitable access to general education curriculum. Equally as important, schools need to see what that work looks like and feels like in action. [SHB 1454](#) includes language for a demonstration project that would elevate districts implementing inclusive practices and use that work to inform a statewide technical assistance system. Every school across our state must be supported to implement these important practices that benefit every student and are critical to the success of students with disabilities.

2. Support Improving Systems of Professional Learning: A safe, supportive and inclusive classroom and school building is essential for all student learning and for student mental health and wellbeing. Educators need training and coaching that equips them with skills they need to meet the diversity of needs of the students that will be in their classroom. [SHB 1479](#) and [SB 5777](#) include a workgroup through the Professional Educator Standards Board that would work to increase system-wide capacity and educator competency to meet the emotional and behavioral health needs of Washington students.

3. Support Families in Their Journey: Families need access to supports and guidance when they have questions that need answering and help navigating the education system for their child. That support needs to be accessible in multiple formats and in a family's preferred language. Family voice must be included as we work in our communities to reimagine an education system that meets the needs of all students. [SSB 5532](#) includes local Special Education Advisory Councils, which play a critical role in increasing the involvement of families who have children with disabilities in district policy making and decision making. The Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) is a valuable resource for families and has never been fully funded to allow for regional Ombuds to be located around our state. Providing resources for the OEO to fully realize their work outlined in RCW 43.06B.010 is desperately needed. [SHB 1130](#) focuses on identifying what is needed to remove language access barriers so families have equitable access to information about their child and school.

[Contact your Legislators now](#) and share these priorities with them. You can find out who your legislators are and their contact information [here](#). It is important to note, that while some of the bills related to special education mentioned above are not moving, the opportunity to put these critically important components together in the final package to address special education is absolutely possible. With your voice and action it is possible.

Please share this out through your networks.

**We want to stay in touch, and hope that you do too.**

To continue receiving our emails, simply click on the link below.

**[I want to receive emails and newsletters from Roots of Inclusion](#)**

You can withdraw your permission to receive our emails at any time by using the unsubscribe link found at the bottom of every email you receive from us.