



November 30, 2021

Everett Community College  
Attn: Board of Trustees  
2000 Tower Street  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Everett Board of Trustees and President Willis,

We join today to urge the delay and reconsideration of the proposal to contract and convert Everett Community College's Early Learning Center to a non-union daycare center.

During the 2020 legislative session, we fought diligently as state, local, and community leaders to pass the Fair Start for Kids Act. We understood that Washington had to finally address a child care crisis that existed long before COVID-19. And we recognize that recruitment and retention of high-quality staff is about fair compensation for the challenging and critically important work needed for our economy, our families, and our overall future.

Together, we championed the most significant investment in access to our high-quality child care programs than ever before. Among the many positive aspects of the legislation, it increased the provider child care subsidy to compete with the market rate for licensed and certified child care providers. It also established the development and implementation of a care cost estimate model for subsidy rates that compensate the total costs of providing high-quality child care from now on.

The legislation also created a complex needs fund, trauma-informed care supports, dual language rate enhancements, site-specific and equity grants, and professional development opportunities. These resources support our providers in their work to break down intergenerational poverty, provide living wages, create opportunities for women and families, and support children for generations to come.

As members of the Board of Trustees, you know first-hand how vital early childhood education and intervention is to the trajectory of success for a young person. Our local city, state, and federal governments all have a vested interest in providing equitable access to programs that ensure children have the social and educational tools needed to thrive.

Unfortunately, the work that went into the development, collaboration, and final passage of the Fair Start for Kids act and the child care efforts of those in Snohomish County and the City of Everett seem to have gone unnoticed by Everett Community College leadership. The decision to close the Early Learning Center is deeply disappointing for the thousands of parents, community members, advocacy organizations, businesses, and elected leaders working to address this crisis and develop plans to support quality centers like EvCC's Center.

While we understand this issue may have been debated and discussed internally, it is evident that local educators, workers, parents, and the overall community were left out of the process and were not given the opportunity to respond or correct. Your local elected officials were notified of the decision simultaneously with the public, demonstrating again the haste and lack of planning and communication that was necessary to address a devastating decision such as this.

Again, we ask that you delay this decision and reconsider the proposal to determine additional ways the state, local municipalities, and our community can assist. We also want to ensure EvCC continues to deliver top-notch early learning programs that support children, students, faculty, staff, and community members. And we can do that while also providing fair contracts and wages to the hardworking, high-quality child care professionals it currently employs.

Sincerely,



Representative Emily Wicks,  
38<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative April Berg,  
44<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Senator June Robinson,  
38<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Rep. Lillian Ortiz-Self,  
21<sup>st</sup> Legislative District



Representative Mike Sells,  
38<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Rep. Strom Peterson,  
21<sup>st</sup> Legislative District



Representative John Lovick,  
44<sup>th</sup> Legislative District