

# OSPI's 2023-25 Operating Budget Priorities

## Fully Fund Special Education Services

*\$412.6M in FY24, \$971.9M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Funding that school districts receive for special education services is not well aligned with their expenditures, leaving some districts to rely on local levies to supplement their special education programs. School districts have a legal obligation to serve all students with disabilities in Washington, regardless of cost of services. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests that the Legislature remove the 13.5% cap on state special education funding and increase the special education tiered multiplier to fully cover the cost of special education services and sustain the state's investment in inclusionary practices.

## Foster a Multiliterate Washington through Statewide Dual Language Education

*\$35.1M in FY24, \$69.7M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Multilingual/English learners, American Indian/Alaska Native students, and other historically underserved student groups have long-standing, persistent opportunity gaps in their K–12 educational careers. With the need to provide accelerated learning models to address pandemic-related learning loss, K–12 leaders across the state have expressed an urgency to begin the planning process to implement dual language education. This proposal scales out inclusive, asset-based, and gap preventing/closing dual language education including supports for bilingual educators, equitable access to literacy supports, the seal of biliteracy, and world language competence-based credits, and efforts to preserve, restore, and grow Tribal language programs throughout the state.

## Eliminate Financial Barriers to Students Pursuing Dual Credit Opportunities

*\$47.9M in FY24, \$99M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

To support the overarching goal of shortening time to credential attainment for high school students, OSPI proposes reducing student costs associated with earning industry recognized credentials and participation in dual credit programs. The proposals below represent a comprehensive approach to ensuring equitable access to dual credit and making credential attainment more affordable for high school students and families. It is a critical step towards realizing the agency's vision as reflected in state and federal performance metrics. This decision package reflects OSPI's commitment to offering rigorous learner-centered options in every community and preparing a diverse, inclusive, and highly skilled workforce by ensuring that all



students, regardless of their means, can obtain the credentials they are able to earn and have equitable access to dual credit courses.

## **Provide for Adequate and Predictable Student Transportation to School**

*\$64.8M in FY24, \$158.9M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The state's current model for providing school districts with funding for student transportation is opaque, unpredictable, and does not sufficiently provide for the actual costs of transporting students to and from school each day. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests appropriate funding that is transparent, based on district-specific variables, and easily predictable ensuring that each school district receives appropriate funding levels.

## **Increase Staffing Allocations to Support Stronger, Safer Schools**

*\$337M in FY24, \$1.01B in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to complete implementation of the first of two research- and evidence-based phases of the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup's (2019) recommendations. The remaining components of the first phase focus on eliminating opportunity gaps by adjusting the prototypical school funding model. At the proposed staffing levels, school districts will be better positioned to meet the needs of all students by increasing the allocation for several key staff, increasing the allocation for substitute teachers, funding additional critical professional development for school staff, and adding continuous improvement coaches to the prototypical model no later than the 2025–26 school year.

## **Ensure Universal Student Access to Meals Statewide**

*\$86.5M in FY24, \$172.9M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Students' basic needs must be met for them to be able to learn. Our country has a long history of providing free and reduced-price meals to students experiencing poverty, and throughout the pandemic, the federal government provided meals for all K–12 students at no cost to the student or their family, regardless of their economic status. While Washington has made great strides in expanding access to free school meals, it is time to provide universal free meals to all students as part of the school day. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to provide healthy school meals to all of Washington's learners. Funding will supplement federal reimbursement and cover costs for schools who are not eligible to participate in federal universal meal options to ensure every student has the same opportunity. Washington has an opportunity to join a growing number of states leading the country in providing free meals to all students.

## Retain Highly Effective Staff Through an Equitable and Competitive Educator Compensation Model

*\$1.4B in FY23, \$3.15B in the 2023-25 Biennium*

To ensure Washington's school districts receive sufficient state funding to recruit and retain diverse and highly effective educators to support our students, the Legislature requires a regular review and revision of school employee salary allocations to accurately reflect market-rate salaries and economic differences between districts. In the 2021–23 biennial budget, the Legislature required the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to convene a K–12 Basic Education Compensation Advisory Committee to develop recommendations to OSPI that support recruiting and retaining a multicultural and multilingual educator workforce. OSPI is responsible for reviewing the recommendations and submitting a statewide request to the Governor and the Legislature. For this proposal, OSPI is taking a targeted approach and offering solutions that focus on the core components required to increase student access to a diverse and highly skilled educator workforce. This proposal supports adjustments to the base salary allocations for all staff, a restructuring and re-basing of the regionalization factors, a restructuring of the experience mix factor, and an expansion of bonuses for qualifying staff.

## Strengthen the Pipeline for Effective School Principals

*\$13.3M in FY23, \$28.3M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The quality of the principal is second only to that of the teacher in its impact on students' learning. This proposal supports a robust principal internship to ensure a principal is ready to lead a school their first day on the job. It provides an experienced colleague mentor for professional support during a principal's challenging first year. The proposal bolsters principal retention in high-poverty schools by providing salary incentives to school leaders who serve them. Finally, it addresses recruiting and retaining highly qualified educators in the principal role by ensuring those who hold National Board certification do not lose their bonus when transitioning to the principalship.

## Expand Mentorship and Retention of Beginning Educators

*\$8M in FY23, \$16M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

In the 2021–22 school year, Washington school districts hired an unprecedented number of novice educators with nearly 7,000 first-year teachers and Educational Staff Associates (ESAs), an increase of over 65% from the previous year. Our state's Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST), which provides mentoring and induction supports to beginning educators, is a proven strategy for reducing educator turnover. Currently, 25% of new teachers and 100% of new ESAs do not receive these critical supports. This request supports full implementation of the BEST program statewide.

## Strengthen OSPI's Core Operations to Increase Capacity for Statewide Supports

*\$1.2M in FY23, \$2.4M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The base operations funding for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has not kept up with the expanding programming requirements over the past decade. The lag in critical staffing in areas like fiscal, legal, policy and research, communications, contracting, human resources, compliance, civil rights, reporting, and information technology is undermining OSPI's ability to be responsive to the ever-evolving needs and requirements of the K–12 system, the 1.1 million students it serves, and Washington's taxpayers. OSPI requests ongoing funding to meet the expanding demands of providing the agency's core services and meeting customer needs in a timely and targeted manner.

## Modernize and Streamline Washington's School Funding System

*Funding Amount to be Determined*

Washington state's school apportionment system, operated by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), disburses half of Washington's General Fund-State budget to school districts and other local education agencies according to complex formulas prescribed by the Legislature. The system is extremely outdated, requires extensive human intervention, and is prone to errors that cause significant risk for the state and school funding operations. This request is a follow up to the legislative requirement of performing a feasibility study for this project. This request serves as a placeholder for the costs and activities identified by the feasibility study, which will be completed by the end of calendar year 2022.

## Sustain a Strong Educator Workforce Through Teacher Residencies

*\$0 in FY23, \$200.8M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Although millions of dollars are expended each year to prepare new teachers nationwide and within Washington state, schools and school districts still lack enough teachers with the qualifications to meet the needs of students, particularly students in historically underserved groups, including multilingual/English learners, students with disabilities, and students of color. Preservice teacher residency programs are an innovative student teaching model during which the preservice teacher spends a full school year learning on the job from an effective cooperating teacher in a classroom with students while also completing relevant and connected coursework toward their certification. This request provides access to a full-year, paid teacher residency program working shoulder to shoulder with a trained mentor teacher to achieve certification, so students have access to diverse and highly skilled teachers, grown in the communities in which they will serve, who are ready on day one to support their success.

## **Bolster Holocaust and Genocide Education for Washington Students Statewide**

*\$899K in FY23, \$1.85M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The 2019 Legislature recognized the importance of Holocaust and genocide studies as a part of middle and high school education ([RCW 28A.300.115](#)). Through OSPI's efforts to date, around 38% of Washington middle and high schools have access to enhanced Holocaust and genocide studies educational programming. However, with current funding, the program has limited reach across the state, and limited potential to provide resources and support to school districts, educators, and students, particularly in Eastern Washington. OSPI requests funding to expand resources and professional learning opportunities for educators across the state to teach Holocaust studies.

## **Expand the Imagination Library Early Literacy Program Statewide**

*\$2.5M in FY23, \$5M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Early exposure to books and reading has a proven impact on high achievement in literacy, learning, and strong educational outcomes. The Imagination Library of Washington program provides age-appropriate, high-quality books each month to children ages birth to five at no cost to families. To increase equitable access to books and support early literacy and kindergarten readiness among Washington's children, OSPI provides a 50% match of state funds to local funds to make the Imagination Library of Washington available to all households with children under the age of five across all 39 counties.

## **Fully Fund the Legislatively Mandated Community Eligibility Provision Expansion**

*\$26.5M in FY23, 28.5M in FY24, \$59M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

State law passed in 2022 (RCW 28A.235.300) requires school districts to apply for Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a program that provides free meals to all students in schools with large populations of students experiencing poverty. Under this new law, school districts are also required to group non-eligible schools together to maximize the number of schools eligible to participate in CEP. In the time since the legislation was passed, the metrics around eligibility have changed significantly, resulting in a significant increase in eligible schools from what was originally projected. OSPI requests additional dollars to fully fund the expansion of CEP, in accordance with state law.

## Increase Student Access to Hands-on Science Opportunities

*\$10.4M in FY23, \$16M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Many students miss the opportunity to build a strong foundation in high-quality, hands-on science learning. The Legislature has made investments in these types of educational experiences, including the Pacific Education Institute's FieldSTEM program, the Pacific Science Center, Salmon in Schools, and the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) Exploration Center. OSPI requests an additional investment in several successful programs that expand access to hands-on science learning to students across the state.

## Prepare Future Trades Workers by Cultivating Regional Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

*\$1M in FY23, \$3M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

Pre-apprenticeship programs operate in partnership with high schools and are proven to educate and engage students in career pathways tied to trades like welding, electrical work, construction, and others. OSPI requests funding to support and expand regional pre-apprenticeship programs for Washington high school students. This proposal will support students pursuing post-graduate work in the trades by providing introductory and specialized training through partnerships with the private sector, labor unions, and institutions of higher education.

## Maintain Funding for the Legislative Direction (House Bill 1365) to Support Educational Technology

*\$10.9M in FY23, \$21.7M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The 2021 Legislature passed [House Bill 1365](#), which directed OSPI to establish new grant opportunities for schools and to provide educational technology, training, and data reporting. Funding associated with the bill was only provided for the 2021–23 biennium, while the work is expected to be ongoing. The COVID-19 pandemic only elevated the importance of educational technology in our schools. It was, and continues to be, vital that students and their families can easily access learning that is safe, reliable, and secure while they are at home. This request is for ongoing funding to accomplish the work outlined in House Bill 1365 (2021).

## Provide for the Legislatively Mandated Statewide Family Meal Application System

*Funding Amount to be Determined*

In 2022, the Legislature passed [House Bill 1833](#), requiring OSPI to initiate and oversee the development and implementation of a statewide electronic system where families can easily apply for free and reduced-price meals; or in schools where all meals are free, submit a Family Income Survey. An implementation plan including a cost analysis, timeline, and system

requirements are being developed in advance of the report to the Legislature due December 1, 2022. This zero-dollar request aims to serve as a placeholder for the potential biennial costs associated with developing and implementing a statewide system.

## **Ensure School District Access to Regional Transportation Coordinators**

*\$67M in FY23, \$195M in the 2023-25 Biennium*

The Legislature currently provides \$939,000 in a proviso to pay for the salaries, benefits, and operating supplies (e.g., office rent, technology, and phone services) of regional transportation coordinators (RTCs). RTCs are employees of their respective regional educational service district (ESD) whose primary role is to ensure local school districts have access to the knowledge, training, and oversight necessary to run a complete and effective student transportation program. Since these funds are provided in a proviso, they do not automatically adjust along with the salary allocations in the prototypical school funding formula, and over time, they have lost buying power. This request is for a one-time adjustment to the allocation, plus dollars to fund the addition of an inflation factor (IPD) tied to the one provided in the prototypical school funding model.