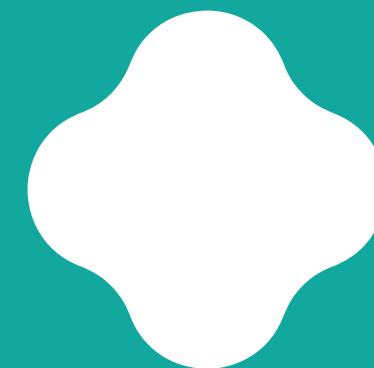


May Advocacy Pod Meeting

Team Advocacy - May 20th, 2026



Agenda



Quick 2026 legislative session recap



Local deep-dive



Resources and next steps

☀ 1 Minute What Happened

- ▶ **Working Connections Child Care Subsidy**
 - Changes to reimbursement rate & monthly amount based on attendance
 - New response rate requirement for the market rate survey
- ▶ **Professional Development**
 - 50% reduction of funds from one line of PD funds - still awaiting full details
- ▶ **Provider Licensing**
 - Increases flexibility in mixed age ratios to offer more staff scheduling options
- ▶ **Workforce Standards Board**
 - 10 member board of early learning and labor representatives
- ▶ **Millionaires Tax**
 - New progressive wealth tax, some sales tax reductions, and B&O filing increase

☀️ Let's Talk About Local!

The BSELS Advocacy Team is in the early stages of expanding our relationship building and advocacy with our county, city, and local school officials across King and Pierce counties - to grow understanding of and support for early learning at all levels in our communities.



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Who is a County Executive and what do they do?

County Executives

Elected by voters from across the county, they are entrusted with executing and enforcing all ordinances and state statutes within the county

- Oversee all the county offices - 4 year term.
- Responsible for presenting annual financial and governmental affairs statements, and proposing an annual budget to their county councils.
- Has the power to veto ordinances from Council.
- Serves as the “mayor” for unincorporated areas (designated census places) of the county.



County Executives

King County - Girmay Zahilay



Pierce County - Ryan Mello



County Executives

How do they connect with early learning?

KING COUNTY

Best Starts for Kids, a county program that offers:

- subsidy funds for families who do not qualify for Working Connections;
- for providers: infant and early childhood mental health skill building, capacity building, universal developmental screening, and workforce development.

PIERCE COUNTY

ECEAP - free, state-funded preschool in 8 locations (Bonney Lake, Buckley, Eatonville, Orting, South Hill, Sumner, and University Place)

ChildReach - in partnership with the Puyallup Tribe: developmental screening for tribal children aged birth to six years old

BOTH COUNTIES

Early Support for Infants & Toddlers (ESIT)



County Executives

Public Health Programs

King County Specific Programs:

- Help Me Grow: addressing systemic barriers
- Kids Plus: for children experiencing homelessness
- School-based Health Centers

Pierce County Specific Programs:

- Black Infant Health
- Choose Peace
- Refugee Health Program

Both counties have programs and services supporting:

- Health equity, particularly for Black families
- Pregnancy & infant support programs
- Resources and services for children with special health care needs
- Disease prevention & vaccinations
- Behavioral Health
- Health, nutrition, injury prevention
- Dental care



What is a County Council and what do they do?

County Councils

The legislative branch of the county government. Councilmembers are elected by the voters of the county based on their geographic region/district.

- County Councils set policies, enact laws, and adopt budgets that guide an array of services for county residents.
- Non-partisan offices with four-year terms.
- They are the governing body for unincorporated areas (designated census places) of the county.



King County Council

9 member council - each district is 260,000+ residents



- Rod Dembowski, District 1
- Rhonda Lewis, District 2
- Sarah Perry, District 3
- Jorge L. Baron District 4
- Steffanie Fain, District 5
- Claudia Balducci, District 6
- Pete von Reichbauer, District 7
- Teresa Mosqueda, District 8
- Reagan Dunn, District 9

Pierce County Council

7 member council - each district is 131,500+ residents



Dave Morell
District 1



Paul Herrera
District 2



Amy Cruver
District 3



Rosie Ayala
District 4



Bryan Yambe
District 5



Jani Hitchen,
District 6



Robyn Denson
District 7

County Councils

How do they connect with early learning?

Regional coordination of services that can go beyond what individual cities/towns can support.

Program oversight and budget approval for county level public health, family, and child care services.

Oversee the county library systems which host and support FFN play and/to learn groups.



Council Committees

- King - Health, Housing, and Human Services Committee
- Pierce - Health & Human Services Committee

Community Advisory Boards & Commissions

King County

- Children and Youth Advisory Board (35 members)
- Communities of Opportunity Best Start for Kids Levy Advisory Board (10 members)

Pierce County

- Birth to 25 (B-25) Advisory Board (21 members)
 - *There is currently a vacancy for an ECE member*



Let's Chat

Questions / Discussion



☀ **Let's Talk About Local!**

Next Month:

- City Government - Mayors, City Councils, etc.
- Who's in your city government?
- How are they working with early learning? Or are they???

Thank you!

