Build the Bench – Washington State

Identify, recruit and develop tomorrow’s education champions who will work for kids
Your presenters

Shirline Wilson – State Director Education Reform Now is a former technology professional, with education in organizational leadership development. Passionate about developing leaders, Shirline has developed the Build the Bench program in partnership with input of education policy non-profits with the aim of building a pipeline of education smart policy makers.

Libuse Binder – Executive Director STAND for Children WA has spent the better part of her career engaged in the teaching and education of others; from her early work as a humanities teacher in New York to her more recent efforts to deliver better public school options for Washington students.
Introductions – Who is in the room?

Share what your interest is for coming today?

What do you know about people who choose to run for elected office?

What are some questions coming in the door that you hope we will be able to answer today?
The problem is getting worse for children in public education.

There is a lack of urgency and support for education solutions that truly close achievement gaps in Olympia.

This is evidenced by stagnant progress towards financial equity between well funded and poorly funded schools, lack of academic rigor available to all students, lack of diversity in leadership and teaching forces, and a stubborn and growing achievement gap that disproportionately impacts students of color and poor kids. In a state as prosperous as Washington, we can and should be doing better to deliver a public education system that prepares more of our students for 21st century opportunities. Tomorrow’s leaders need the courage to stand up to special interests and put kids first.
Legislative update – education policy 2018

• Early Warning Data Systems and Interventions

• McCleary – the case that just won’t quit

• Improving Learning Assistance Program (LAP) services

• Automatic Academic Acceleration Policy

• Fully Funding State Need Grant

• Increasing Early Learning Spots
Races across the state – Aug. primary/Nov. General

House seats with interesting race opportunities
32, 40, 41, 5, 10, 12, 44, 48, 23, 29, 34, 43, and 49

Senate seats with interesting race opportunities
6, 44, 34, & 32

School board races out to 2020

City council races – out to 2019
Representation in Olympia

Education policy that impacts our children is largely led by the efforts of the two chambers of legislature down in Olympia. The work of crafting policies, directing financial resources and new programs starts with what your representatives take up during a legislative session. Once they have agreement on a given set of policies, the work goes by way of bills that wind their way through committees, ways and means, appropriations and across the chambers before it finally lands on the Governor’s desk. During this period there are times where public comment, advocacy, negotiation and demonstrations are held in support of or in opposition to proposed policies.
Diversity in Representation

- As of the 2010 census, Washington is becoming a more diverse.
- Asian Pacific Islanders are seeing the most population growth.
- People who identify as white are decreasing in population.
- Women make up approximately 37% of legislative seats.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Graphic: Gene Baly/The Seattle Times
Who represents you

National ethnic and gender diversity:

Washington Post wrote in 2016 that there is a startling lack of diversity in State Legislatures, and even though we are increasing diversity by electing more women and people of color, the Pew Research Center still finds that all minority groups are underrepresented in a meaningful way. As an example, about 35 percent of the nation’s black population is represented by a congressional representative who is black. Hispanics make up 17 percent of the U.S. population but just 7.8 percent in the House and 3 percent in the Senate; Asian Americans make up 5.8 percent of the U.S. population yet just 3 percent in the House and 1 percent in the Senate.

Most national congressional roles are filled from a pipeline of people who serve at the State level.
Who represents you in Olympia

1% percent of legislature is Black, compared with 4% of our total population.

4% of the legislature is of Asian decent, compared with 8% of the total population.

Less than 1% is American Indian compared with 2% of our total population.

3% is from a Latinx background as compared with 12% of the state population overall.

37.5% are women across all ethnic groups.
Legislators are regular people

Many legislators have other jobs.

Most legislators have average education levels.

You don’t need to have previous experience in order to run.
What is a public education champion?

• A public education champion seeks greater transparency and accountability to the public for improved student outcomes, encourages and supports rigorous and quality coursework for all students, and actively dismantles policies that create barriers to academic achievement for systemically underserved students.

• A public education champion is a courageous leader who will work across party lines to do what is right for Washington’s public school children.

• A public education champion is strong enough to resist the disproportionate pull of special interests that favor the status quo.
Why we need you?

• **WE** believe that through increased representation of women and people of color that we will improve education outcomes for systemically underserved students in a way that benefits all Washington’s kids.

• **WE** believe that by providing structured supports, tools, resources, fundraising help that we can cultivate leaders from traditionally underrepresented communities and help them run for public office.

• **WE** believe that if we provide training on important education policy issues that leaders are elected will be ready to be a champion for our State’s children.
What is the Build the Bench Program?

• A custom designed recruitment, training, development and support program to help women and people of color who want to serve in public office get the tools they need to run a winning campaign and be an effective legislator.

• We focus on various levels of elected office from school boards to legislature to city council with phase I of the program focused on legislature, with plans to expand to school boards and city council seats.

• We are non-partisan, which means we will train a future leader regardless of party affiliation.
Weekend Institutes – 3 Saturdays

- Education policy priorities
- Education finances
- Local civic engagement
- Shaping your message
- Running an effective campaign
- Legislative education
- Education intersectionality
- Selecting your team
- PDC and filing process
- Raising money
- Endorsements
- Catastrophe strikes – what to do
- Selecting your team
- Certificates and graduation
Next Steps/Questions

Are you interested? Contact us!

Know of someone who should be in the program? Connect us!

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