

**2024 - 2025****PUGET SOUND TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ACCOUNT****ANNUAL REPORT**

Institute of Higher Education	Wash State Community College Dist #23 DBA Edmonds College
Interlocal Agreement Number	EL-21-80-06-203
Allocation 2024-2025	\$285,427.78
Reallocated Unspent Funds from 2023-2024	25,401.38
Total 2024-2025 Allocation	310,829.16
Admin Designation (maximum 10%)	31,082.92
Direct Service Designation (maximum 90% after admin)	251,771.62
Early Learning Designation (minimum 10% after admin)	27,974.62
Spent through August 2025	\$255,074.90

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 and housing insecurities, by providing resources and services aimed at supporting students' basic needs so that they stay in school and complete their degree.

The PSTAA funds will be used to continue to buy food, hygiene items, volunteer and staff apparel, and operating supplies. Funds will be used to buy high demand products, such as winter coats/clothing and blankets, and basic school supplies. New this year is our plan to distribute refrigerated and frozen food to offer more nutritious food. Funds will be used to expand our refrigeration/freezer needs and storage. We will also use funds for transportation costs including food bank pickups, donations, food drives, and gleaning. Additionally, funds will provide for the costs of printing and marketing materials and signage.

Funds will also be used for vouchers for students with high financial needs who live within the boundaries of RTA. The continued voucher allocation will allow us to serve more students so they can buy fresh foods, and to help with expenses such as child care, rent, utilities, gas, etc.

Funds will also be used to temporarily house students. The apartment will be used as transitional housing for unhoused or housing insecure students until more stable housing can be secured. The full-time Care Navigator found in the Triton Student Resource Hub will manage the process (intake, determine need/priority, duration of stay, etc.). 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. Providing these new housing services will significantly improve student retention for students facing housing challenges so that they can focus on their classes and studies.

Funds will be used to cover wages for our Food Pantry Coordinator who will be the lead in the college food pantry and will coordinate food and hygiene item distribution to our campus population, schedule and assign student staff and volunteers, and provide operational oversight during open pantry hours. Funds will also be used to fund a placement fee for a 1700-hour AmeriCorps volunteer. This person will help with overall Hub and Food Pantry operations and offer educational programming like nutrition, diet, cooking demonstrations, eating on a budget, etc.

Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.

There were no modifications to the proposed use of funds.

Share your progress including outcomes achievement to date.

PSTAA funding has been crucial in empowering Edmonds College students to overcome basic needs, insecurities and stay on track with their education. On September 8, a news article was published about the Triton Student Resource Hub. The article Highlighted the food pantry, emergency financial aid, and 211 Resource Advocate. The Seattle Times later shared the article.

Food and Basic Needs Support

The Food Pantry made a significant impact, serving 7,265 visitors (1,024 unique) from September 2024 to August 2025. During this period, we distributed 73,769 pounds of food, provided 747 packs of diapers (118 unique), and offered \$1,940 in laundry vouchers, all directly contributed to student well-being.

Edmonds College also increased team knowledge and advanced professional development with the funds. PSTAA funds provided Food Safety Training to three staff members. This training is essential for maintaining food safety and ensuring all team members have the background necessary to follow best practices.

To manage the growing demand, the PSTAA funds allowed us to hire a **Program Specialist** to oversee daily pantry operations. Additionally, funding for transportation allowed us to **lease a van** for essential food and donation pickups, The leased van ensured a steady supply of resources.

Enhancing the Pantry Environment

Beyond direct resource distribution, PSTAA funding supported vital upgrades to the Food Pantry, making it more accessible and a welcoming environment. Improvements included clear directional signage and a vibrant student-created mural celebrating cultural



diversity. We are continuously expanding our selection of culturally relevant foods and recently launched a collaborative cookbook project to provide recipes, cooking techniques, and community resources that promote healthy eating and cooking confidence.

To foster a strong sense of belonging and aid accessibility, **food pantry uniforms** were provided for our staff and volunteers. These uniforms served as effective visual cues, helping visitors feel comfortable approaching our team for help, and proudly display a unifying message: "Together, We Can Grow."

Addressing Crisis Needs and Unmet Demand

The Triton Student Resource Hub, co-located with the Food Pantry, provided emergency crisis funding for students facing financial challenges that could have led to them dropping out. PSTAA funds offered short-term financial aid to help with rent, food, transportation, childcare, medical, and utilities for students within the RTA boundary.

Over the last four quarters, the PSTAA emergency funds:

- Awarded eighty applications and supported seventy-two unduplicated students.
- Thirteen students received housing assistance awards through the PSTAA Housing funds.
- Students who received awards also received resources within the community and an opportunity to connect with a 211 Community Resource Navigator for other potential long-term solutions.

What challenges have you encountered?

Despite our efforts and braided funding from state and local sources, the biggest challenge is that the need for student emergency funds is significantly greater than our current funding. We can only meet about half of the requests. Funds are exhausted approximately three weeks into each quarter.

In addition, due to federal funding cuts, the AmeriCorps member was put on administrative leave while serving at the pantry. Although we mitigated the short-term impact of this, we may not be able to use future PSTAA Funding for a new AmeriCorps placement fee if the program is discontinued permanently.

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS

Early Learning Provider: Lake Stevens Cooperative Preschool

Proposed Use of Funds (Brief Summary)

PSTAA Funds will be used for early childhood curriculum standardization and enhancement in Family Life Education Department (FLED) affiliated, low-cost, Parent Participation Preschools for nine non-profit preschools, serving approximately 400+



families in Snohomish County. With support and guidance from Edmonds College's department of Family Life Education, funds were granted to the non-profit Lake Stevens Cooperative Preschool (LSCP). LSCP used these funds to buy early learning curricula, classroom materials, and training for teachers. Special attention will be focused on evidence-based programs that provide extensions from the preschool classroom to the home environment. As a reflection of changing demographics, there were also improvements in access to the cooperative school caregiver program, including added speakers, improvements in technology for flexible attendance at meetings, and books and other materials for the enrolled caregivers.

Share their progress including outcomes achievement to date.

PSTAA funds were strategically used to enhance early childhood education and support families within nine non-profit Parent Participation Preschools affiliated with Edmonds College's Family Life Education department, serving over four hundred families in Snohomish County.

Curriculum and Teacher Training Enhancements

The grant planning committee at Lake Stevens Cooperative Preschool (LSCP) named key areas for investment, with purchases and implementations completed this summer. The primary focus was teacher training in neurodiversity and neuro-affirming practices to improve curriculum and instruction in neurodiverse classrooms. Teachers completed a Neuro-affirming Practice certificate through the Play Strong organization and attended training with NW Kids Impact to better understand sensory processing differences in early childhood.

All current teachers attended the NW Kids Impact training on sensory strategies in early childhood settings. Teachers reported feeling better equipped to help the growing number of neurodiverse children in their classrooms, especially with setting up sensory friendly classrooms. The grant funds provided sets of headphones to help children who are especially sensitive to noise to allow them to be more comfortable in the classroom.

Bridging Classroom Learning to the Home Environment

To ensure learning extended beyond the classroom, funds were used to provide materials for families to use at home that mirror classroom routines and pedagogy. Every family received a visual schedule kit, a research-backed tool that helps children and caregivers with routines and managing challenging behaviors. Additionally, each family receives a copy of "The Way of Play: Using Little Moments of Big Connection to Raise Calm and Confident Kids" by Georgie Wisen-Vincent and Tina Payne Bryson, which supports parents on using playful interactions to foster social-emotional learning and development. FLED instructors provided implementation strategies. There was almost immediate feedback about how these visual schedules were benefiting the parent-child interactions in the home, leading to fewer power struggles and an increased level of autonomy for the children.



Outdoor Learning Space Enrichment

Teachers requested new activities to enrich outdoor classroom spaces. Recognizing limited storage across schools, a collection of outdoor toy kits were available for any of the eight partner schools to check out for designated periods. These kits primarily focused on outdoor building materials, including various types of blocks, ramps, logs, and outdoor play figures, which are essential manipulatives. Two kits of outdoor music toys will also be available, promoting diverse play experiences.

Ten different collections of outdoor equipment were bought, as well as storage for the equipment to make transportation easier. Each collection of toys was more expensive than the preschools would typically budget for an entire year of toy purchases, making these high quality and outdoor specific toys out of their reach.

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

When designating PSTAA funding to community-based early learning providers, both notable successes and operational challenges were met.

Successes

The collaboration with Lake Stevens Cooperative Preschool has yielded significant successes in maximizing the impact of the funding. Teachers and schools have shown a strong commitment to investing in high-quality, open-ended outdoor toys while strategically addressing storage limitations. This ensures that valuable resources are accessible without burdening existing facilities.

Furthermore, the grant planning committee, which includes caregivers, has been highly engaged in finding materials that effectively bridge classroom learning with the home environment. The planned purchase of a research-based visual schedule kit for each family and the book "The Way of Play" directly support this goal, complementing the parent education aspect that is central to cooperative preschools. There has also been a clear enthusiasm from both teachers and families to enhance the classroom experience for all children, particularly for the growing population of neurodiverse students, which is a key focus of the planned teacher training.

Challenges

As a small, parent-run non-profit cooperative school, Lake Stevens Cooperative Preschool faces specific fiscal restrictions that have presented buying challenges. For instance, they are not allowed to have a credit card, which complicates online transactions. This often requires individual members to make purchases and await reimbursement, potentially leading to financial hardship. Consequently, these operational constraints have delayed the purchasing process, and we are only now able to move forward with buying the materials.

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The largest challenge faced was particularly around coordination and transportation. The large quantity of visual schedules (348), for example, weighed over 1500lbs, and once sorted, needed to be delivered throughout most of Snohomish. Similarly, the library of outdoor toys will be a huge benefit for all the preschools, however, the scheduling of the rotation and making it easy to borrow across all the Snohomish sites has taken some experimenting.