



## Invest in Digital Navigators to Close the Digital Divide

Digital navigators consolidate all of the components of digital inclusion - **internet, devices, and skills** - by providing digital navigation to existing social services, reaching diverse and multilingual communities most impacted by digital inequities through multiple one-on-one interactions.

Digital Navigators are critical in closing the digital divide, connecting people to the internet through three key channels:

### **Triage, assess, and connect people to existing opportunities**

Ex. walk a family through signing up for Comcast's low-income program Internet Essentials; help someone connect a computer to wifi; assist someone in signing up for unemployment online; support an elder in setting up a tele-health appointment; connect a student to a computer through their school district

### **Directly provide qualitative and quantitative data to the Office of Broadband, OSPI, Department of Health, school districts, etc. about technology and digital literacy needs of those farthest from digital equity**

Ex. identify people who cannot afford or access existing programs and distribute wifi hotspots, laptops, tablets, and/or other devices

### **Connect students, families, and elder to Multilingual Tech Support**

A multilingual call-in center and technology hotline, opening February 2021, provides a workforce development pipeline for young people of color looking to move out of gig work and into the tech field. Call-in center staff will be recruited from Black, Indigenous, immigrant, refugee, low-income communities of color who have been most impacted by digital inequities in Washington. After completing the training and serving for one year, call-in center staff will receive certification from local community and technical colleges, as well as interviews with technology companies in the area, serving as a career pipeline into lucrative industries for BIPOC communities.

Digital navigators are cross-trained, experienced, multilingual, multicultural, trauma-informed social service providers, housed in community-based organizations, community centers, senior centers, school districts, and/or other nonprofits and public institutions, embedded in and speaking the languages of the communities they serve.

Governor Inslee has committed \$6 Million into digital navigators in his 2021-23 Budget. We respectfully request that the Legislature include Governor Inslee's Digital Navigators Program within their own budget as well.



# EQUITY IN EDUCATION

C O A L I T I O N

**Support the Governor's Equity Budget allocation for \$6.1 Million to provide digital navigation services statewide and join hundreds in the call to close Washington's digital divide.**

WA Representative Mia Gregerson  
WA Senator Mona Dos  
WA Representative Tana Senn  
Seattle School Board Director Brandon Hersey

WA Representative Debra Entenman  
WA Representative Kirsten Harris-Talley  
WA Representative Laurie Dolan

AARP Washington State  
AFT Washington  
Children's Alliance  
Concrete School District  
Highline Public Schools  
Edmunds School District  
Faith Action Network  
OneAmerica  
Seattle Art Museum  
Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness

Southeast Seattle Education Coalition  
Southwest Youth and Family Services  
Statewide Poverty Action Network  
Technology Access Foundation  
Teach for America  
United Way of King County  
University of Washington  
Vancouver Public Schools  
Washington Nonprofits

Adoptees for Justice  
ALL of US or NONE Eastern WA  
Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition  
ArtsEd Washington  
Big Brother Big Sisters of Puget Sound  
Cambodian American Community Council of WA  
Casa Latina  
CHOOSE 180  
Chuukese Women Association  
Communities in Schools of Kent  
Communities in Schools of Seattle  
Connect Casino Road  
Debre Mihret Kidus Mikael  
Denise Louie Education Center  
Education Reform Now  
Educators for Justice  
Geeking Out Kids of Color  
Gethsemane Lutheran Church  
Global Artists Collective  
Grandview Early Learning Center  
India Association of Western Washington  
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center  
International Community Health Services  
Iraqi Community Center of WA

Kent Community Development Collaborative  
Khmer Community of Seattle/King County  
Kitsap Strong  
L.I.H. Law  
Literacy Source  
NAMI Seattle  
Northwest Education Access  
Rethink Manhood  
Snohomish County Mutual Aid  
Somali Parents Education Board  
Sharing Teens and Elders Project  
Spean Rajana  
Tulalip Tribes  
U.T.O.P.I.A. Seattle  
Urban Native Education Alliance  
Wallingford Indivisible  
Washington Coalition for Gifted Education  
Washington Low Income Housing Alliance  
Washington LTC Ombudsman Program  
Washington Multicultural Services Link  
Washington State Parent Ambassadors  
WashMasks Mutual Aid  
Youth Development Executives of King County  
YouthCare