Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Review Alternative Learning Experience

1. **Purpose:**
   The purpose/objective of this program is to perform on-going program reviews of alternative learning experience (ALE) programs and dropout reengagement programs.

2. **Description of services provided:**
   - Individual on-site and desk reviews of documentation and reporting components of ALE and dropout reengagement FTE.
   - Technical assistance and guidance toward meeting the documentation, and reporting requirements specific to these programs.
   - Technical assistance and guidance on the broader overlapping public education requirements within these programs.
   - Development of tools and resources to assist school districts in analyzing their own practice, documentation, and reporting compliance.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**
   - Schools and districts that are currently claiming ALE funding, Open Doors funding, or are interested in establishing a program that uses these funds are eligible.
   - Eligible recipients can also include Educational Service Districts, nonprofit organizations and colleges that operate Open Doors programs in partnership with public school districts.

   Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year – Compliance Reviews (annual data):

Number of School Districts:	16
Number of School Programs:	19
Number of College Programs:	0
Number of Students:	91
Other:	0

   Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year – Compliance Reviews, trainings, Q&A, EOY Reporting, other support services (new data):

Number of School Districts:	144
Number of School Programs:	151
Number of College Programs:	17

Number of Educators: 400
Other: ESDs 5

Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 1.0
Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 0.0

FY21 Funding: **State Appropriation:** $131,000
Federal Appropriation: $0
Other fund sources: $0
TOTAL (FY21) $131,000

4. **Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?**
☒ No
☐ Yes, please explain.

5. **State funding history:**

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY21	$131,000	$122,633
FY20	$131,000	$127,258
FY19	$131,000	$127,227
FY18	$131,000	$113,092
FY17	$131,000	$57,210
FY16	$131,000	$120,978
FY15	$134,000	$88,663

6. **Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:**

Fiscal Year	Number of Districts
FY21	144*

*includes all services provided to Youth Reengagement programs. Compliance reviews only = 16 districts.

7. **Programmatic changes since inception (if any):**
Internal to the agency, the program moved from the Audit Resolution Department to the Alternative Learning Department in 2017. This has assisted the agency in coordinating resources and communication, as well as identifying and directing programs that may need more specific supports. The scope of what is reviewed has expanded to include some public education requirements that do not have a fiscal

audit impact but were identified as needing specific review for these types of programs. The COVID-19 pandemic has moved the reviews to fully virtual and desk review models for the foreseeable future.

8. **Evaluations of program/major findings:**
The State Auditor's Office has noted a steady decline in fiscal audit findings in ALE and positive results so far in the initial fiscal audits of reengagement programs. School districts who have participated in the reviews have reported to find them helpful. This role has helped OSPI prioritize guidance and resources based on the findings.

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:**
The primary challenge with this program is time and capacity. There are many unique ALE and reengagement programs around the state. Providing thorough evaluation and feedback to each of these, along with the coordination required makes it difficult to accomplish as many as the agency would like each year. This was further impacted Spring 2020 with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On-site vs Desk Reviews: There is noted efficiency and increased usefulness to an on-site visit in comparison to a desk review, but site visits come with the increased cost of travel. Program staff are more likely to ask compliance support questions about their program during in-person visits than with online desk reviews (3 average questions for onsite reviews, compared to 2 average for desk reviews; 12 onsite reviews had 4 or more questions, while only one desk review had more than 3 questions.)

COVID-19 closures: Site visits were cancelled or converted to desk reviews for the spring and summer months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

10. **Future opportunities:**
In the immediate, the crisis is providing an opportunity to prioritize and re-envision the desk review model. This year's desk reviews will also include a virtual introduction and follow-up through Zoom to create a more personal relationship and opportunity for questions and concerns to be discussed. This role is extremely useful in supporting ALE and reengagement programs to meet state rules and expectations. Results of these have been instrumental in identifying common areas of challenge that need broader communication and resources to reduce, while still helping the individual program with their unique challenges. This role's expertise has also provided insight into strategies for the establishment and supervision of other program compliance requirements.

11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

ESSB 5092 Sec. 1501 (1)(l) - $131,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2020, $131,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2021, and $213,000 of the performance audits of government account-state appropriation are provided solely for the office of superintendent of public instruction to perform on-going program reviews of alternative learning experience programs, dropout reengagement programs, and other high-risk programs. Findings from the program reviews will be used to support and prioritize the office of superintendent of public instruction outreach and education efforts that assist school districts in implementing the programs in accordance with statute and legislative intent, as well as to support financial and performance audit work conducted by the office of the state auditor.

12. **Other relevant information:**
Beyond direct reviews, the position funded by this proviso supports schools through compliance webinars and presentations at regional workshops and conferences, and through online trainings. This position also develops and updates online resources, sample documentation and compliance specific guidance for newsletters available to schools and educators statewide. This proactive mission driven support approach has created more trust for school districts to be more transparent with OSPI and seek guidance directly.

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**
See OSPI's Grantee List

14. **Program Contact Information:**
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