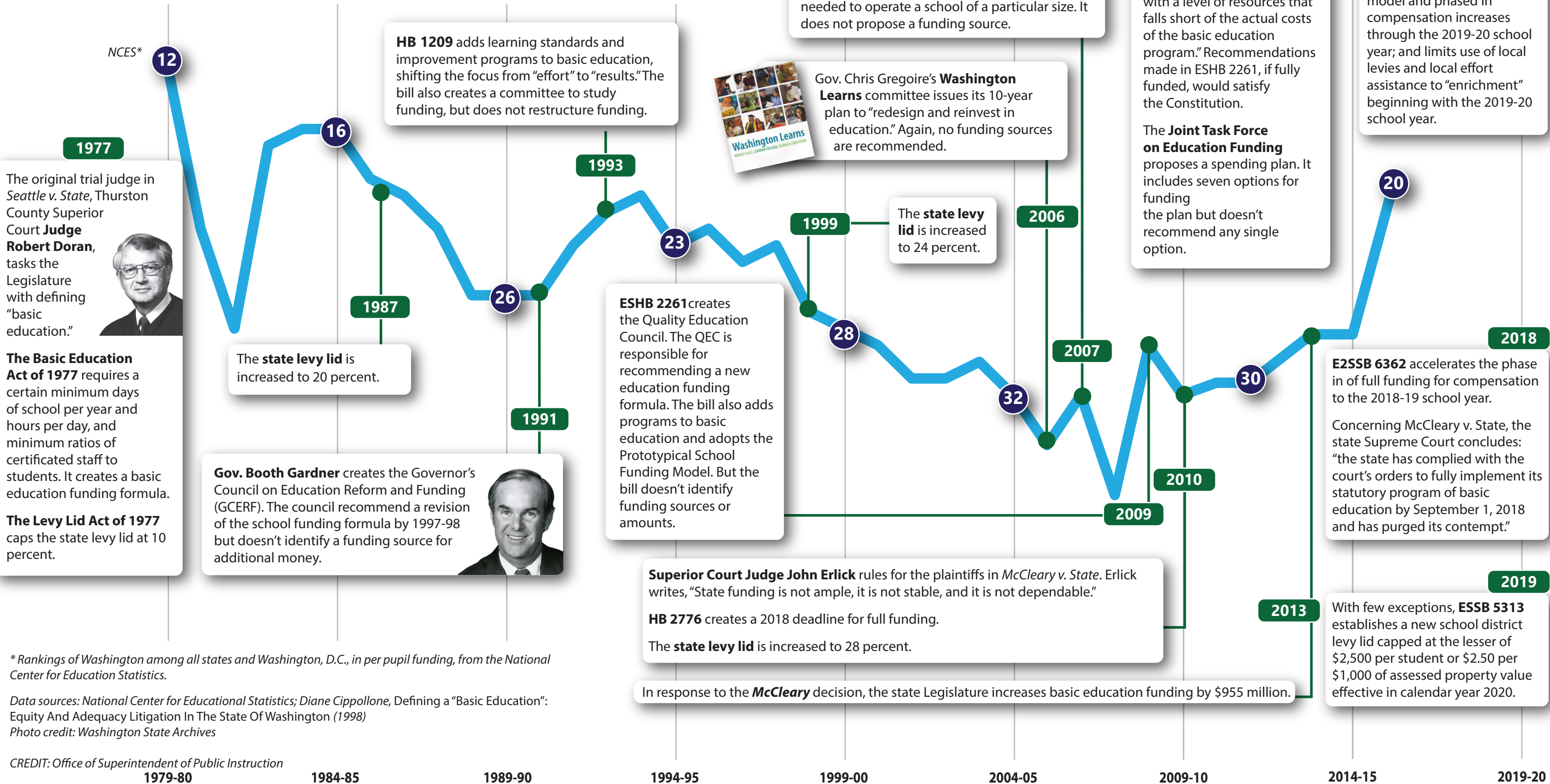


A brief history of education funding in Washington state

Modern education funding began in 1976, when the Seattle School District sued the state. At the time, 65 districts (representing 40 percent of the student population) each recently had levies fail twice in a row. The State Supreme Court agreed with the district, ruling that the funding system in place at the time was neither ample nor stable.



* Rankings of Washington among all states and Washington, D.C., in per pupil funding, from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Data sources: National Center for Educational Statistics; Diane Cippollone, *Defining a "Basic Education": Equity And Adequacy Litigation In The State Of Washington (1998)*

Photo credit: Washington State Archives

CREDIT: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

1979-80

1984-85

1989-90

1994-95

1999-00

2004-05

2009-10

2014-15

2019-20

McCleary v. State of Washington is filed. The **Basic Education Funding Task Force** (known as the Grimm Commission) recommends a new funding formula based on the Prototypical School Model, which identifies the resources needed to operate a school of a particular size. It does not propose a funding source.

Gov. Chris Gregoire's **Washington Learns** committee issues its 10-year plan to "redesign and reinvest in education." Again, no funding sources are recommended.

2012
In **McCleary v. State**, the state Supreme Court writes: "The State (is) consistently providing school districts with a level of resources that falls short of the actual costs of the basic education program." Recommendations made in ESHB 2261, if fully funded, would satisfy the Constitution.
The Joint Task Force on Education Funding proposes a spending plan. It includes seven options for funding the plan but doesn't recommend any single option.

2017
EHB 2242 increases state allocations for K-12 basic education programs; replaces the state salary allocation model and phased in compensation increases through the 2019-20 school year; and limits use of local levies and local effort assistance to "enrichment" beginning with the 2019-20 school year.

2018
E2SSB 6362 accelerates the phase in of full funding for compensation to the 2018-19 school year.
Concerning *McCleary v. State*, the state Supreme Court concludes: "the state has complied with the court's orders to fully implement its statutory program of basic education by September 1, 2018 and has purged its contempt."

2019
With few exceptions, **ESSB 5313** establishes a new school district levy lid capped at the lesser of \$2,500 per student or \$2.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value effective in calendar year 2020.

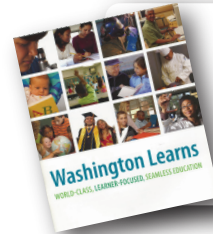
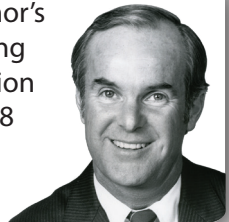
The original trial judge in *Seattle v. State*, Thurston County Superior Court **Judge Robert Doran**, tasks the Legislature with defining "basic education."



The Basic Education Act of 1977 requires a certain minimum days of school per year and hours per day, and minimum ratios of certificated staff to students. It creates a basic education funding formula.
The Levy Lid Act of 1977 caps the state levy lid at 10 percent.

The state levy lid is increased to 20 percent.

Gov. Booth Gardner creates the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding (GCERF). The council recommends a revision of the school funding formula by 1997-98 but doesn't identify a funding source for additional money.



The state levy lid is increased to 24 percent.

ESHB 2261 creates the Quality Education Council. The QEC is responsible for recommending a new education funding formula. The bill also adds programs to basic education and adopts the Prototypical School Funding Model. But the bill doesn't identify funding sources or amounts.

Superior Court Judge John Erlick rules for the plaintiffs in *McCleary v. State*. Erlick writes, "State funding is not ample, it is not stable, and it is not dependable."
HB 2776 creates a 2018 deadline for full funding.
The state levy lid is increased to 28 percent.

In response to the **McCleary** decision, the state Legislature increases basic education funding by \$955 million.