

Planning and Application Guidance

Prepare to apply for an Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement program. Prior to submitting an application to OSPI, use this guidance to inform initial planning and visioning. More information on how to apply for an Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement program is available on the [Getting Started Toolkit](#) webpage.

REQUIRED CONCEPTS

Understand the intent of the program

Open Doors Youth Reengagement programs focus on progress and operate from the student's baseline toward the student's identified career or learning goal(s). An Open Doors program may focus on high school diploma earning, but it is not required. Programs may be designed solely for career skill development and/or academic attainment that does, or does not, lead to college, a diploma, or a GED. RCW [28A.174.100](#) states: "It is the legislature's intent...[that Open Doors provides] appropriate instruction and services to reengage older students and help them make progress toward a meaningful credential and career skills."

Know who the program is intended to serve

Open Doors serves youth and young adults who are unable or unlikely to graduate by age 21. Primary eligibility factors: age 16-21, not presently enrolled or attending school, and/or severely credit deficient. Program WAC refers to Open Doors as dropout reengagement and defines the credit deficiency thresholds and other eligibility requirements. See [Student Eligibility](#).

Identify and solidify partnerships

Open Doors is legislatively intended to encourage partnering. Partners may include school districts, ESDs, community-based organizations, community and technical colleges, skill centers, work force development councils, and businesses.

[Partnerships](#) offer substantial career-based, cultural, and academic opportunities that districts alone cannot provide. Open Doors

Programs may have [multiple partnerships](#) in support of one, or multiple, [pathway\(s\)](#).

Data-informed planning and development

Examine data to mitigate student barriers and increase meaningful supports *specific* to youth who have disengaged or are otherwise not attending or accumulating sufficient credits to graduate by age 21. Examine data about:

- Why have youth disengaged and what led to their out-of-school status
- Available or lacking district-based education, career, and social support options, including gaps, barriers, opportunities, and strengths
- The interest and goals of youth and young adults (to inform your program design)
- Environmental or community assets

Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

Open Doors programs can enable more equitable futures for students from historically marginalized communities. Understand existing inequities and [strive to create enabling environments](#) for students. Consider how students and staff are treated, the accessibility of operations, and the equity of opportunities put forth through your programming.

Get innovative

How will this program be different from what is already available to youth? Open Doors programs exist as an alternative path to success and focus on reengaging youth that have dropped out. Thus, a program's design, partnerships, and [pathway\(s\)](#) must innovatively support students to "make progress toward a meaningful credential and career skills." ([RCW 28A.174.100](#))

High school diploma and credit earning is only one possibility within Open Doors.

REFINE YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Review the Dropout Reengagement WAC

The Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement Program is governed by its own unique rules in WAC. This includes eligibility, definitions, and other requirements. View the full Dropout Reengagement WAC: [Chapter 392-700 WAC](#).

Determine your program's purpose

What existing Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement programs and pathways are already available to students? How will your proposed program be different and/or meet a need that the existing Open Doors programming or district options do not? Explain this in your application.

Distinguish the competency-based approach

The program you design must implement [instruction](#) as defined within the Open Doors WAC. Supporting students to make progress toward career and/or academic goals can look many ways. Learn more: [WAC 392-700-065](#).

Identify your program's pathway(s)

Each program may operate between one and four [pathways](#) for students. Ensure that a college partnership is solidified if applying to offer a college pathway. If offering a career pathway, ensure your partnerships and programming specifically and rigorously promote career skills.

Design with creativity and intention

An Open Doors program does not need to be for credit. The program can be, but does not have to be, a diploma-generating experience. Design a program that meets students where they are and provides meaningful engagement. Build a program that enables progress in career skills, academic growth, and/or college exposure or experience.

Examine the Indicators of academic progress

Open Doors Youth Reengagement programs operate using Indicators of Academic Progress (IAPs). Learn more by reviewing [line 15 in the "Definitions"](#) section of the WAC. Use the IAPs to guide planning and visioning efforts.

Check out our video resources

Watch the two-minute Open Doors [overview video](#). It provides a brief program summary and orientation. Browse the [Open Doors YouTube](#) videos to gain additional insight. A variety of content exists from both OSPI and direct-service programs.

Plan for compliance

Prioritize watching the [compliance webinar](#) to guide your planning for tracking, monitoring, and documenting. Chapters include:

[0:00](#) Intro

[3:41](#) Enrollment Practices

[6:03](#) Enrolling the Students

[6:56](#) Attendance and Check-Ins

[8:03](#) Indicators of Academic Progress

[9:08](#) Limitations on Enrollment

[13:20](#) Role of the Case Manager

[15:06](#) Program Requirements Outside Student Enrollment Claims

[15:48](#) Compliance Reviews

[19:15](#) Tips for Student Engagement

[19:55](#) Resources

See the ALE and Open Doors comparison chart

Although Open Doors is an alternative education program, it is significantly different than Alternative Learning Experience (ALE). [Review the ALE & Open Doors Comparison Chart](#) to ensure you understand the differences.

Consider the R-Type School Code Option

An R-type school code qualifies your program as a school. This is not required but may lead to additional supports and funding. Learn more about the [R-Type School Code](#) designation.

Prepare a Mastery-Based Credit Policy

Open Doors allows competency-based learning and enables students to earn up to 1.0 subject area credit for passing each related GED test. The credit(s) shall be recorded in transcript and recorded in the annual Open Doors Youth Reengagement end-of-year data collection. See [WAC 397-700-137 Award of Credit](#)

CORE REQUIREMENTS (WAC 392-700)

√	Component	Detail
	Student eligibility	Student age of ≥ 16 and <21 by September 1; credit deficiency and/or referral
	Standardized testing	Reading & math assessments within 30 days of enrollment or results from up to 6 months prior
	Out of district	Approval date for choice transfer or homeless declaration (i.e., McKinney-Vento) before count date
	Course listings	High school courses for credit; identification of leveled work or educational plan
	Monthly face-to-face contact	At least two (2) hours per calendar month
	Weekly status checks	Face-to-face, email, phone, synchronous/asynchronous digital contact, etc., for every week with 3+ school days
	IAPs	Every 4th count, not including September
	Identification of instructor(s)	Endorsed as needed for high school credits; in-class ratio not to exceed 1:25 for school districts, educational service districts, charter, or tribal schools, or 1:35 for colleges
	Case manager(s)	Meets qualifications; ratio not to exceed 1:75, adjusted for staffing FTE
	Calendar	Minimum 1,000 hours/year; min 2 hrs/day; max 6 hrs/day
	Special education	The district and program must collaborate to ensure that all special education policies and procedures are followed and that each student with an IEP enrolled in the Open Doors program receives a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
	Section 504	The district and program must collaborate to ensure that all Section 504 policies and procedures are followed (including, but not limited to, child find and initial evaluations) so that each student eligible under Section 504 enrolled in the Open Doors program has a 504 plan and receives a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
	Transitional Bilingual Instruction Programs	At minimum, the district and program must collaborate to provide the following: student identification, provision of English language development services and accessible content instruction, eligibility notification, assessment, and progress monitoring
	Mastery-Based Credit Policy	Competency/Mastery-based credit(s) shall be recorded in students' transcripts and recorded in the annual Open Doors Youth Reengagement end-of-year data collection.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

Students enrolled in Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement programs have the right to receive the same services to which all eligible students are entitled. This includes the provision of special education services; accommodations (IDEA), aids, and services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"); and transitional bilingual instruction (TBIP).

Programs and their partners must plan for how services will be provided to students. Clarifying and describing partner roles, duties, and delivery is critical for program approval by OSPI. Consider when and how student referrals, evaluations, and annual reviews will occur and how to maximize services coordination.

Special education (required)

Special education is governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and WAC 392.172A. Special Education requires school districts and their programs, including Open Doors Youth Reengagement, to provide eligible students with specially designed instruction in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Review the [Open Doors Special Education Tip Sheet](#) and [Special Education](#) page.

Contact: speced@k12.wa.us 360-725-6075

Transitional Bilingual Instruction Programs (TBIP) (required)

Districts are responsible for providing transitional bilingual instruction, also called English language development programs. These programs are guided by state and federal laws and are required to be offered to eligible youth in Open Doors 1418 programs. Learn more about supporting multilingual learners in Open Doors by reviewing the specific [Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program Open Doors Guidance](#)

Contact: [Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program](#) | [OSPI](http://www.k12.wa.us) (www.k12.wa.us)

Juvenile justice and institutional Education
Washington state provides education services to incarcerated and previously incarcerated youth. OSPI and Educational Service Districts (ESDs) deploy Education Advocates to support students who have been incarcerated. Open Doors Case Managers can work with Education Advocates to provide wholistic supports to incarcerated and previously incarcerated youth. Learn more: [Institutional Education](#)

Section 504 supports (required)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (commonly known as Section 504) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. Public schools, including Open Doors Youth Reengagement programs, are required to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students who have a disability. Info: [Section 504 & Students with Disabilities](#)

Contact: equity@k12.wa.us 360-725-6162

Migrant eligible out-of-school youth services
Connect and partner with the Title I, Part C. Migrant Education Program (MEP) and the collaborating Education Service District coordinators from ESDs 189, 105, 123, and 171. MEP can provide supplemental supports and services to migrant-eligible youth, between the age of 16-21, who are not currently enrolled, have not yet graduated from high school, or have not received a high school equivalency diploma. This may include youth who fit the profile of "Here-to-Work." Learn more by visiting the [Migrant Education Health Program](#) page's section on Out-of-School Youth

McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Supports
McKinney-Vento programming provides services for youth who are living in unstable housing situations defined as "lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." The program requires districts to designate liaisons with whom an Open Doors Case Manager can connect. Connecting and coordinating with the McKinney-Vento Liaison is a best practice. Learn more: [Homeless Education](#)

COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION

- OSPI requires the completion and submission of this [Program Narrative template](#) by all new programs *and* by existing programs seeking to update pathways or partnerships.

*For Special Education, Section 504, and TBIP describe how the Opens Doors Program will meet its obligations to identify and serve students determined eligible for these services. Include organizations the district will coordinate with and how this collaboration will help ensure a seamless educational experience for potential and participating students (and families).

Complete the letter of intent

An agreement between the district and OSPI stating the district agrees to the WAC requirements. Utilize the [Letter of Intent PDF](#) and obtain district signatures prior to submitting to OSPI for signature and approval.

Complete the scope of work

This documents that the program partners and lead agency agree to the WAC. This is required when a district and other entity partner to offer Open Doors 1418 programming. Utilize the [Scope of Work PDFs](#) on the website and obtain district and partner signatures prior to submitting to OSPI for signature and approval. *Note:* If the district is applying to run a district-only program with no [partners](#), no Scope of Work is required.

Implement a mastery-based credit policy

Districts must adopt a competency-based or mastery-based credit policy with procedures. Learn more by viewing the [WSSDA model policies](#) for awarding mastery-based learning credit and [WAC 180-51-051: Procedure for granting students mastery-based credit](#).

Create a program flow chart

The program must create a comprehensive flow chart aligned to the narrative. The chart must indicate and describe the entry, process, and options within the proposed Open Doors program, including referral process, assessment for placement, orientation, and student

pathways or options. Include labels indicating which entity provides which services. If the district has multiple programs, the chart should reflect the variety of Open Doors programs available to students within the district.

Provide a school calendar

Identifies the number of program hours available from September 1st through August 31st. Open Doors requires that the standard school year provides 1080 hours. We look for:

- 1000 hours of available instructional time
- No more than 6 hours per day
- A minimum of 2 hours per day

[RARE] Contracted Services Agreement (varies)

Required in some instances where program components related to the WAC are being contracted by another agency or provider that may not qualify into a partnership agreement.

Submit your application (final step)

After completing the required application documents outlined in this section, please submit all documents via the [OSPI Open Doors Application Form](#). Application materials that are emailed will not be processed.

Seeking more information?

To access all the application material and additional information, please visit the [Open Doors Youth Reengagement Getting Started Toolkit](#) webpage.

