

SW Washington Legislators:

As you know, Governor Inslee's proposed biennial budget includes a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for state-funded school employees. If enacted, the increase would be three percent in the first year and 1.8 percent in the second year.

Although I support the governor's decision to include a COLA, I'd like you to be aware that it would constitute another encroachment on our local levy unless the state funds the adjustment for all district employees. Because the state does not pay for all Vancouver Public Schools staff positions, our cost to provide a three percent COLA would exceed this additional revenue by an estimated \$750,000.

The COLA encroachment is yet another illustration of why it's so important for the legislature to respond appropriately to the McCleary mandate, providing greater equity and support for districts across the state. Thank you for considering this issue as you engage with others in budget discussions.

Sincerely,

Steven T. Webb, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Vancouver Public Schools