

Board of Directors

Annie Elder
Brian Kelly
Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt
Karen Reich, President
Kelly Zender

Date: May 11, 2021
To: Whatcom County Council
From: Mount Baker School District # 507
Subject: Resolution AB2021-209 PERMANENT AFFORDABILITY OF CHILD CARE IN WHATCOM COUNTY

Dear Whatcom County Council,

District
Administration
Superintendent

Mary Sewright
360.383.2000

Thank you for your attention to the issue of child care affordability! We appreciate the opportunity to provide a school district perspective. MBSD is definitely representative of the Whatcom County "child care desert" with ONE licensed family home and ONE licensed outdoor program available in - geographically - the 2nd largest school district in the State of Washington.

Answers to your questions are below. In addition, we are available for an extended conversation at your convenience.

Director of
Finance & Operations

Ben Thomas
360.383.2000

1. What role do you see for Whatcom County Government in helping make quality child care accessible and affordable?

Whatcom County Government is in a unique position to support long-term infrastructure that will increase affordability AND especially in our district, accessibility to child care.

Director of
Special Programs

Ian Linterman
360.383.2012

2. What roadblocks do you see in making this vision happen?

Possible roadblocks include zoning codes and permit processes, access to support and professional development to increase the number of family home providers, and a long-term vision/commitment to funding for stability of high quality early learning opportunities.

Director of Curriculum
& Instruction

Bridget Rossman
360.383.2013

3. If this resolution was enacted, how would it positively impact child care in Whatcom County?

Attention to the child care related issues of cost, access, high quality, and the importance of the early years to family and community health is ALREADY a positive impact. We are excited to support the follow up ACTION.

4. What is your vision for child care in Whatcom County in 2040? How do you see government, nonprofits, and businesses working together to provide quality childcare that is accessible and affordable?

The vision in our district includes a centrally located early learning facility that serves as a HUB for satellite preschools and licensed family child care in each of our 3 elementary catchment areas. The HUB could include 1) High quality "wrap-around" child care 2) Opportunities for integrated cooperative and/or developmental preschool for children with special needs. 3) A community center where providers and families with young children can easily access support, services, and information about helping children succeed in school... and beyond!

5. If this resolution was enacted, how could it negatively impact child care in Whatcom County?

MBSD is committed to working in partnership to help solve the child care crisis. We recognize and honor the work of the Whatcom Child Care Coalition and locally, the Nooksack Tribal Child Care project. We do not expect a negative impact in our region.

6. What other ideas do you have for how these funds would best be used for long-term, sustainable child care solutions?

Again, we appreciate the Council's focus on affordable, high quality child care and look forward to your next steps in supporting our communities - starting with our earliest learners!



Mary Sewright
Superintendent