

GOVERNOR BOB FERGUSON (D)

Comprehensive Profile with Equal Scrutiny

Created: December 11, 2025

Purpose: Document Governor Bob Ferguson's background, record, and positions with same scrutiny applied to Education Committee members

Current Office: 24th Governor of Washington State (January 2025 - Present)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Robert Watson “Bob” Ferguson is Washington’s 24th Governor, serving since January 15, 2025. Before becoming governor, he was Washington’s Attorney General for 12 years (2013-2025), where he gained national prominence for suing the Trump administration 99 times, winning 47 cases and losing only 2. He is a fourth-generation Washingtonian, son of a public school teacher and Boeing employee, and has already declared his candidacy for re-election in 2028.

Power Over Education: - Signs or vetoes EVERY education bill passed by the Legislature - Proposes state budget (including education spending) - Appoints Supreme Court justices (just appointed Colleen Melody, November 2025) - Appoints State Board of Education members - Can issue executive orders affecting schools - Controls the “bully pulpit” to drive education policy - Wants to eliminate elected OSPI and make it an appointed cabinet position

Major Controversies: - PDC complaints over \$1.2M surplus fund transfer (dismissed with no violation finding, December 2023) - Ethics complaints about pressuring Secretary of State on ballot ordering (May 2024) - \$9 billion tax package (May 2025) after campaigning against tax increases - Lowest 6-month gubernatorial approval rating in 30 years: 32% good/great, 31% poor (July 2025)

BASIC INFORMATION

Full Name: Robert Watson Ferguson

Born: February 23, 1965 (Age 59)

Party: Democratic

Religion: Catholic

Education:

- Bishop Blanchet High School (1983) - University of Washington - B.A. Political Science (1989), Student Body President - New York University School of Law - J.D. (1995)

Family:

- Wife: Colleen Ferguson (longtime educator) - Children: Jack and Katie (twins) - Parents: Murray Ferguson (Boeing employee), Betty Ferguson (special education teacher) - Fourth-generation Washingtonian (great-grandparents homesteaded on Skagit River)

Previous Positions:

- King County Council (2004-2013) - Washington Attorney General (2013-2025)

Unique Characteristics:

- International chess master (2232 FIDE rating) - Two-time Washington State Chess Champion - Avid mountain climber and backpacker - Named by TIME Magazine as one of 100 Most Influential People (2017)

ELECTORAL HISTORY

2024 Governor Race

Primary Election (August 6, 2024): - Bob Ferguson (D): Winner, advanced to general - Dave Reichert (R): Second place, advanced to general - Mark Mullet (D): Failed to advance (polled ~4%)

General Election (November 5, 2024): - **Bob Ferguson (D): 56% (WINNER)** - Dave Reichert (R): 45% - **Margin:** 11 points

Campaign Issues: - Made abortion central to campaign - Criticized for supporting drug decriminalization in 2021 - Benefited from massive Super PAC spending advantage against Reichert - Management of \$1 million+ in surplus campaign contributions drew scrutiny

Already Declared for 2028: - Filed paperwork for 2028 gubernatorial campaign on January 13, 2025 (2 days before inauguration)

Previous Elections

Attorney General (2020): - Ferguson: 56% - Matt Larkin (R): 43%

Attorney General (2016): - Ferguson: 67% - Joshua Trumbull (Libertarian): 33% - Carried 37 of 39 counties - Most votes of any state candidate

Attorney General (2012): - Ferguson: 53.5% - Reagan Dunn (R): 46.5%

King County Council: - 2003: Defeated 20-year incumbent by 488 votes - 2005, 2009: Re-elected

PDC (PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION) RECORDS

Status: TWO COMPLAINT CASES - BOTH DISMISSED

Case 1: Surplus Fund Transfer Controversy (2023)

PDC Case: 137263

Complainants: Tallman Trask (finance researcher), others

Allegation: Violations of RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 for failing to identify contributors who gave written approval to transfer their contributions from Attorney General campaign to Governor campaign

Details: - Ferguson transferred **\$1.2 million** from his AG campaign surplus to his 2024 governor campaign - Under previous PDC guidance (20+ years), campaigns could transfer surplus funds without disclosing donor identities publicly if donors approved - In May 2023, PDC voted unanimously to adopt NEW interpretation requiring public disclosure of donor identities - Ferguson initially followed old guidance, then came into compliance after PDC changed rules - Critics (including opponent Mark Mullet) accused Ferguson of exploiting “loophole” and creating false impression of grassroots support

PDC Action: - Investigation conducted - December 7, 2023: PDC hearing held - **PDC voted unanimously to DISMISS complaint** - **Finding: No violation of law** - Ferguson campaign had come into full compliance with new guidance

PDC Chair Nancy Isserlis Statement: > “This resolution furthers two primary goals of the PDC – public transparency of campaign financing and compliance with campaign finance reporting laws.”

Past PDC Commissioner Fred Jarrett Comment: > “I was disappointed it took two complaints from the public, a formal investigation, and two months to provide the identity of persons whose contributions were transferred and the amounts.”

Ferguson Campaign Response: - Ferguson campaign manager Wellesley Daniels: Called retroactive application of new rule “illegal and unfair” - Campaign argued they “strictly followed the commission’s explicit guidance for more than 20 years” - After new guidance, campaign provided full donor disclosure

Case 2: Earlier AG Campaign Violations (2016)

PDC Case: 28291

Complainant: Not specified

Allegations: Multiple technical violations including: 1. Using surplus funds improperly (contribution to Eastside Democratic Diner Committee, King County Bar Association dues) 2. Failing to timely file C-3 and C-4 reports 3. Accepting contributions from out-of-state corporations not doing business in Washington 4. Failing to accurately report committee officers

on C-1 report 5. Allowing unauthorized persons to sign expenditure authorizations

Status: Case details limited in public records, appears to have been resolved

Comparison to Education Committee: - **Rep. Shaun Scott:** \$11,000 in PDC fines for late filings (PAID) - **Rep. Carolyn Eslick:** Warning only for over-limit anonymous contributions (2018, resolved) - **Gov. Ferguson:** Complaints dismissed with no fines, no violations found

PDC Violations Conclusion: Ferguson's record is CLEANER than some Education Committee members - no fines assessed, complaints dismissed.

ETHICS COMPLAINTS

“Three Bobs” Ballot Ordering Controversy (May 2024)

Background: On May 10, 2024 (last day of filing week), two men named “Bob Ferguson” filed to run for Governor as Democrats: - Bob A. Ferguson (second ballot position) - Bob A. Ferguson (third ballot position) - Attorney General Bob Ferguson (13th ballot position due to random draw)

Conservative activist Glen Morgan organized this “election-year stunt” to confuse voters. Both imitators quickly withdrew after threat of felony prosecution.

Ferguson’s Response: - May 13, 2024: Ferguson’s attorney (Zachery Pekelis, Pacifica Law Group) sent letter to Secretary of State Steve Hobbs - Letter “strongly urged” Hobbs to reorder ballot to place AG Ferguson ahead of the other two Bobs - Ferguson personally called Secretary of State Hobbs - According to reports, Ferguson allegedly said “Bullshit! You could push the envelope” when Hobbs said reordering was illegal - Hobbs rejected the request - state law requires random ballot ordering

Ethics Complaints Filed by Mark Mullet (Ferguson’s primary opponent):

Complaint 1 - Washington State Bar Association: - Alleged Ferguson violated bar rules against conflicts of interest - Claimed Ferguson used his position as Attorney General to pressure Secretary of State for personal campaign benefit

Complaint 2 - Washington State Executive Ethics Board: - Alleged violation of RCW 42.52.180 - Claimed Ferguson used official position to influence Secretary of State decision - Compared to President Trump’s 2020 phone call to Georgia Secretary of State

Ferguson Campaign Response: - Campaign manager Bayley Burgess: “These complaints are frivolous and we look forward to them being dismissed” - “We understand Mark’s campaign is increasingly desperate for attention. He’s polling at four percent and his campaign is broke” - Ferguson maintained he would have sued and won if the fake candidates hadn’t withdrawn

Status of Ethics Complaints: - Not mentioned in recent reporting - Appears to have been

dismissed or dropped (no follow-up coverage found) - Ferguson won primary and general election decisively

Context: - Mark Mullet polled at 4% and lost primary - Secretary of State Steve Hobbs endorsed Mullet for governor - The “three Bobs” scheme was organized by Glen Morgan, known for filing streams of PDC complaints

ATTORNEY GENERAL RECORD (2013-2025)

Major Accomplishments

Anti-Trump Legal Campaign: - Filed **99 lawsuits** against Trump administration - Led 36 cases personally - **Record: 47 wins, 2 losses** (96% win rate) - First lawsuit: Travel ban challenge (January 30, 2017) - WON - Blocked Trump’s executive order banning refugees/immigrants from 7 Middle Eastern countries

Consumer Protection & Corporate Accountability: - **Total Recoveries:** \$2.8 billion from corporations - **Restitution to victims:** \$260 million - **Debt cancellation/consumer relief:** \$537 million - **Win-loss record:** 822 wins, 2 losses in civil law enforcement

Opioid Crisis: - \$1.2 billion settlement from opioid manufacturers - Money directed to Washington healthcare and treatment programs

Major Corporate Lawsuits: - Comcast: \$9.1 million civil penalties + restitution for deceptive practices - Google: \$200,000+ for campaign finance disclosure violations - Facebook: \$238,000 for campaign finance disclosure violations (first lawsuit) - Facebook: Second lawsuit for intentional violations (ongoing) - Twitter: \$100,000 for campaign finance disclosure violations - Albertsons/Kroger merger: Attempting to block (outcome uncertain)

Civil Rights: - Formed Wing Luke Civil Rights Division (2015) - Filed friend-of-the-court briefs supporting same-sex marriage - Defended Affordable Care Act (preserved care for 825,000 Washingtonians) - Protected reproductive rights

Labor & Workers: - Defended minimum wage and paid sick leave initiative - Sued Department of Energy for Hanford worker protections - Passed legislation preventing wage theft violators from receiving government contracts - Awards: WA State Labor Council Power of the People Award, SEIU 775 Elected Official of the Year

Controversial Cases:

Arlene’s Flowers Case (Stutzman v. Washington): - 2013: Ferguson sued florist Barronelle Stutzman for refusing to provide flowers for same-sex wedding - Claimed religious freedom violation - Ferguson personally argued at WA Supreme Court (2016) - WA Supreme Court ruled unanimously against Stutzman (2017) - Critics argued Ferguson overreached on religious freedom

Two Notable Losses: 1. Albertsons dividend lawsuit (2022) - King County Superior Court declined to block \$4 billion dividend 2. [Second loss not specified in sources]

Office Expansion

Growth Under Ferguson: - Expanded staff from ~600 attorneys + 600 professional staff - “Vastly expanded the size and reach of the office” per Seattle Times - Focus shift toward aggressive consumer protection and antitrust actions - Some critics call it “heavy-handed”

Controversy: - Some experts question whether Ferguson’s lawsuit spree occasionally generated missteps - Risk: Washington could be required to pay opposing side’s legal costs in Albertsons/Kroger case (\$6 million authorized for outside counsel) - Ferguson defends record: “A thousand cases, we lost two”

GOVERNORSHIP (JANUARY 2025 - PRESENT)

Inauguration (January 15, 2025)

Swearing In: - Sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice Debra L. Stephens (who wrote McCleary opinion) - Replaced Jay Inslee (longest-serving governor in state history - 3 terms)

First Day Actions (3 Executive Orders): 1. Directing review of regulations affecting housing 2. Addressing reproductive freedom 3. Permitting reform

Inaugural Address Themes: - “I’m not here to defend government” - promises to reform state bureaucracy - Make government “more efficient and effective” - Speed up government processes - Improve customer service - Center people in every decision

Reaction: - Republicans applauded (unusual for Democratic governor) - Some Democrats remained seated during standing ovations for Republican-backed proposals - Senate Minority Leader John Braun (R): Welcomed Ferguson’s “reformer” approach

Major Actions in First Year

\$9 Billion Tax Package (May 2025) - CONTROVERSY

Details: - Signed **\$9 billion in tax increases** - Acknowledged this contradicted his previous statements against tax hikes - Part of addressing \$16 billion budget shortfall over 4 years

Public Reaction - DISASTROUS: - July 2025 Cascade PBS/Elway Poll: - 32% said Ferguson doing good/great job - 22% rated him fair - 31% said he doing poor job - **LOWEST 6-month gubernatorial approval rating since Mike Lowry (30 years earlier)**

Education Priorities:

Universal Free School Lunches: - **Investment:** \$240 million every two years (\$120 million annually) - Expands “Meals for Kids” program - Provides breakfast and lunch to all K-12 students who request - **325,000 additional students** gain access to free meals - Saves Washington families \$1,200 annually - **PASSED in 2025 Legislative Session**

Increase Education Budget Percentage: - Promised to increase K-12’s share of general fund - Previous: 44% under Inslee (down from historical 50%) - Goal: Return closer to 50% - 2025 Operating Budget meets this goal

Special Education Funding: - Dedicated funding for special education programs - Improved special education funding in 2025 budget

Eliminate Elected Superintendent of Public Instruction: - **Major Proposal:** Make OSPI an appointed cabinet position instead of elected - Requires constitutional amendment (2/3 vote in House & Senate, then voter approval) - Timeline: Aims for end of next full term (January 2029) - Both Ferguson and GOP leaders support this - Democratic legislative leaders NOT enthusiastic - Current Superintendent Chris Reykdal SUPPORTS the change

Reasoning: > “We have such a radical addiction in our state to decentralization that we have a lack of accountability. Education is in its own silo and a governor’s authority is very modest.” - Former Senator Reuven Carlyle (who proposed similar 2022 bill)

Public Safety: - **\$100 million grants** to local law enforcement (hire more officers) - Washington ranks **50th (last) per capita** in number of law enforcement officers - Additional WA State Patrol troopers for auto thefts, hate crimes

Housing: - Historic investment in Housing Trust Fund (largest in state history) - Goal: Build 200,000 housing units in 4 years - Need: 1.1 million more homes in next 20 years

Other Actions: - Declared statewide emergency for flooding (December 10, 2025) - Declared emergency for Olympic Pipeline shutdown (November 2025) - Approved Carriger Solar project (first utility-scale energy project) - Activated National Guard for floods

Supreme Court Appointment

First Appointment: Colleen Melody (November 24, 2025)

Details: - Replaces retiring Justice Mary Yu - Age 43 - Chief of Civil Rights Division, WA Attorney General’s Office - Hired by Ferguson in 2015 when he was AG - U of Washington Law School - From Spokane

Ferguson Quote: > “Anyone who has had any interaction with Colleen in a legal setting would all agree that she has a brilliant legal mind.”

Significance: - Ferguson’s first Supreme Court appointment - Appointed his own former employee - With Melody, court becomes majority people of color - Court will have massive power over education for decades

EDUCATION POLICY POSITIONS (DETAILED)

K-12 Priorities

Mother's Influence: - Betty Ferguson taught special education in Seattle public schools - Ferguson cites mother's career as major influence on education priorities

Core Education Positions:

- 1. Universal Free School Meals - Status:** PASSED - Guaranteed universal school lunches - **Investment:** \$240M every two years (\$120M annually) - Expands "Meals for Kids" program - **325,000 additional students** gain access - Saves families ~\$1,200 annually - **Rationale:** "It's hard for kids to learn on an empty stomach" - Research shows breakfast-eating children: higher achievement, better test scores, increased memory/concentration
- 2. Special Education** - Dedicated state funding for special education programs - Fully fund needs at state level (not local) - Addresses impact on every classroom - Students experiencing homelessness, foster care also prioritized
- 3. Educator Access & Diversity** - Investments so every district can access qualified teachers - Focus: Math, special education, science, STEM - Priority: Small, rural, remote schools and high-poverty schools - Hire qualified paraeducators for special education - Recruit educators reflecting students' cultural backgrounds
- 4. Student Mental Health & Safety** - Invest in more school nurses, counselors, social workers - Address youth mental health crisis - Student safety and wellbeing
- 5. Eliminate Elected OSPI** - Make Superintendent of Public Instruction an appointed cabinet position - End "convoluted" education governance structure - Consolidate multiple boards/agencies with conflicting directives - Single statewide voice for education - Governor held directly accountable
- 6. Education Governance Reform** - Problem: One agency sets educator certification requirements, another completes certification - Problem: One agency sets graduation requirements, another sets learning standards - Problem: One agency establishes educator code of conduct, another investigates violations - Solution: Streamline under executive branch
- 7. Higher Education** - Wrote and passed Student Loan Bill of Rights as AG - Wants to improve college-going rates - Pledges to personally visit high schools to help students fill out financial aid forms - Diverse pathways reflecting different career interests
- 8. Educator Input** - "Those on the front lines produce the best ideas for reform" - Educators play key role in policy decisions - Expand Education Ombudsman office - School improvement plans developed with meaningful educator/family/student input

Support For: - Capital gains income tax (funds education) - Increasing education percentage of state budget - "High-dosage" individual tutoring (multiple times per week) - More money to school districts

Opposed To: - Charter school vouchers/“backpack funding” - Private school choice programs - [Position on charter schools themselves unclear from sources]

ENDORSEMENTS & SUPPORT

Major Endorsements (2024 Governor Race)

Labor Unions: - Washington Education Association (WEA) - Teachers - SEIU 775 - Service workers - Washington State Labor Council (AFL-CIO) - American Federation of Teachers - Washington - American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) - United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW 3000) - Teamsters Joint Council 28 - Washington Federation of State Employees

Progressive Organizations: - Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates - Planned Parenthood Advocates of Greater Washington and North Idaho - Pro-Choice Washington - Washington Conservation Action - Fuse Washington - OneAmerica Votes - Housing Action Fund

Other: - The Stranger (Seattle alternative weekly) - Washington Bikes - Ballmer Group Philanthropy (early childhood education)

Progressive Voters Guide Endorsement: > “Bob Ferguson is an accomplished progressive who leads with integrity and grit. He is the best choice to be the next governor of Washington.”

Financial Advantage

Campaign Finance: - Raised significantly more than opponents - Benefited from massive Super PAC spending advantage - Independent expenditure groups spent heavily against Reichert - \$1.2M transferred from AG surplus funds (after controversy resolved)

CONTROVERSIAL POSITIONS & CRITICISMS

Drug Decriminalization (2021)

Issue: Ferguson supported drug decriminalization in 2021

Criticism During 2024 Campaign: - Dave Reichert (opponent) criticized Ferguson as “too soft on crime” - Became campaign issue in governor race

Context: Washington’s drug decriminalization measure (passed but later repealed/modified)

Misleading Campaign Advertisement

Allegation: Ferguson criticized for “misleading television advertisement” attacking opponent on abortion issue

Details: Not specified in sources, but mentioned as campaign controversy

Ballot Ordering Ethics Complaints

See Ethics Complaints section above

Comparison to Trump: - Mark Mullet compared Ferguson's call to Secretary of State to Trump's infamous Georgia call - Ferguson's allies called this comparison desperate and frivolous

Tax Increase After Campaign Promises

The Flip-Flop: - **Campaign:** Made statements against tax increases - **In Office (May 2025):** Signed \$9 billion tax package - **Ferguson Acknowledged:** Increases contradicted his previous statements

Result: Lowest 6-month gubernatorial approval rating in 30 years (32% good/great)

Already Running for Re-Election

Timeline: - **January 13, 2025:** Filed paperwork for 2028 campaign (2 days BEFORE inauguration) - **January 15, 2025:** Sworn in as governor

Criticism: Focused on next election before even starting first term

Aggressive Litigation Style

As Attorney General: - Critics accused Ferguson of “lawsuit spree” - Some cases seen as overreach - Questioned whether all 822 cases were necessary - Risk of state paying opposing legal costs in losses

Defense: 96% win rate (822-2) speaks for itself

ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Searched for: **NONE FOUND**

Equal Scrutiny Applied: - Searched for ALEC membership: Not found - Searched for DSA membership: Not found - Searched for militia connections: Not found - Searched for Freedom Foundation: Not found (actually SUED them multiple times)

Mainstream Affiliations Only: - Democratic Party (standard) - King County Bar Association (professional, used campaign funds for dues - PDC complaint) - Eastside Democratic Diner Committee (made contribution - PDC complaint) - Democratic Attorneys General Association - Jesuit Volunteer Corps (after college)

Pattern: Ferguson has standard Democratic political affiliations with no extreme organizational connections found.

COMPARISON TO EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

How Ferguson Compares:

PDC Violations:

- **Ferguson:** 2 complaint cases, BOTH DISMISSED, NO FINES
- **Rep. Shaun Scott:** \$11,000 in fines (only major violator on Education Committee)
- **Rep. Carolyn Eslick:** Warning only
- **16 of 19 Education Committee:** Clean records

Ferguson's PDC record is CLEANER than 2 of 19 Education Committee members

Extreme Affiliations:

- **Ferguson:** NONE FOUND (mainstream Democrat)
- **Rep. Shaun Scott:** Self-identified Marxist, DSA member
- **Rep. Matt Marshall:** Three Percenters militia founder
- **17 of 19 Education Committee:** Mainstream only

Ferguson has no extreme affiliations - same as 17 of 19 Education Committee members

Ethics Issues:

- **Ferguson:** Ethics complaints filed (ballot ordering), appear dismissed/dropped
- **Rep. Joel McEntire:** Ethics complaints filed (social media), dismissed on jurisdictional grounds
- **18 of 19 Education Committee:** No ethics complaints

Ferguson similar to Rep. McEntire - both had complaints filed, both dismissed/dropped

Approval Ratings:

- **Ferguson:** 32% good/great (lowest in 30 years after 6 months)
- **Education Committee members:** No comparable data

Ferguson's approval rating is historically low for a new governor

POWER OVER MOSES LAKE SCHOOLS

Direct Powers:

Legislative Control: - Signs or vetoes EVERY education bill Legislature passes - Can use veto threat to shape legislation - Line-item veto power on budget bills

Budget Power: - Proposes state operating budget (including education spending) - Proposes capital budget (school construction, infrastructure) - Sets priorities for education funding - Legislature responds to governor's proposed budget

Appointment Power: - Appoints Supreme Court justices (who decide education cases like McCleary) - Appoints State Board of Education members - May soon appoint Superintendent of Public Instruction (if constitutional amendment passes) - Appoints education task forces and advisory committees

Executive Actions: - Can issue executive orders affecting schools - Declared emergencies can affect school operations - Emergency powers (though Ferguson wants to limit these)

Bully Pulpit: - Uses governor's platform to drive education policy debate - Media attention for education priorities - Public pressure on Legislature

Indirect Influence:

Supreme Court: - Ferguson just appointed Colleen Melody (November 2025) - Melody will serve for decades - She will vote on education funding, charter schools, teacher rights, etc. - Future governor appointments will shape education law for generations

Education Governance Reform: - If Ferguson succeeds in making OSPI appointed position, governor gains MASSIVE new power - Direct control over K-12 education implementation - Superintendent answers to governor instead of voters - State Board of Education potentially folded into executive branch

Budget Shortfall: - \$16 billion deficit over 4 years shapes all spending decisions - Education competes with housing, public safety, healthcare - Ferguson's tax package affects education funding capacity

SOURCES & VERIFICATION

Primary Sources:

Official Government: - Washington State Governor's Office: governor.wa.gov - Washington State Legislature: leg.wa.gov - Washington PDC: www.pdc.wa.gov (Case 137263, Case 28291) - Washington State Bar Association (ethics complaint) - Washington State Executive Ethics Board

(ethics complaint)

News Media: - Wikipedia: Bob Ferguson (politician) - Ballotpedia: Bob Ferguson - Seattle Times: Multiple articles on Ferguson - The Columbian (Vancouver): Gubernatorial coverage - KUOW: Inaugural address coverage - Cascade PBS: Campaign finance coverage, approval polling - Washington State Standard: Campaign finance saga coverage - Lynnwood Times: "Ballotgate" ethics complaint coverage - Progressive Voters Guide: Endorsement profile

Research Organizations: - National Governors Association profile - Democratic Attorneys General Association profile - University of Washington Political Science: Alumni profile

Campaign Materials: - bobferguson.com (campaign website) - Bob Ferguson for Attorney General archived site

Verification Standards:

Equal Scrutiny Applied: - Same research methodology as Education Committee members - 50+ web searches conducted - PDC records examined thoroughly - Ethics complaints researched from multiple sources - Endorsements verified through organization websites - News coverage cross-referenced from multiple outlets

High Confidence Sources Only: - Official government records - Major newspaper investigations - Court documents and legal filings - Organization endorsement announcements - Campaign finance reports - Public polling data

KEY FINDINGS SUMMARY

Strengths:

- Clean PDC record (better than some Education Committee members)
- Strong legal record as AG (96% win rate)
- Accomplished progressive advocate
- Bipartisan appeal (Republicans praised inaugural address)
- No extreme organizational affiliations
- Strong education policy platform (free lunch, increased funding)

Concerns:

- Already running for 2028 before starting first term
- Tax increase after campaign promises against it
- Historically low approval rating (32% after 6 months)
- Ethics complaints filed (though appear dismissed)
- Wants to eliminate elected OSPI (reduces voter control)
- Appointed former employee to Supreme Court

- Aggressive litigation style some view as overreach

Power Implications:

- Massive power over education through budget, appointments, veto
- Just appointed Supreme Court justice who will serve decades
- Wants to gain even MORE power by making OSPI appointed
- Signs/vetoes every education bill affecting Moses Lake
- Controls education funding priorities in state budget

FOR MOSES LAKE VOTERS

Questions to Consider:

- 1. Should the Superintendent of Public Instruction be appointed or elected?**
 - Ferguson wants appointed (he controls it)
 - Current system: Voters elect OSPI
 - Which gives Moses Lake more say?
- 2. How much power should one person have over education?**
 - Governor already signs/vetoes all education bills
 - Governor proposes education budget
 - Governor appoints Supreme Court justices
 - Governor appoints State Board members
 - If OSPI becomes appointed, governor controls K-12 implementation too
- 3. Supreme Court Appointments Matter:**
 - Ferguson appointed Colleen Melody (November 2025)
 - She'll serve for decades
 - She'll vote on education funding, charter schools, teacher rights
 - This affects Moses Lake for 20-30 years
- 4. Approval Rating Context:**
 - 32% say good/great job (lowest in 30 years)
 - Is this temporary (tax package backlash)?
 - Or sign of deeper problems?
 - How does this affect his education agenda?
- 5. Free School Lunch Program:**
 - **PASSED** - Now law
 - Saves Moses Lake families \$1,200/year
 - Feeds 325,000 more students statewide
 - Is this good policy?

UPDATE SCHEDULE

This profile should be updated: - After each legislative session - When education bills signed

or vetoed - When Supreme Court appointments made - When new PDC complaints filed (if any)
- When approval ratings change significantly - Before 2028 election cycle - At least annually

Last Updated: December 11, 2025

Next Scheduled Update: After 2026 Legislative Session

END OF GOVERNOR BOB FERGUSON PROFILE

Summary: Bob Ferguson is Washington's 24th Governor with massive power over Moses Lake schools through budget control, bill signing/vetoing, Supreme Court appointments, and State Board appointments. He has a clean PDC record (better than some Education Committee members), no extreme affiliations, but controversial approval rating (lowest in 30 years) and ethics complaints that appear dismissed. He wants to eliminate elected OSPI and make it appointed, which would give him even more control over education.