

**Subject:** Proposed Motion 2017-0496 - A motion directing staff to the King County Council to draft and deliver an implementation plan to the King County Council by September 1, 2018 to direct the use of funds from the Puget Sound Taxpayers Accountability Account (Account) to improve educational outcomes in King County.

**Status:** November 27 - Introduced and referred to the Committee of the Whole  
November 29 - Passed out of Committee of the Whole without a recommendation  
December 11 - Passed by King County Council

**Summary:** The Account was created by the state legislature in 2015 to improve educational outcomes in early learning, K-12, and higher education. The Account is funded by a 3.25 percent tax offset fee on construction costs related to Sound Transit 3. According to Council staff, King County will receive \$315 million in total funding between 2019 and 2035. Proposed Motion 2017-0496 creates an implementation plan so King County will understand the unmet educational needs in the county and be prepared to effectively distribute the funds to qualifying educational organizations beginning in 2019.

**Pros:**

- Designating funds to schools and deserving programs will create earned media and generate positive constituent outreach
- If split equally among the nine Council districts, the fund will equal a total of \$35 million per district from 2019-2034
- Potential for bipartisan cooperation to ensure equal funding in each district
- Could partner with constituents to decide how funds are administered, depending on recommendations from consultant
- Many worthy educational organizations qualify for funding under the existing rules

**Cons:**

- The implementation plans calls for the hiring of a consultant, which will cost at least \$50,000. Why can't county staff administer the fund?
- The Account could be considered a 3.25 percent tax on Sound Transit spending. Why isn't the money going toward construction costs?
- Legislature has to appropriate Account funds, which may be delayed or withheld for unrelated political reasons
- King County has no experience administering funds to educational services
- Unknown whether the funds will be equally distributed by district
- Sound Transit 3 projects are already behind schedule. Since funding amounts are based on the construction timeline, distribution could be delayed, which will prevent long-term educational projects from being funded

**Analysis:**

- The Account is an opportunity to highlight and financially support many innovative educational programs in King County
- The potential for effective constituent outreach and earned media outweighs concern about whether the Account amounts to a tax on Sound Transit 3 construction spending
- While the Account is a redundant funding mechanism for educational services provided at the local level, it has already been approved by the legislature and will be implemented by the County beginning in 2019