



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Champ Thomaskutty, Director
RE: Ferndale School District – Healthy Children’s Fund Mental Health Workforce Expansion Interlocal Agreement Amendment #2
DATE: JULY 17, 2026

Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Ferndale School District for your review and signature. This amendment renews the contract for one year, updates the scope of work and budget to reflect the extended contract period, and provides a progress report.

Background and Purpose

This agreement funds the expansion of mental health services to an estimated 150-250 early learners (ages 3 through 5) and their families annually, who are enrolled in the District’s Developmental Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten Programs. Services include mental health staff support to early learners ages 3-5 and their families, training and professional development opportunities for new and existing staff, increasing collaboration with community partners who are providing mental health services, and implementing a Mental Health Internship Program.

Access to early childhood mental health care is a critical gap in Whatcom County and this lack of access has serious and lasting consequences on children’s physical, emotional, social, and cognitive health. With early identification and investments in mental health treatment for young children and their families, expenditures in healthcare, education, criminal-legal systems, and the labor market are reduced. Early identification and intervention also help families in accessing simple strategies for support, which leads to healthy development of the child and a healthier home environment, and a reduction in the risks of childhood mood disorders.

This agreement was awarded as a result of RFP 24-60 and aligns with Healthy Children’s Fund Implementation Fund strategies intended to expand behavioral and mental health services for vulnerable children, pregnant parents, and parents with young children.

■ Funding Amount and Source

Funding for this agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$300,530, is provided by the Healthy Children’s Fund. These funds are included in the 2026 budget. Council authorization for this amendment is required as the funding provided by this amendment exceeds the \$10,000 or 10% threshold (WCC 3.08.090[M]).

■ Differences from Previous Contracts

Section	Differences
Exhibit A – Scope of Work	Modifies the scope of work to amend the number of early learners served, remove the collaborative learning project with WCEL, modify the deliverables for the Whatcom County Schools Collaboration Group, modify the intern caseload and define the hours dedicated to early learners, add requirements for an internship learning collaborative, and update reporting requirements.
Exhibit B – Compensation	Updates the budget to reflect funding for the extended contract period and the revised scope of work.
Exhibit C – Summary Data	Adds Exhibit C, a progress report of work to date (Q4 2024 – Q2 2026).

Please contact Ann Beck, Community Health and Human Services Manager at 360-778-6055 or ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us if you have any questions.

