



**2023-2024**

**PUGET SOUND TAXPAYERS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ACCOUNT  
ANNUAL REPORT**

<b>Institute of Higher Education</b>	<b>WA State Community College Dist. #23 DBA Edmonds College</b>
<b>Interlocal Agreement</b>	<b>EL-21-80-06-203</b>
<b>Allocation 2023-2024</b>	<b>\$ 191,730.00</b>
<b>Reallocated Unspent Funds from 2022-2023</b>	<b>\$ 24,289.97</b>
<b>Total 2023-2024 Allocation</b>	<b>\$ 216,019.97</b>
<b>Admin Designation</b> (maximum 10%)	<b>\$ 21,602.00</b>
<b>Direct Service Designation</b> (maximum 90% after admin)	<b>\$ 174,976.18</b>
<b>Early Learning Designation</b> (minimum 10% after admin)	<b>\$ 19,441.80</b>
<b>Spent through August 2024</b>	<b>\$ 175,636.91</b>

**FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Proposed Use of Funds (Brief Summary)**

Edmonds College is utilizing PSTAA funds to improve student success, with a focus on students facing food insecurities, housing insecurity, and/or unhoused, by supplying resources and services aimed at supporting students' basic needs so that they stay in school and complete their degree.

In 2018, Edmonds College opened a modest Food Pantry providing basic food and toiletry supplies at no cost to students in response to the growing number of students facing food insecurities and the results of the #RealCollege Survey.

In 2019, a student basic needs task force was formed, and the various student emergency aid programs were brought together to create a single emergency aid application and hired a full-time Care Navigator.

In January 2022, the Triton Student Resource Hub opened. The first floor is now the Triton Food Pantry, and the second-floor supplies student basic needs. In addition to the full time Care Navigator, a community partner Verdant Health District is staffing a full-time 2-1-1 Community Resource Advocate (CRA) found in the Hub. Services with our Veterans Center, Counseling Center, Career Action Center, and an employment navigator from



CARES of Washington are given space on site on a regular basis. Requests for emergency funding and resources continue to rise with more students returning to campus in person and as demographics shift. Students' needs go beyond food and toiletries and the items and resources provided by the Food Pantry have not been sufficient to meet the growing basic needs of our students.

The PSTAA funds will be used to continue to buy high demand products, such as food, winter coats/clothing and blankets, and basic school supplies. We will continue to enhance the resources in the Food Pantry by increasing the allocation for vouchers for students with high financial need and who live within the boundaries of RTA. As we have experienced a significant increase in the number of requests for assistance with childcare, rent, gas, and basic utilities, the additional voucher allocation will allow us to serve more students so they can purchase fresh foods, or to help with expenses such as childcare, rent, utilities, gas, etc. The majority of PSTAA funding requests are for client flex funds and supplies for folks in need. Administration costs, mileage and printing are three other items included in this grant request.

Growing needs are housing and staffing. PSTAA funds would be used to increase hours of operation at the Student Resource Hub, as well as to have more consistent hours. This comes from stable staffing of operation, which currently has its challenges. Therefore, we request funding for a part-time Food Pantry Coordinator. This person will help in overall Hub and Food Pantry operations, data collection, and food distribution. An AmeriCorps Member will offer educational programming like nutrition, diet, cooking demonstrations, eating on a budget, etc., and allow us to expand the hours of operations to allow more students to use the Food Pantry.

One growing need is housing. If a student is homeless and unhoused, funds are used to rent an apartment in campus student housing, Triton Court, for the rest of the quarter while working with the coordinated entry system for more long-term stable assistance. The two full-time Care Navigators that are in the Triton Student Resource Hub will manage the process (intake, determine need/priority, duration of stay, etc.). A full time Community Resource Advocate is also found in the hub for access to 2-1-1 and coordinated entry resources. The Triton Court apartments are managed by the college's Housing Program, the college does not own the apartments but manages them as student housing. Supplying these continued housing services and basic supports will significantly improve student retention for students facing financial challenges so that they can focus on their classes and studies.

Based on a count of unduplicated student data, most students served by the Food Pantry, (75 percent) live in the Snohomish County RTA boundaries, so a majority of those who will receive help from new and added resources and services in the Food Pantry live within the RTA area.

**Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.**



No modifications were made to the services plan.

Revisions to our original expenditure plan only included the reallocation of funds. These revisions were:

- Adding \$18,474 for food and supplies.
- Adding \$2,186 to Early Learning.
- Adding \$1,200 to the AmeriCorps. placement fee.

**Share your progress including outcomes achieved to date.**

During the last four quarters, FY2023-2024:

- The Hub received 833 requests for aid totaling \$1,920,942.00. From the various grants we were able to fund 396 requests totaling \$433,424.00. PSTAA funds were used to award 120 of the requests that totaled \$117,930.00, with the rest being referred to community resources with the help of the CRA.
- We onboarded our new Food Pantry Program Coordinator which is partially funded by PSTAA funds. Due to this achievement, we have been able to stabilize our open hours and supplied more access to our visitors. We now have open hours in the morning and in the evening during the week.
- Our AmeriCorps member was successfully onboarded. This member has been able to increase donations and community partnerships. They have also hosted a campus-wide food drive that brought in over 15,000 items. In addition, the member has also improved the Triton Resource Hub’s visibility through tabling, marketing, and service projects. Other outreach activities include a cookbook project and a community screening of a food insecurity documentary.
- The College bought supplies and equipment to create a more welcoming, efficient, and safe space including shelving, signage, cleaning supplies, bags, office, and labeling supplies.
- We increased the amount of hygiene items distributed to include toothpaste and brushes, shampoo/conditioner, soap, shaving, deodorant, diapers, wipes, etc.
- We bought more food to distribute as the number of visitors have increased.
- During the contract period, we served 5,485 visitors with an unduplicated count of 1,315 visitors.

Quarter	Visitor Count	Unduplicated Count
2023 Fall (September - December)	1377	354
2024 Winter (January - March)	1471	340
2024 Spring (April - June)	1844	387
2024 Summer (July - August)	793	234



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As of 9/1/2023 to the current date, we have distributed 51,650.79 lbs. of food.

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Weight of food distributed in lbs.</b>
September 2023	2293.5
October 2023	6609.8
November 2023	4566.5
December 2023	1056.5
January 2024	5821.6
February 2024	2223.8
March 2024	4615
April 2024	10507.59
May 2024	10110.9
June 2024	3845.6
July 2024	7056.6
August 2024	5561



<b>Triton Resource Hub Outcomes</b>						
<b>Applications</b>		<b># student requests in the quarter</b>	<b>\$ Funds requested</b>		<b>Student requests per year</b>	<b>Funds requested</b>
	<b>Spring 24</b>	181	\$350,473.00	<b>FY23-24</b>	833	\$1,920,942.00
	<b>Spring 23</b>	219	\$345,876.00	<b>FY22-23</b>	770	\$1,385,080.00
	<b>% change</b>	-17.35%	1.33%		8.18%	38.69%
	<b>Since Jan 2022</b>	2071	\$4,158,064.00			
<b>Awards</b>		<b># student awards in the quarter</b>	<b>Funds awarded</b>		<b>Students awarded</b>	<b>Funds awarded</b>
	<b>Spring 24</b>	93	\$90,849.00	<b>FY 23-24</b>	396	\$433,424.00
	<b>Spring 23</b>	132	\$112,501.00	<b>FY 22-23</b>	430	\$395,544.00
	<b>% change</b>	-29.55%	-19.25%		-7.91%	9.58%
	<b>Since Jan 22</b>	1100	\$1,017,618.00			

Every quarter all students who received an award are surveyed. In FY2023-2024 of the eighty-nine surveys returned only four were not able to complete the quarter.

**What challenges have you encountered?**

The main challenge faced by the Triton Student Resource Hub is the escalating student demand for emergency grants. As more students experience financial hardships, the need for these grants has significantly increased. Unfortunately, the Hub's current resources and funds are insufficient to meet this growing demand, leaving many students without the critical support they need. This resource gap presents a significant obstacle in supporting student financial stability and overall well-being.

Regarding the food pantry and its operation there are no significant challenges to list. Significant challenges, however, continue to be the continuing demand for more food and resources. We continue to see more students using the pantry and the demand for food increases. Food costs continue to rise that also contributes to the challenge of meeting the food needs.



## **FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS**

**Early Learning Provider:** West Edmonds Cooperative Preschool (WECP)

### **Proposed Use of Funds (Brief Summary)**

PSTAA Funds will be used for early childhood curriculum standardization and enhancement in FLED affiliated, low-cost, Parent Participation Preschools throughout Snohomish County. Funds will be granted to the non-profit West Edmonds Cooperative Preschool (WECP) to buy updated classroom curriculum, including implementation training and classroom materials for 9 non-profit preschools, serving approximately 500+ families in Snohomish County. The focus of cooperative preschools is the family engagement, as caregivers play an active role in the classroom as teaching assistants. As outlined in the Early Learning Family Engagement Framework, three of the major definitions of family engagement are central to the mission of cooperative preschool:

- A shared responsibility in which programs are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning.
- Grounded in positive, ongoing goal-oriented reciprocal relationships between educators and families.
- Developmental and grows over time, meeting families where they are by providing opportunities and resources to help them move forward, both in their role as their child's first teacher and partner with the school, and in uplifting their own family well-being.

The cooperative preschool serves as a vital learning experience for children and a laboratory setting for caregivers to develop important skills that will influence their relationship with their children throughout their academic career. With a developmentally appropriate, play based learning environment, teachers and caregivers need more training and materials to help support skill development in literacy, math, and science. Confidence with these subjects at the preschool level will ensure caregivers will continue to take an active role throughout the child's schooling.

With support and guidance from Edmonds College's department of Family Life Education, WECP will use these funds to buy early learning curricula, classroom materials and training for teachers. With special attention focused on evidence-based programs that incorporate Pre-Academic Skills, as well as foundational experiences in literacy, math, and science into their materials, with the intent of standardizing the curriculum among the nine programs, enhancing what already exists within their current curriculum, and supplying more accessible and equitable classrooms.



**Share their progress including outcomes achieved to date.**

- FLED affiliated Preschools has adopted evidence based, developmentally appropriate early learning curricula that incorporates Social Emotional learning and Inclusion principles.
- Preschool classrooms were provided with learning materials that are developmentally appropriate and focused on math and science exploration. Many classrooms had outdated or insufficient items like microscopes, lab goggles and other hands-on learning tools. There is now equity across all schools.
- Professional development opportunities for the approximately twenty preschool teachers were arranged through Zeno Math. Zeno Math is a Seattle based organization dedicated to playful and developmentally appropriate math exploration through a lens of racial equality. Cooperative preschool teachers were given access to three trainings through Zeno Math.
- To help support connections between math and science and literacy, classroom libraries were updated with more books focused on those disciplines.
- Additionally, Zeno Math offered two “Family Math Parties” that aim to break stereotypes of engaging in math with young children. Caregivers learn foundational skills in talking about math that will help them throughout their children’s academic lives.
- Children had the opportunity to learn and engage at a developmentally proper level with a curriculum and environment that supports all dimensions of human differences.
- Improvements to the classroom and outdoor areas have been made to keep a safe learning environment.
- Research based teaching practices and materials implemented has had a positive impact in these areas:
  - Social Emotional Learning: positive social relationships, emotional regulation, and cooperation.
  - Enhance Language and Literacy development for both primary language learners and ELL students.
  - Training was supplied for the preschool teachers in observation and assessment to help preschool staff to have more meaningful connections with children and caregivers.
  - Growing was seen in engagement with families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways.

**Share successes and challenges designating funding to community-based early learning providers.**

- In the three years that one of the affiliated preschools in our program has been awarded this grant, they have been able to provide all the college affiliated schools with items that would usually not be attainable in a typical year. These small preschools run at a very low budget to remain cost effective and low cost for families, which often means that many of the improvements are out of reach



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financially. Most families enroll to receive help from both the low tuition as well as the opportunity to be an active participant in their child's early education.

- While the grant has afforded access to many new materials, future planning will put an emphasis on training for curriculum development. Many teachers report that they are thrilled with the new items, but sometimes struggle with weaving them into the existing curriculum.
- Additionally, as the caregivers are an integral part of the school, further attention will be given to including caregivers to make connections with the curriculum at home. This will be a focus for 2024-2025 as we want to ensure that the children and caregivers have support for the home environment.
- Each year has had a different focus, with excellent responses from the school community.
  - New toys, books, and classroom materials, as well as a speaker focused on Diversity and Equity.
  - Equipment to help children meet their sensory needs, in the classroom as well as outside, leading to social-emotional skill development.
  - Training for teachers in introducing early math and science skills, as well as updated classroom materials for math and science exploration.