

Department of Education and Early Learning

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Department Overview

The mission of the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) is to transform the lives of Seattle’s children, youth, and families through strategic investments in education. DEEL advances this mission by investing in equitable education opportunities, high-quality learning environments, and student and family supports. DEEL investments contribute to four department results: (1) families have access to affordable, quality childcare, (2) children are kindergarten-ready, (3) students graduate high school college- and career-ready, and (4) students attain a postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate.

With investments across the prenatal-to-postsecondary continuum, DEEL supports children, youth, and families to address disparities in educational opportunity gaps. Using funding from the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) Levy, Washington State’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), and other grants, DEEL operates direct-service programs, contracts with community-based and institutional partners, and provides quality teaching and professional development supports to providers and educators.

Budget Snapshot

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Department Support				
General Fund Support	18,532,091	15,861,332	15,919,750	7,010,474
Other Funding - Operating	111,910,321	135,364,447	84,895,822	169,845,445
Total Operations	130,442,412	151,225,779	100,815,572	176,855,919
Total Appropriations	130,442,412	151,225,779	100,815,572	176,855,919
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	121.50	124.50	124.50	124.50

* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

Budget Overview

DEEL implements its mission to support Seattle’s children and families primarily by leveraging funding from the FEPP Levy, originally approved by voters in 2018, to support a continuum of equity-driven investments in child care, early learning, K-12, and postsecondary education. DEEL also relies on funding from federal, state and private grants to support its education initiatives.

On November 4, 2025, Seattle voters approved the FEPP Levy renewal as the current FEPP levy expires at the end of 2025. The 2026 Endorsed Budget did not include expenditures or revenues for the FEPP Levy renewal as the development of the new levy proposal was not proposed and voted on until the development of the 2026 Budget. The FEPP Levy renewal will fund education-related initiatives in the city for six more years from 2026 to 2031. The

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levy will raise \$1.3 billion over six years to provide education-support services for Seattle children, youth, and families. The 2026 Adopted Budget for DEEL increases by 17% over the 2025 Adopted Budget, which includes the first year of levy revenue and DEEL's expenses as reflected in Ordinance 127238. The FEPP Levy renewal funds \$44.4 million on average annually in programs for early learning, child care, mental health, and related administrative costs that were previously funded by the Sweetened Beverage Tax, General Fund, and the Payroll Expense Tax. This amount also includes levy expenses in the Department of Human Services and Department of Parks and Recreation adopted budgets.

The core components of the levy support youth and children from early childhood to college and career. Focusing on helping youth be ready to start their educational journeys, learn their best in and out of school, and thrive in their post-secondary choices, the DEEL levy renewal includes the following initiatives to support their mission:

- **Early Childhood:** The Early Childhood investment area includes \$658.2M over six years to sustain and expand supports for childcare access through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and kindergarten readiness through the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP). 3,100 SPP students annually and 1,400 CCAP families are expected to be served by the final year of the levy.
- **K-12 Student Supports:** The K-12 Student Supports investment area includes \$275.6M over six years to continue the City's commitment to accelerate student learning with academic and enrichment supports and promote college and career readiness.
- **K-12 Health and Safety:** The K-12 Health & Safety investment area includes \$235.1M over six years for School Based Health Centers, strategies to promote positive youth mental health outcomes, and student safety supports.
- **College and Career Supports** The College and Career Supports investment area includes \$82.4M over six years to sustain and expand Seattle Promise and career pathway programs. Career pathways investments include funding for the Path to UW program and programs for skilled trades/technical workers. 105 Path to UW students and 1,475 Seattle Promise students are expected to be served annually by the final year of the levy.
- **Leadership and Administration:** The proposed FEPP levy includes \$78.6M over six years to maintain department administration and operations.

The FEPP levy requires an Implementation and Evaluation (I&E) plan to develop the criteria, guidelines, and requirements to guide the levy investments. If voters approve the levy renewal, a proposed I&E plan would be transmitted to Council in early 2026 for adoption.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

The City Council imposed a proviso on \$167,000 on DEEL's 2026 budget for childcare navigation services and support for unhoused children and their families accessing childcare.

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Incremental Budget Changes

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	2026 Budget	FTE
Total 2026 Endorsed Budget	100,815,572	124.50
Baseline		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	2,048,475	-
Adopted Operating		
Early Learning Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy	41,037,459	-
K-12 Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy	22,959,421	-
Postsecondary Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy	6,355,740	-
Leadership and Administration in the 2025 FEPP Levy	3,846,044	-
K-12 PET Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy	-	-
Central Cost Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy	-	-
General Fund Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy	-	-
Sweetened Beverage Tax Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy	-	-
DEEL Levy Revenue	-	-
Adopted Technical		
Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget	(198,856)	-
SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction	(7,936)	-
Council Provisos		
Proviso \$167,000 for Childcare Navigation and Support for Unhoused Children	-	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$76,040,347	-
Total 2026 Adopted Budget	\$176,855,919	124.50

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$2,048,475

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare and other central cost factors. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Adopted Operating

Early Learning Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy

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Expenditures \$41,037,459

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This item adds \$41.0 million to DEEL's budget as part of the Year 1 amount for the 2025 FEPP Levy renewal in the Early Learning investment area. This investment supports preschool, child care, child health, prenatal to three programs, child care worker supports, and DEEL program labor. The preschool strategy includes funding for expanded seats in the Seattle Preschool Program (SPP), with the program expected to serve 2,600 students in the 2026-2027 school year and 3,100 students served annually by the final year of the levy. The child care strategy includes funding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Homeless Child Care, and Child Care Health Program. CCAP is projected to serve 1,400 children in 2026-2027, an increase of 800 new subsidized child care slots in the 2026-2027 school year.

K-12 Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures \$22,959,421

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This item adds \$22.9 million to DEEL's budget as part of the Year 1 amount for the 2025 FEPP Levy renewal in the K-12 investment area that sustains funding for K-12 students by investing in Expanded Learning Opportunities, and increases funding for School Based Health Centers, Mental Health Supports, and School Safety.

Postsecondary Programs in the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures \$6,355,740

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This item adds \$6.3 million to DEEL's budget as part of the Year 1 amount for the 2025 FEPP Levy renewal in the College and Career investment area including funding for Seattle Promise, Path to Trades, and the Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The original FEPP18 I&E Plan projected 870 students in the final year of the Levy. The FEPP25 Levy is expected to support up to 1,475 Promise students in the 2026-27 school year. This investment area also provides funding for new apprenticeships and skill-building opportunities for graduates through the new Path to Trades program.

Leadership and Administration in the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures \$3,846,044

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This item adds \$3.8M to DEEL's budget as part of the Year 1 amount for the 2025 FEPP Levy renewal in the Leadership and Administration investment area which includes funding for staffing, evaluation, and professional services for the Director's Office and Finance and Operations division.

K-12 PET Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures -

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This budget neutral item shifts \$14.4 million for K-12 mental health programming from the Payroll Expense Tax to the 2025 FEPP Levy. The Mayor's Youth Mental Health Investment Strategy originally included \$13.9 million of Payroll Expense Tax funding in 2025 and \$14.4 million in 2026 for Reach Out, telehealth services, in-person mental health supports, and universal screening. This programming is now being supported by the FEPP Levy renewal.

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Central Cost Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures -

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This budget neutral item reflects shifting \$3.2M for central costs expenses from other funding sources including the General Fund, Sweetened Beverage Tax, and Payroll Expense Tax to the 2025 FEPP Levy. Ongoing funding for central costs will be maintained through renewal of the 2025 FEPP Levy.

General Fund Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures -

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This budget neutral item shifts funding of \$8.4M from DEEL's 2026 General Fund budget to the 2025 FEPP Levy for the Child Care Assistance Program, Child Care Referral, the Nurse Family Partnership, ParentChild+, labor, central rates, and professional services. Ongoing funding for these programs will be maintained through renewal of the 2025 FEPP Levy.

Sweetened Beverage Tax Transfer to the 2025 FEPP Levy

Expenditures -

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This budget neutral item shifting funding of \$6.9 million of 2026 Sweetened Beverage Tax budget to the 2025 FEPP Levy for programs including the Child Care Assistance Program, Child Care Health Program, Developmental Bridge, ParentChild+ as well as DEEL labor. Ongoing funding for these programs will be maintained through renewal of the 2025 FEPP Levy.

DEEL Levy Revenue

Revenues \$166,137,566

On November 4, 2025, City residents voted to approve the renewal of the Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise (FEPP) levy for six more years (2026-2031). This item adds \$166.1 million for anticipated 2026 expenditures and \$45.0 million to the levy fund balance for future levy spending per Ordinance 127238 and related fiscal note. Many DEEL levy programs are funded on a school year basis so 2026 revenues support programs during the calendar as well as school year 2026-2027.

Adopted Technical

Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget

Expenditures \$(198,856)

This centrally administered change adjusts base budget appropriations to reflect the proper Annual Wage Increase (AWI) increment for 2026, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of City Unions for personnel costs. AWI increments are determined based on the average change in the local Consumer Price Index (CPI). This change represents a true-up between the forecasted CPI assumption included in the Endorsed Budget and the actual CPI data.

SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction

Expenditures \$(7,936)

The City's employee retirement system, the Seattle City Employees Retirement System (SCERS) is a defined benefit pension program funded by a combination of salary-based employer (i.e., the City) and employee contributions, and

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investment earnings. Based on the updated actuarial valuation for 2025, this item reduces the employer contribution rate from the endorsed rate of 15.17% to the SCERS minimum actuarial required rate of 15.06%.

Council Provisos

Proviso \$167,000 for Childcare Navigation and Support for Unhoused Children

This Council Budget Action (CBA) imposes a proviso on \$167,000 in the Department of Education and Early Learning for childcare navigation and support for unhoused children and their families accessing childcare. This support for unhoused children and their families should include but not be limited to: identifying childcare programs, completing childcare applications, subsidy form assistance, play groups for sibling caregivers, and support for family events and strategic service planning. This funding is intended to be provided to an organization that has experience providing such services.

This CBA imposes the following proviso:

"Of the appropriations in the 2026 budget for the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, \$167,000 is appropriated solely for childcare navigation services and support for unhoused children and their families accessing childcare, and may be spent for no other purpose."

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Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
DEEL - BO-EE-IL100 - Early Learning				
00100 - General Fund	13,571,827	14,543,156	14,672,253	6,270,894
00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	5,204,739	7,356,565	6,778,813	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	(36,955)	-	-	-
17857 - 2011 Families and Education Levy	-	643,000	-	-
17861 - Seattle Preschool Levy Fund	1,440,726	-	-	-
17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	48,052,131	58,585,045	30,870,748	30,780,106
17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	56,780,687
Total for BSL: BO-EE-IL100	68,232,469	81,127,765	52,321,813	93,831,686
DEEL - BO-EE-IL200 - K-12 Programs				
00100 - General Fund	4,155,037	927,293	816,122	739,580
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	1,205,485	13,900,000	14,400,000	-
17857 - 2011 Families and Education Levy	449,171	-	-	-
17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	37,314,213	39,576,328	21,423,592	21,387,334
17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	37,547,575
Total for BSL: BO-EE-IL200	43,123,906	54,403,621	36,639,714	59,674,489
DEEL - BO-EE-IL300 - Post-Secondary Programs				
17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	9,828,995	6,484,994	5,543,360	5,534,314
17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	6,395,465
Total for BSL: BO-EE-IL300	9,828,995	6,484,994	5,543,360	11,929,779
DEEL - BO-EE-IL700 - Leadership and Administration				
00100 - General Fund	805,228	390,883	431,375	-
00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	504,466	666,269	694,253	-
17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	7,947,348	8,152,246	5,185,057	5,114,211
17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	6,305,754
Total for BSL: BO-EE-IL700	9,257,042	9,209,399	6,310,685	11,419,965
Department Total	130,442,412	151,225,779	100,815,572	176,855,919
Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	121.50	124.50	124.50	124.50

* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

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Budget Summary by Fund Department of Education and Early Learning

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
00100 - General Fund	18,532,091	15,861,332	15,919,750	7,010,474
00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	5,709,206	8,022,834	7,473,066	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	1,168,530	13,900,000	14,400,000	-
17857 - 2011 Families and Education Levy	449,171	643,000	-	-
17861 - Seattle Preschool Levy Fund	1,440,726	-	-	-
17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	103,142,688	112,798,613	63,022,756	62,815,964
17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	107,029,481
Budget Totals for DEEL	130,442,412	151,225,779	100,815,572	176,855,919

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Revenue Overview

2026 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
331110	Direct Fed Grants	448,095	539,580	539,580	539,580
334010	State Grants	6,729,055	6,453,846	6,270,894	6,270,894
341150	Private Reimbursements	(1,163)	-	-	-
342130	Communication Service Fees	(179)	-	-	-
342150	Communications Main/Rep Fees	(3,153)	-	-	-
Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund		7,172,655	6,993,426	6,810,474	6,810,474
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	(860)	-	-	-
Total Revenues for: 12300 - Election Vouchers Fund		(860)	-	-	-
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	297	-	-	-
360010	Investment Interest	-	490,000	50,000	50,000
Total Revenues for: 17857 - 2011 Families and Education Levy		297	490,000	50,000	50,000
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	153,000	(50,000)	(50,000)
Total Resources for:17857 - 2011 Families and Education Levy		297	643,000	-	-
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	127	-	-	-
360010	Investment Interest	-	17,000	-	-
Total Revenues for: 17861 - Seattle Preschool Levy Fund		127	17,000	-	-
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	(17,000)	-	-
Total Resources for:17861 - Seattle Preschool Levy Fund		127	-	-	-
311010	Real & Personal Property Taxes	88,468,392	90,728,658	1,361,975	1,361,975
337080	Other Private Contrib & Dons	-	5,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
341150	Private Reimbursements	5,011,555	-	-	-
360010	Investment Interest	-	3,089,000	579,000	579,000
397010	Operating Transfers In	-	-	12,750,000	12,000,000
Total Revenues for: 17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy		93,479,946	98,817,658	17,190,975	16,440,975
400000	Use of/Contribution to Fund	-	13,980,954	45,831,781	46,374,989

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Balance				
Total Resources for:17871 - Families Education Preschool Promise Levy	93,479,946	112,798,613	63,022,756	62,815,964
311010 Real & Personal Property Taxes	-	-	-	207,000,000
337080 Other Private Contrib & Dons	-	-	-	2,800,000
360010 Investment Interest	-	-	-	2,300,000
Total Revenues for: 17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	212,100,000
400000 Use of/Contribution to Fund Balance	-	-	-	(91,537,423)
Total Resources for:17876 - FEPP Levy 2025	-	-	-	120,562,577
 Total DEEL Resources	 100,652,166	 120,435,039	 69,833,230	 190,189,015

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

DEEL - BO-EE-IL100 - Early Learning

The purpose of the Early Learning Budget Summary Level is to help children enter school ready to succeed, provide preschool teachers with resources and training, and assist Seattle families with gaining access to early learning resources.

Program Expenditures	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Early Learning	68,232,469	81,127,765	52,321,813	93,831,686
Total	68,232,469	81,127,765	52,321,813	93,831,686
Full-time Equivalents Total*	65.50	67.50	67.50	67.50

**FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here*

DEEL - BO-EE-IL200 - K-12 Programs

The purpose of the K-12 Division Budget Summary Level is to manage K-12 investments in elementary, middle, and high school, as well as health strategies across the K-12 continuum.

Program Expenditures	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
K-12 Programs	43,123,906	54,403,621	36,639,714	59,674,489
Total	43,123,906	54,403,621	36,639,714	59,674,489
Full-time Equivalents Total*	19.00	20.00	20.00	20.00

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DEEL - BO-EE-IL300 - Post-Secondary Programs

The purpose of the Post-Secondary Budget Summary Level is to help achieve the goal of the City's Education Action Plan that 70% of all student groups in Seattle Public Schools will go on to attain a post-secondary credential by the year 2030.

Program Expenditures	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Post-Secondary Programs	9,828,995	6,484,994	5,543,360	11,929,779
Total	9,828,995	6,484,994	5,543,360	11,929,779
Full-time Equivalents Total*	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

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DEEL - BO-EE-IL700 - Leadership and Administration

The purpose of the Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level is to provide executive, community, financial, human resource, technology and business support to the Department of Education and Early Learning.

Program Expenditures	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	2,438,717	2,403,814	1,637,991	2,569,361
Departmental Indirect Costs	-	21,841	30,614	29,934
Divisional Indirect Costs	6,818,325	6,783,743	4,642,080	8,820,670
Total	9,257,042	9,209,399	6,310,685	11,419,965
Full-time Equivalents Total*	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00

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The following information summarizes the programs in Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level:

Citywide Indirect Costs

Expenditures/FTE	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	2,438,717	2,403,814	1,637,991	2,569,361

Departmental Indirect Costs

Expenditures/FTE	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Departmental Indirect Costs	-	21,841	30,614	29,934
Full Time Equivalents Total	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00

Divisional Indirect Costs

Expenditures/FTE	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
Divisional Indirect Costs	6,818,325	6,783,743	4,642,080	8,820,670
Full Time Equivalents Total	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00