



## 2020 Legislative Agenda

Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive in school and life. The Early Learning Action Alliance is guided by our mission and principles that success should not be determined by race, ethnicity, geography, ability, or family income. A great start for children promises successful schools, resilient families and communities, and a healthier economy for all. Too few children currently have access to the opportunities they need to thrive. It doesn't have to be this way! As we work together to bring Washington's early learning system to scale, we must take urgent action to address market failures that threaten our ability to serve more children and families in the future.

### **Address Market Failures that Threaten Our Ability to Serve Children**

The relationship between caregivers and children is cornerstone for development and learning, and yet it is increasingly challenging for early learning providers to make ends meet. We should take these steps to preserve our high-quality and diverse community-based workforce and to maximize future investments in early learning:

- ✓ Increase the Working Connections Child Care rate for infants and toddlers by 12% (\$19 million)
- ✓ Expand and fund community-based pathways so the early childhood education workforce can meet required credentials (\$8 million)

### **Prioritize Access for Children and Families Most in Need**

Children and families experiencing crisis can't wait another day for critical early learning services. Make modest investments now to be sure these children and families have the resources needed for safety, security, and growth:

- ✓ Ensure access to child care for families experiencing homelessness (\$1.4 million)
- ✓ Invest in a Complex Needs Fund to serve children with trauma and/or behavioral or mental health needs through the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (\$6 million)

### **Take Incremental Steps to Expand Access in Local Communities**

Children and families are stuck on years-long waiting lists because there simply isn't access to the programs they need. During times of limited resources, it is essential that we continue to make progress for these children and families – they can't afford to wait.

- ✓ Expand the number of dual language early learning programs so children can receive high-quality early learning in their home language (\$5 million)
- ✓ Adjust the co-payment structure for Working Connections Child Care to address the co-pay cliff
- ✓ Expand access to intensive home visiting through the Home Visiting Services Account (\$3 million)

To realize these objectives, the Early Learning Action Alliance **supports the creation of state revenue streams that will provide robust, stable and necessary funding**. The revenue streams should be non-regressive and should not supplant existing state or federal early learning funding sources.