



# The office of the Education Ombudsman

Governor's Office - State of Washington

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Presented by  
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# The Office of the Education Ombudsman

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The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO) is an agency within the Governor's Office created by the legislature in 2006. It is not part of the public education system.

Our mission is to promote equity in education and the academic success of all students attending elementary and secondary public schools in the state of Washington.



# The Office of the Education Ombudsman

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We fulfill our mission by:

- Providing information to families, students, educators and others regarding the education system.
- Promoting family and community involvement in education.
- Helping resolve conflict between families and schools.

OEO contributes to the improvement of the public education system by identifying best practices in education and recommending strategies for improving the success of diverse students to public officials.





# Education Ombudsmen

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- OEO ombudsmen are neutral problem solvers who help families and students understand how the state public education system works, how they can get their needs met, and what to do when conflict occurs.
- They rely on the power of facilitation, informal mediation, and investigative expertise to resolve disputes between parents, legal guardians or students and public schools.
- OEO ombudsmen may intervene early in disputes to prevent them from escalating and becoming lengthy and costly to families and school districts.

# OEO

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## ○ We Listen and Inform

OEO call center toll-free 1-866-297-2597

Parents, students, educators and community members contact us with questions, comments, and concerns regarding the K-12 public education system.

- We log the information we receive in our data system.
- We offer information regarding the public school system, family involvement in schools, complaint resolution, etc.
- We refer customers to resources and services offered by other organizations.

# OEO

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## ○ We Educate



- **Classes** - We teach free workshops and sponsor conferences, forums, and training opportunities for families, students, and educators.
- **Publications** - We published a variety of informational brochures for parents and students, translated in several languages.
- **Website** - [www.waparentslearn.org](http://www.waparentslearn.org) offers information regarding K-12<sup>th</sup> education.

# OEO

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## ○ We help resolve conflict

We facilitate the resolution of conflict between students, families and public schools in a neutral and confidential manner.

- We facilitate the resolution of complaints from parents or students against public schools.
- We provide consultation to students, parents, and legal guardians about resolving conflict with schools.



# OEO Complaint Criteria

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- OEO accepts complaints regarding students who are currently enrolled or eligible to be enrolled in the K-12 public school system in Washington State, alleging that:
  - The school or school district did not respond when they complained or responded inappropriately;
  - the school or school district did not follow federal law, state law, school policy or school district policy, and
  - the student or group of students, learning environment or academic performance has been negatively affected by the school or school district's action or lack of action.



# Data Collection

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- The Ombudsman Data System (ODS) tracks issues, concerns, and complaints brought to OEO by students and families.
  - OEO reports on numbers, trends, patterns, locations of complaints and issues.
  - OEO's recommendations to public officials are based on data collected.
  - We publish annual reports.

# Contact OEO

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## The Office of the Education Ombudsman

Governor's Office – State of Washington

1110 Capitol Way - Suite 304 A  
Olympia, WA 98504-004

Toll free 1-866-297-2597

Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Interpreter services for over 100 languages available

[www.waparentslearn.org](http://www.waparentslearn.org)