THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

LEARNING FROM COVID-19 IMPACTS TO K-12

Preliminary Summary of Lessons, Reflections, and Recommendations from Across Washington State

December 2024

The William D. Ruckelshaus Center is an impartial resource for collaborative problem solving in the State of Washington and the Pacific Northwest, dedicated to assisting public, private, tribal, non-profit, and other community leaders in their efforts to build consensus and resolve conflicts around difficult public policy issues. It is a joint effort of Washington State University, hosted and administered by the WSU Office of the Provost and the University of Washington, hosted by the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy and Governance.

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WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER
155 NE 100th Street, Suite 401
Seattle, WA 98125

Project Team

William D. Ruckelshaus Center
- **Phyllis Shulman,** Assistant Professor and Senior Facilitator, William D. Ruckelshaus Center
- **Tye Ferrell,** Senior Facilitator, William D. Ruckelshaus Center
- **Hazel Wilburn,** Project Specialist, William D. Ruckelshaus Center
- **Alec Solemslie,** Project Specialist, William D. Ruckelshaus Center
- **Kevin Baker,** Baker Consulting, LLC

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

In March of 2021, the William D. Ruckelshaus Center (the Center) initiated a comprehensive effort to identify lessons learned and share key insights from Washington's response to the Covid-19 pandemic to improve preparedness, recovery, and resilience in Washington State. The project was designed to collect and synthesize information, frame issues, and consider recommendations with consideration of race, equity, and social justice principles. More than 75 individuals and groups with responsibilities for decision-making and response implementation were interviewed.

A significant area of concern interviewees raised was the impact of the pandemic on children and youth. The pandemic dramatically interrupted K-12 education for students across the state and led to a range of academic, social, physical, mental, and behavioral health impacts. Studies show that the disruptions caused by the pandemic disproportionately impacted students and families whose incomes are lower, are from historically disadvantaged communities, are immune compromised, and/or have special needs.

Through 2023 and 2024, the Center engaged in a deep inquiry to better understand the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on Washington's children and youth. The Center conducted interviews with teachers, students, principals, superintendents, state agency staff, community organizations, school board directors, mental health professionals, researchers, and others, to understand if there are ongoing impacts from Covid and to identify initiatives and interventions that are successfully supporting children and youth's social, emotional, physical, and academic health and recovery.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the project is to identify or develop initiatives and successful interventions that can best support children's social, emotional, physical, and academic health and recovery. Ultimately, the project aims to inform policies and practices needed to improve the long-term social, emotional, and educational outcomes of students, especially those disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic in Washington State.

This preliminary summary highlights key findings and potential actions that could be considered to address the significant and lingering impacts of the pandemic. A more comprehensive report of findings and recommendations will be disseminated Spring, 2025.

Approach

The findings and recommendations in this synopsis are based on individual semi-structured interviews and small group discussions with teachers, high school students, principals/assistant principals, superintendents, state agency staff, community organizations, school board directors, mental health professionals, representatives from associations throughout the state, and others. The list of participants can be found in Appendix A. The list of discussion questions can be found in Appendix B.

HEADLINES

The following Headlines showcase significant issues that arose from the interviews.

- Interviewees emphasized that there are significant ongoing impacts from the pandemic on the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic well-being of children and youth as well as the parents, educators, administrators, and other adults who engage with them. These impacts, if left unaddressed, are likely to affect young people's well-being and future potential and could lead to broader social and economic implications such as worsening societal inequities and diminishing community well-being as children who lack self-regulation, communication, and conflict resolution skills, for example, grow into adulthood.

- Many interviewees spoke of the impact of social isolation that resulted from the pandemic, as well as the increased internet and social media use that the pandemic accelerated. Interviewees said that this isolation has impacted the communication and social skills of children and youth of all ages, causing social anxiety and manifesting as anti-social behaviors and an inability to manage day-to-day stressors, make friends, and ask questions of teachers.

- With the end of federal Elementary and Secondary School Education Recovery (ESSER) funds, interviewees spoke of the urgent need to address pandemic impacts through a statewide approach that emphasizes shared information and learning, collaboration, and partnership.

- Interviewees generally acknowledged that the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing inequities in academic achievement and access to resources. Because of this, many interviewees emphasized the importance of prioritizing the needs of students and families that were marginalized or disadvantaged prior to the pandemic by poverty, race, ethnicity, instability, disability, or special needs.

CALL TO ACTION

The Call to Action highlights significant actions that can be taken to address ongoing pandemic impacts.

- Develop a state-wide, locally adaptable initiative or initiatives to address the ongoing social, emotional, and behavioral impacts of the pandemic on children and youth that partners with local communities and community-based organizations, through a combination of public and philanthropic funding.

- Develop, implement, and expand targeted and individualized academic interventions, including tutoring, summer school, and after-school programs, for the children and youth that need it most, from kindergarten through post-secondary.

- Invest in and support programs that enhance healthy, diverse, and skilled educators and administrators including expanding initiatives to address trauma and incorporate trauma awareness in programs and curricula for all staff that need it in the K-12 system.

- Develop a comprehensive state strategy on equity utilizing the "Equity Can't-Wait" report to enable a more just and equitable K-12 system.

- Identify what has been working across the state, provide opportunities to share approaches, and scale the most promising practices.

- Identify lessons learned, and practical approaches to address education and service needs for children and youth with disabilities in emergencies to incorporate into emergency plans and policies and improve current conditions.
- Develop a campaign for schools and districts to more effectively engage with local communities and rebuild trust in the public school system.

PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF FINDINGS[1]

This preliminary summary reflects the views and opinions of the interviewees who gave their time and talent to this inquiry. The role of the Ruckelshaus Center's Project Team was to listen to, collect, and synthesize the viewpoints of interviewees and their ideas for action. Those findings and options for action do not represent the views of the universities or Advisory Board members, nor do they represent the personal views of Project Team members.

The picture that emerged from the Center's interviews is of a statewide K-12 system still reeling from the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many interviewees expressed a need to urgently address ongoing pandemic impacts. Also, many described how pandemic impacts continue to ripple through communities, families, colleges and universities, employers, and the healthcare system and how this in turn impacts schools. Interviewees shared numerous examples of positive efforts of administrators and educators to address the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, utilizing the limited and often diminishing resources available to them. However, absent a statewide approach and dedicated funding, most interventions are by necessity disparate, localized, and focused on specific downstream effects more than systemic upstream causes. At the same time, interviewees' interest in urgently addressing pandemic impacts was tempered by what they called Covid fatigue, a lack of energy to think about pandemic-related issues.

Experience from previous disasters has shown that recovery from the impacts of disasters can take a long time. Because of the scope, scale, and ripple effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, some experts estimate that recovery will take a decade or longer.[2] Many interviewees said that federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding was valuable but ended too soon. Focused interventions and funding ideally should reflect the longer timeframe of the up to 10 years needed to address the ongoing effects of a major disaster like the Covid-19 pandemic. Nearly all interviewees spoke of the urgent need for additional funding to enable schools to continue addressing ongoing pandemic impacts.

The pandemic impacted nearly everyone. Interviewees offered a wide range of responses to the question of who the most impacted children are, including children who lost a family member, children from low-income and homeless families, foster children, children with disabilities or special needs, English language learners, children in transitional grades, and Black, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Latino children. Many interviewees commented that inequity in Washington State is persistent and has deep roots, shaped by factors including poverty, racism, and ableism. These responses underline

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[1] As this report was being finalized, the Center on Reinventing Public Education released its *State of the Student Report: Fall 2024*, subtitled, *Solve for the most complex needs: A path forward as pandemic effects reverberate*, whose national findings reflect many of Center's findings in Washington State. https://crpe.org/the-state-of-the-american-student-2024/

[2] McClelland, A. G., Shaw, D., O'Grady, N., & Fattoum, A. (2022). Recovery for Development: A Multi-Dimensional, Practice-Oriented Framework for Transformative Change Post-Disaster. *The Journal of Development Studies*, *59*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2022.2130055

how widespread pandemic impacts are and the extent to which the pandemic exacerbated existing inequities.

Significant Ongoing Impacts

All interviewees spoke of significant ongoing impacts from the pandemic on the social, emotional, and academic well-being of children and youth, from kindergarten through post-secondary education, including the potential impact on their future success. These impacts include notable behavioral and mental health issues, learning loss, developmental delays, gaps in social and communication skills, and absenteeism.

The impact of the pandemic on the academic performance of children and youth in Washington State, particularly the disparate impact on Black, Native American, and Latino students, who were already trailing their white and Asian American peers, has been well documented and was acknowledged by many interviewees. Several interviewees expressed concern that critical learning gaps will follow and are already following students through their academic and professional careers; gaps that, if not addressed, could undermine these students' future learning and success. Some interviewees said that intensive tutoring was often ineffective because of insufficient quality control and lack of tutoring for those who needed it most.

Several interviewees said that some students who were not doing well in an in-person school situation, fared better with online learning, speculating that perhaps this was because they were not bullied or did not experience racism or other bias at school. The interviewees expressed a need for research into why these students fared better with remote learning. The interviewees emphasized the importance of flexibility in learning modalities for students moving forward to accommodate learning differences.

What has Changed Post-Covid?

Although many of the issues interviewees spoke of are not new, the intensity and severity of the social, behavioral, and mental health issues children and youth are experiencing has increased considerably across the state. For example, some interviewees stated that the number of students with severe behavioral issues requiring intensive intervention, including at out-of-state facilities with the capabilities to serve them, has risen dramatically since the pandemic. The Project Team heard about kids eating lunch in bathroom stalls, walking out of class, or simply not coming to school. Social anxiety from the imposed isolation of the pandemic has become endemic, and many educators said they provide scripts for students to help them navigate basic social interactions and common conflicts. Chronic absenteeism has become a widespread phenomenon as parents and students prioritize other activities over school. In addition, the team heard about increased numbers of children vaping, carrying weapons, and engaging in other unhealthy behavior, often at younger ages than before.

Nearly all educators, school administrators, and youth spoke about the use of smartphones and social media by children and young people. Some educators and administrators said that students have become much more tech savvy than before the pandemic, as well as preternaturally socially savvy because of their exposure to the internet and social media, even while their maturity and decision-making capabilities remain limited to their stage of cognitive development. They said that the social media drama that plays out after school hours can play a large role during school the next day, even when phones are not allowed at school, a policy that educators and administrators unanimously supported in our interviews.

According to several interviewees, one of the successes resulting from the pandemic response was that the state made the fastest advance ever in advancing digital equity. Unfortunately, interviewees said, those gains are not being sustained throughout the state, though they perceived an opportunity to reverse those losses, if action was taken soon.

Several interviewees spoke of how these widespread, ongoing social, emotional, and academic pandemic impacts on students are likely to have broader social and economic implications in the future. Left unaddressed, ongoing pandemic impacts on students' well-being and behaviors may very well exacerbate ongoing societal inequities and diminish community well-being, as students with underdeveloped social skills, unresolved behavioral issues, academic learning gaps, difficulty in resolving conflict, problems with self-regulation, and untreated mental health issues grow into adulthood.

Impacts on Adults

In addition, interviewees mentioned that there are significant ongoing economic, social, and mental and behavioral health impacts on adults, including caregivers, educators, school workers, counselors, and administrators. These impacts are reflected in data that shows dramatic turnover in superintendents and principals, as well as significant turnover of teachers and other school staff. According to interviewees, many of the teachers who left were nearing retirement and had a lot of experience.

The team heard a lot of anxiety about declining enrollment and funding and the difficulty of finding and retaining skilled educators and school staff, particularly in rural areas, even as needs, pressures, and "unfunded mandates" increase.

A number of interviewees expressed concern about burnout among teachers, principals, and assistant principals in particular. In addition, they said, it has become increasingly challenging to recruit teachers to take on assistant principal or principal roles. The rise in mental and behavioral health issues and associated behaviors among students was cited as one reason for burnout and turnover. Several interviewees mentioned that educators were also deeply impacted by the pandemic, whether because of the loss of loved ones, illness, stress, or overwork. They noted that educators, and in particular principals and assistant principals, are in positions that require them to take care of the needs and concerns of others, including students, parents, community members, staff, and each other, often at the expense of self-care.

Many interviewees shared concerns about how the loss of experienced teachers and administrators during and after the pandemic and the reduction in force that is happening in many districts because of enrollment declines is impacting not just the current workforce, but the future workforce as well.

The time constraints on educators and administrators can inhibit their ability to take on new initiatives to address the lingering impacts of Covid, interviewees said. Several interviewees said it can be difficult to agree on and mobilize transformational action, even though many commented that innovative and systemic actions are needed. Other interviewees asked, how can future teachers be better prepared to address the ongoing impacts of the pandemic?

Stress and Trauma

Many interviewees acknowledged the widespread traumatic nature of the pandemic and spoke of the ongoing need to address the stress and trauma experienced by children, youth, caregivers, educators, staff, and administrators. In addition, interviewees noted that the pandemic compounded pre-existing traumas for many individuals, including those experiencing racism, bias, and poverty. Other interviewees noted that the trauma of the pandemic has been compounded for some children and

youth by issues such as chronic stress, isolation, and unstable or unsafe home situations. Still others spoke of the stress and isolating effects of internet use and social media, in particular. Additionally, many caregivers and educators experienced stress and/or trauma and this is continuing to have an impact on the children and youth they care for.

Some schools and districts are implementing trauma-informed practices to better acknowledge and grapple with stress and trauma in the classroom and beyond. These interventions, according to interviewees, can positively impact learning and how discipline is administered, as educators, administrators, school staff, and parents learn how to work with kids in a trauma-informed manner. They added that these interventions can have ripple effects in a school building and beyond, as students feel an increasing sense of belonging and discipline is addressed in more effective ways.

Many interviewees also spoke of the critical need for children and youth to have connections with their peers and with caring adults as one aspect of addressing trauma and creating safe spaces that enable learning.

Moving Forward

There was overwhelming agreement among interviewees that the mental and behavioral health of children and youth is foundational to academic achievement. Many interviewees spoke about Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Inclusive Practices, and other programs or approaches, although some expressed concern that not everyone understands how to implement some of these programs, such as SEL. The team also heard that SEL is not necessarily taught in a way that is appropriate for older students.

The shortage of mental health professionals and corresponding lack of access to mental healthcare, both in schools and in communities, was mentioned by many as a major issue. Many interviewees emphasized that a foundational element to addressing these issues is to focus on, develop, and implement school-wide initiatives to create a sense of belonging for students, caregivers, and staff.

Many interviewees spoke of the importance of encouraging student voice and agency as a critical aspect of school and K-12 governance, but also in pandemic recovery. Engaging students meaningfully in addressing pandemic-related issues, they felt, could itself be a part of addressing pandemic impacts by engaging students in relevant real-world problem-solving related to the issues that they are experiencing, increase their commitment to addressing those impacts, and unearth new solutions and approaches that better engage them.

Several interviewees spoke about the importance of "civic infrastructure," the network of engaged residents, nonprofits, community-based organizations, supportive local governments, and associations in communities. If this civic infrastructure is robust, it can provide a major leg up to schools and students, who may benefit from increased numbers of volunteers, after-school activities, fundraising potential, community partnerships, and other supports. If the civic infrastructure is lacking, schools and their students will likely suffer. Interviewees acknowledged that schools alone cannot address all of the ongoing pandemic impacts. Several interviewees said it is important to break down silos between schools, districts, and agencies and recognize that the efforts to address the impacts require connection, cooperation, and partnership.

The response to the pandemic was a society-wide effort and interviewees emphasized that schools played a vital role. Districts and schools developed or expanded a wide range of partnerships with healthcare providers, nonprofits, funders, and community-based organizations during the Covid pandemic that were essential in serving the needs of children and youth, particularly those who are "at

risk" or have special needs or disabilities. ESSER funds helped to sustain many of these partnerships, but with ESSER funds ending, many schools are losing essential community partnerships for supporting their students. Community mental healthcare, youth summer camps, before-and-after-school programs, and learning enrichment programs have the potential to contribute significantly to addressing mental and behavioral health and socialization issues for youth. Before-and-after-school programs and community-based organizations expressed interest in greater communication and collaboration with schools and districts to improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for children and youth.

Interviewees expressed a strong interest to address ongoing pandemic impacts through increased collaboration with organizations outside of the K-12 system, such as healthcare institutions, nonprofits, philanthropists, community-based organizations, and researchers.

The Complex Nature of the Challenges

The complex nature of the interrelating challenges facing the K-12 system is daunting. Many interviewees noted that aspects of the response to Covid-19 and its ongoing impacts compounded societal issues such as disinformation, distrust of institutions, political polarization, and civil discord. These societal issues continue to be a complicating factor in pandemic recovery. Some interviewees mentioned what they saw as a deliberate and ongoing effort to undermine the public school system through the use of disinformation and political attacks. Several interviewees noted that public schools are challenged by a negative narrative and an increasing lack of trust in public education and decreasing respect for teachers, administrators, and school board members. This, combined with political polarization, makes it difficult for schools and districts in some cases to even name or talk about issues such as equity and gender identity.

Some interviewees concluded that the pandemic has led to systemic impacts across the K-12 system and the broader systems, society, economy, and politics in which it operates. Some emphasized the importance of statewide leadership and sharing of promising practices, while maintaining the flexibility needed to tailor interventions to the specific needs and resources of students, staff, and communities. Other emphasized the importance of civic infrastructure and the need to partner with communities to build support and unlock resources. Still others said that engaging students actively in understanding what is happening, planning responses, and implementing solutions will be essential in gaining their trust and engagement.

Many interviewees expressed an interest in research, promising practices, and evidence-based interventions that can be applied in the school or classroom and adapted to a wide range of situations. Others said there is an unmet potential for more co-produced research on the impacts and what is working to address the ongoing impacts of the pandemic. Administrators and educators stated that they are interested in what is working and what can be learned from those examples. Interviewees shared examples of many programs and projects that are being implemented by community-based organizations, schools, and districts, including many that are showing promising results. Beginning to share some of these practices, projects, and resources can be an important step forward in the journey to recovery.

POTENTIAL PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Interviewees emphasized that urgent and durable action is needed to address the lingering impacts of Covid and there is a need to prioritize initiatives that address underlying issues of equity. Interviewees also supported increasing opportunities to share information about what is working well, discuss challenges, and create or enhance networks that can provide guidance and stimulate innovation.

The significance and extent of ongoing pandemic impacts requires a response at the scale and scope of the challenges. Because of the systemic nature of the issues, a holistic response that involves coordination among diverse interventions and enhances approaches by multiple actors at state and local levels is needed. For example, many children and youth need mental health services, but schools do not have enough funding to provide services to each student who could benefit from them, nor are there enough providers. Interviewees described several examples of partnership and coordination between school districts, individual schools, health centers, mental health providers, before-and-after-school providers, community-based organizations, and others to provide mental health services for children and youth. Other interviewees described successful peer-to-peer initiatives, some initiated by students, to address mental health issues and belonging. By working together, schools and their surrounding communities can maximize resources, serve more students, and have a greater impact.

The following are potential priorities for action based on input from interviewees.

1. **Develop a statewide, locally adaptable initiative or initiatives to address the ongoing social, emotional, and behavioral impacts of the pandemic on children and youth**
   - Fund the initiative(s) through a combination of public and philanthropic funding
   - Ensure that the needs of the children and youth who were most impacted by the pandemic are prioritized
   - Develop partnerships between schools, health organizations, community organizations, and before-and-after-school programs to identify what is needed to address ongoing pandemic impacts, including aligning programming to better tend to students' needs
   - Create opportunities for and support peer-to-peer and youth-driven initiatives that improve mental health, develop skills in conflict mediation/resolution, and provide youth with agency to discuss and problem-solve about how to address the issues they are facing
   - Expand initiatives to address trauma and incorporate trauma awareness in programs and curricula for all students in the K-12 system that need it
   - Emphasize programs and approaches that strengthen belonging and build social cohesion in the school
   - Identify and continue to implement school-based programs that provide students with the developmental skills needed to engage and communicate with others and develop self-esteem

2. **Develop, implement, and expand targeted and individualized academic interventions, including tutoring, summer school, and after-school programs, for the children and youth that need it most, from kindergarten through post-secondary**. **This could include:**
   - Tutoring that targets those who need it most
   - Summer learning programs
   - Pre-college summer programs in math and writing for students enrolling in community and technical colleges and universities who need remedial help

3. **Invest in and support programs that enhance healthy, diverse, and skilled educators and administrators, including expanding initiatives to address trauma and incorporate trauma awareness in programs and curricula for all staff that need it in the K-12 system**. **Ideas include:**
   - Provide funding for additional assistant principal positions to relieve principals' workload
   - Expand initiatives to address trauma and incorporate trauma awareness in programs and curricula for all staff in the K-12 system that need it
   - Recruit and retain a diverse teacher pipeline (per the Equity Can't Wait study)

- Provide professional development opportunities for educators and administrators to share experiences and approaches and learn from professionals, for example, about how to better address challenging student behaviors
- Convene a group to identify how to improve workforce development to address need for educators, principals, specialists, and superintendents
- Look for opportunities to increase work flexibility for teachers, for example, through job shares
- Provide funding to support and maintain peer learning, for example through the associations of principals, social workers, school nurses, and other K-12 staff

4. **Develop a comprehensive state strategy on equity utilizing the "Equity Can't-Wait" report to enable a more just and equitable K-12 system**
   - Recommit to addressing digital equity

5. **Identify what has been working across the state, provide opportunities to share approaches, and scale the most promising practices**
   - Organize a forum or series of forums for educators, administrators, and researchers to share and discuss what is working well, findings from research, where there are research gaps, and what programs, frameworks, and strategies schools and districts are using and what is working and not working
   - Identify approaches that are successfully addressing the social, emotional, and academic impacts of the pandemic, particularly for those children and youth who are most impacted; determine which approaches could be readily scaled; and roll out the most promising practices where they are most needed

6. **Identify lessons learned, needs, and practical approaches to address education and service needs for children and youth with disabilities in emergencies to incorporate into emergency plans and policies and to improve current conditions**
   - Convene a workgroup to identify lessons learned, needs, and practical approaches to address education and service needs for kids with disabilities in emergencies (to incorporate into emergency plans and policies and to make improvements in current conditions)

7. **Develop a campaign for schools and districts to more effectively engage with local communities and rebuild trust in the public school system**

Appendix A: Interviewees

K-12 Pandemic Impacts Interviewees
Virtual Interviews

Name	Title	Affiliation	Location
Aaron Fletcher	Principal	Liberty High School; Association of Washington School Principals	Spangle, WA
Adrienne Johnson	Preschool Instructional Assistant	Lowell Elementary Race and Equity Team	Seattle, WA
Aimee Allen	Head of School	Harbor Montessori School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Gig Harbor, WA
Allison Soules	Head of School	Matheia School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Seattle, WA
Amy Cast	School Board Director	North Shore School District	King and Snohomish counties
Anita Koyier-Mwamba	Manager of Black Education	Seattle Public Schools	Seattle, WA
Brian Jeffries	Policy Director	Washington Roundtable/ Partnership for Learning	Seattle, WA
Bryanna Pearson	Teacher	Lowell Elementary Race Equity Team	Seattle, WA
Carlecia Bell	President	Phenomenal She	Federal Way, WA
Carlina Brown-Banks	Deputy Director	Community Center for Education Results	Seattle, WA
Cathy Raye Hyland	Head of School	Community Montessori; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Tacoma, WA
Charlie Davis	President and CEO	YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties	Pierce and Kitsap Counties
Christine Griffin	Program Coordinator	Hands and Voices	Bellingham, WA
Christy Johnson	Development Director	Saint Patrick Catholic School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Pasco, WA
Craig Mattson	Principal	Northwest Christian School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Puyallup, WA
Crystal Goodwin	Assistant Principal	Glacier Middle School; Association of Washington School Principals	Buckley, WA
Damien Pattenaude	Superintendent	Renton School District	Renton, WA
Dan Goldhaber	Director	UW Center for Education Data and Research	Seattle, WA

Dawn Rains	CEO	Treehouse for Kids	Seattle, WA
Debbie Schindler	Head of School	Pacific Christian Academy; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Federal Way, WA
Dixie Grunenfelder	Executive Director	OSPI Student Engagement and Support	Olympia, WA
Donald Felder	Administrator	Seattle Public Schools (Former)	Seattle, WA
Eric Stultz	CFO	Lake Washington Girls Middle School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Seattle, WA
Erin Hart	Superintendent	Three Rivers Christian School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Longview, WA
Erin McKee	Principal	Cougar Mountain Middle School; Association of Washington School Principals	Issaquah, WA
Erin Okuno	Director	Governor's Office of the Education Ombudsman	Seattle, WA
Henry Strom	Executive Director	OSPI Office of Native Education	Olympia, WA
Isaac Kwakye	Director of Research and Student Success	Washington Student Achievement Council	Olympia, WA
James Layman	Director	Association of Washington Student Leaders	Spokane, WA
Jen Sandvig	Childcare Director	Sagebrush Montessori; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Richland, WA
Jessica Vavrus	Executive Director	Association of Educational Service Districts	Tumwater, WA
Jill McCormick	Program Director	Partnership for Action, Voices, and Empowerment	Tacoma, WA
Jim Buss	Head of School	Ebenezer Christian School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Lynden, WA
Jim Kowalkowski	Executive Director	Rural Education Center; Davenport School District	Lincoln County
John Welch	Superintendent	Puget Sound Educational Service District	Renton, WA
Joshua Murphy	Instructional Coach	Cedar Heights Middle School	Covington, WA
Karen Hedine	CEO	YMCA of Walla Walla County	Walla Walla County
Katya Miltimore	Executive Director	Boys and Girls Clubs of Washington	Olympia, WA
Kelley Boyd	Principal	Coulee-Hartline School District; AWSP	Coulee City, WA
Kevin Jacka	CEO	The Rural Alliance	Deer Park, WA

Krestin Bahr	Superintendent	Peninsula School District	Gig Harbor, WA
Lacey Griffiths	Assistant Principal	RA Long High School; Association of Washington School Principals	Longview, WA
Lacy Fehrenbach	Chief of Prevention	Washington State Department of Health	Olympia, WA
Leonard Forsman	Board President	Tribal Leaders Congress on Education	Port Madison Indian Reservation
Lisa Dallas	Principal	Adna Elementary School; Association of Washington School Principals	Chehalis, WA
Maddy Thompson	Senior Policy Advisor, Education	Governor's Office	Olympia, WA
Marilee Hill-Anderson	Community Engagement Director	Sumner-Bonney Lake School District	Pierce County
Marissa Rathbone	Director of Strategic Advisory	Washington State School Directors' Association	Olympia, WA
Michelle Sorenson	Leadership Coordinating Team Member	Washington Association of School Social Workers	Seattle, WA
Mikael Olson	President	Washington State Association of School Psychologists	Spokane, WA
Mike Meotti	Executive Director	Washington Student Achievement Council	Olympia, WA
Molly Butler	Assistant Principal	Wenatchee High School; Association of Washington School Principals	Wenatchee, WA
Nancy Caroll	Assistant Principal	West Seattle High School	Seattle, WA
Natalie Turner-Depue	Director	WSU Child and Family Research Unit	Pullman, WA
Pam Kohlmeier	Policy Manager	Washington Medical Commission	Tumwater, WA
Pam Schwartz	Principal	St. Catherine of Sienna School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Seattle, WA
Patrick Vincent	Principal	Union Gap K-8 School; Association of Washington School Principals	Union Gap, WA
Paul Bootsma	Superintendent	Lynden Christian School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Lynden, WA
Paul Francis	Executive Director	State Board for Community and Technical Colleges	Olympia, WA
Paul Tran	Teacher	Lowell Elementary Race and Equity Team	Seattle, WA
Rae Richardson	Teacher	Lowell Elementary Race and Equity Team	Seattle, WA
Randy Spaulding	Executive Director	Washington State Board of Education	Olympia, WA

Renae Young	Principal	Yakima Adventist Christian School; Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Yakima, WA
Rosario Ortiz	Director	Casey Family Programs	Seattle, WA
Roz Thompson	Director of Government Relations	Association of Washington School Principals	Olympia, WA
Scott Friedman	Associate Director	Association of Washington School Principals	Olympia, WA
Scott Seaman	Executive Director	Association of Washington School Principals	Olympia, WA
Shelby Leyland	Music Teacher	Lowell Elementary Race and Equity Team	Seattle, WA
Stacy Dym	Executive Director	The Arc of WA	Seattle, WA
Susan Enfield	Superintendent	Highline School District (Former)	Burien, WA
Suzie Hanson	Executive Director	Washington Federation of Independent Schools	Seattle, WA
Taanvi Arekapudi	Student; Youth Mental Health Advocate	Inglemoor High School	Kenmore, WA
Tamera Marcoe	Assistant Principal	Hunt Elementary; Association of Washington School Principals	Puyallup, WA
Tania May	Assistant Superintendent	OSPI Special Education	Olympia, WA
Tawni Barlow	Director of Student Services	Medical Lake School District; Association of Washington School Principals	Medical Lake, WA
Thomasina Rogers	Principal	Ridgetop Middle School; Association of Washington School Principals	Silverdale, WA
Tona McGuire	Pediatric Psychologist	Health Support Team, LLC; UW SMART Center	Seattle, WA
Tracie Hoppis	Manager of Family Support Services	Washington Statewide Parent to Parent	Yakima, WA
Virginia Herrera-Paramo	Executive Director	Para Los Ninos	Burien, WA
Willie Seals III	Senior Director of Programs	Ace Academy	Seattle, WA
Winston Bell	Director	Everybody Can Win	Federal Way, WA

Student Interviewees: The Association of Washington Student Leaders
Virtual Interviews

Name	Affiliation	Location
Aiden Shoote	Battle Ground High School	Battle Ground, WA
Bharat Dwivedi	Eastlake High School	Sammamish, WA
Brooke Berry	Stanwood High School	Stanwood, WA
Jeffrey Anton	Union High School	Vancouver, WA
Kyani Chen	Lindbergh High School	Renton, WA
Lanai Kleckley	Marysville Getchell High School	Marysville, WA
Railey Lamb	Kennewick High School	Kennewick, WA
Shivali Panda	Lake Washington High School	Kirkland, WA
Varnika Bhargava	Redmond High School	Redmond, WA
Vince Schile	Sehome High School	Bellingham, WA

Appendix B: Discussion Questions

1. *Please introduce yourself, your background, and your role as it relates to Washington State's children and youth.*

2. *Do you see any lingering impacts (including social, emotional, or academic impacts) of the Covid-19 pandemic? What are they?*
   a. *Who are the most impacted students? What are they experiencing?*

3. *Do you know of any interventions or programs to mitigate these impacts? How are they working?*
   a. *What else do you think should be done to address those impacts?*
   b. *What is working well? What is not?*
   c. *What are the greatest challenges or barriers?*

4. *What information, data, or research are you using to design, implement, and evaluate your interventions or programs?*
   a. *What information, data, or research is missing?*

5. *Are the most impacted students being supported sufficiently? Why or why not?*
   a. *Are you seeing differences in how interventions or programs to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic work for the most impacted students?*

6. *The pandemic exposed and widened many of the existing educational gaps in the K-12 system. Do you see a connection between efforts to address equity in the broader educational system and pandemic recovery? What are your thoughts about this?*
   a. *What do you think are the most important priorities for reform to increase equity? What is working? What is not?*

7. *What lessons did you learn during and after the Covid pandemic?*

8. *What would stimulate collaboration and sharing of lessons learned to address ongoing pandemic impacts (between and among disciplines and professions and on multiple scales)?*
   a. *How is sharing currently happening, if at all?*
   b. *What would be most helpful for you to learn about?*
   c. *Who are you not learning from that you would like to learn from?*

9. *What collaborations, if any, emerged to mitigate the impacts on children and families?*

10. *What should we have asked you that we did not?*

11. *Who else should we talk to and why?*