

SENATOR JIM HONEYFORD

15TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT - WASHINGTON STATE SENATE

360-786-7684 | 800-562-6000 | P.O. Box 40415 Olympia, WA 98504-0415

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[Honeyford](#)

Media Contact:

[Liz Coleman](#) 360 786-7395

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Capital budget grants provide local schools with additional space

OLYMPIA...Three local school districts have been selected to receive funding aimed at making kindergarten through third-grade classrooms less crowded. The Wapato School District is slated to receive \$13 million, the Toppenish School District was awarded \$2.2 million and the Yakima School District picked up \$220,451; the funds will primarily be used to build more classrooms.

“Over the past four years, the Legislature has made education its number one priority with almost half the state’s operating budget now going toward education funding. During the current biennium, the capital budget has directed nearly \$1 billion dollars to enhancing that commitment,” said [Sen. Jim Honeyford](#). “While the Legislature still has a lot of work to do on the education front, this is a great start and I’m glad many of our local schools are going to benefit.”

In 2015, the Legislature passed [Senate Bill 6080](#) that established the K-3 class-size reduction grants. Priority for grants went to districts with the highest percentage of free and reduced lunches and the most crowded K-3 classrooms. Other requirements included that the district had not raised capital funds through a levy or bond in the past 10 years.

Statewide, 21 school districts will receive grants totaling nearly \$234 million. For those schools that need 10 or more new classrooms to meet lower student-to-teacher ratios, it is anticipated that a new school will be constructed. Those schools will receive additional funding to cover the cost of administrative offices, hallways and cafeterias. Those schools that needed fewer additional classrooms were classified as a remodel of an existing structure.

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