
APPLICATION FOR STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES SEEKING INTENSIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Send completed application to Sheryl Lazarus at laza0019@umn.edu by May 31, 2019.

STATE EDUCATION AGENCY (SEA) CONTACT INFORMATION

State Agency Name: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Name of Primary Contact: Petra Heppner-Nelson

Title of Primary Contact: Special Education Program Improvement Supervisor

Email of Primary Contact: Petra.Heppner-Nelson@k12.wa.us

Phone # of Primary Contact: 509-323-2730

STATE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please complete the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LRE Trend Data for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities who Participate in the Alternative Assessment Grade 3-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LRE A (80% or more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please describe patterns or trends in supporting children in less restrictive environments in your state. In particular, please provide information (including quantitative data) about where students with significant cognitive disabilities are served across LRE categories.

Trends in LRE and Current Challenges to Inclusive Access

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are provided special education and related services across the special education continuum within Washington state. The majority of students receive their special education and related services in one of three continuum of alternate placements: 80-100% in the general education setting; 40–79% in the general education setting; or less than 40% of their day in general education setting. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that school districts ensure that the provision of services to each student eligible for special education shall be provided to the maximum extent appropriate in the general education environment with students who are nondisabled; and that removal from the general education environment occurs only if the nature
and severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Washington state does not collect data specific to a student’s cognitive ability. Most of the students with significant cognitive disabilities fall in the disability categories of Autism (AU), Intellectual Disabilities (ID) or Multiple Disabilities (MD), and their LRE data are detailed below in Chart A. The total number of students with disabilities, ages 6 to 21, in Washington state is 123,518 (2016-17), 127,073 (2017-18), and 130,486 (2018-19). Within the three disability categories of AU, ID, and MD, the totals for ages 6 to 21 are 20,048 (2016-17), 21,208 (2017-18), and 22,320 (2018-19).

Chart A: LRE Numerical Data Trends in Percentage for 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 for Students with AU, ID, or MD, ages 6 to 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>80-100%</th>
<th>40-79%</th>
<th>0-39%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU 16-17</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU 17-18</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU 18-19</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 16-17</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 17-18</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 18-19</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>58.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 16-17</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 17-18</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 18-19</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU/ID/MD 16-17</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU/ID/MD 17-18</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU/ID/MD 18-19</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart A provides quantitative data about students’ with AU, ID, and MD levels of participation within the general education setting over the past three years. The percentage of students with AU who have been included in the general education setting 80-100% of the school day has increased over the last three years, from 35.6% (2016-17) to 36.9% (2018-19). In the next placement on the LRE continuum (40-79% in general education), data show little change from 56.7% (2016-17) to 25.9% (2018-19). For those students with AU in the general education setting less than 40% of the school day, the percentage is high, yet decreasing trends are evident, starting at 36.7% (2016-17), then decreasing to 35.9% (2017-18) and ultimately 35.3% (2018-19). These data show that students eligible under the disability category of AU are showing improved movement toward increased time in the general education classroom, although not in an adequate number.

The next student group in Chart A are students with ID. Over the past three years, the percentage of students with ID who have been included in the general education setting 80-100% of the school day have decreased from 6.3% (2016-17), to 5.9% (2017-18), and then further to 5.3% (2018-19). Within the next placement on the LRE (40-79% in general education classroom), data again show an increase from 32.7% (2016-17), 33.5% (2017-18) and 35.8% (2018-19). While this decreasing
trend is suboptimal, it is tempered by the decreases in a more restrictive setting (i.e., 0-39%), which have gradually moved from 60.1% (2016-17), to 59.9% (2017-18), then 58.0% (2018-19).

The final group of students in Chart A are students with MD. Over the past three years, students with MD have been included in the general education setting 80-100% in increasing amounts from 9.8% (2016-17), increased to 10.6% (2017-18), and then 11.2% (2018-19). The next placement on the LRE continuum is 40-79% in general education, for which data show undesirable increases from 19.7% (2016-17), to 20.2% (2017-18), and 21.6 % (2018-19). More than 60% of students with MD are served 0-39% in general education setting, in decreasing levels, starting at 65.6% (2016-17), then moving to 64.0% (2017-18) and 62.4% (2018-19), demonstrating trends that Washington state would like to continue, while also improving.

When reviewing the LRE data for students with significant cognitive disabilities in the categories of AU, ID, and MD, the three year data trend shows the majority of these students spend their day in a separate setting, away from general education peers, yet there are improvements in almost all categories over the past three years, albeit slight. What is not shown by these aggregated state-level data, however, is the substantial variance of LRE data across Washington state school districts, with more than 30 school districts serving 100% of their students with significant cognitive disabilities (i.e., AU, ID, MD) in the general education setting less than 40% of the school day.

Not included in Chart A are data for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are served in a separate day school due to the small numbers. For students with AU, there have been less than 1.3% over the three year time period, while students with ID have ranged from 0.3% to 0.6%, and students with MD, decreased from 2.0% to 0.6%. Private school placement for students with AU, ID, or MD is less than 1% for all years from 2016 through 2019. Some students in these disability categories are also served in homebound or hospital settings. Students with AU and ID are less than 1% for the years 2016 to 2019. Students with MD range from 0.1% to 1.8%. The small numbers make these data unpredictable, and while OSPI staff will continue to review them, they are generally not used for decision-making purposes at the state level.
As revealed in Chart B, students in Washington state with significant cognitive disabilities spend the majority of their day in settings away from their general education peers. Currently less than 25% of these students spend 80-100% of their day in the general education classroom.

Chart C: Preschool LRE Data for 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 for Students with Developmental Delays (DD), AU, ID, or MD, ages 3 to 5
Chart C includes portions of Preschool LRE data, focused on a comparison among early childhood placements for students, ages 3 to 5, with DD, AU, ID, or MD. Developmental delay is included in this analysis, as it is the largest eligibility category for students ages 3 to 9. The percentage changes for ID and MD should be interpreted with caution, due to small n sizes. Overall, the data for students with DD, AU, and ID show positive trends in attending and being served in regular early childhood programs, with a decrease in attending and being served in separate special education programs.

Chart D: 2017 Percentage of Washington Students with AU/ID/MD Participating in CTE

Chart D represents a data snapshot, comparing participation in Career and Technical Education (CTE) with the larger population of students with disabilities in Washington state. Although the data show that participation in CTE for students with AU, ID, and MD are lower than their prevalence in the student population, the gaps are much closer (1.9%, 1.2%, and 1.11%, respectively) than the state totals, which show a gap of 7.62%. Washington state access to CTE for students with disabilities, and the resulting impact on long-term employment outcomes, has been the subject of a study by the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER)¹, and CALDER has co-presented with OSPI Special Education and CTE leadership on a national webinar showcasing CTE access in Washington state.

Chart E: Washington state IDEA Part B Indicator #14: Post-School Outcomes for Exiters for 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
<th>Competitively Employed</th>
<th>Other Education/ Training</th>
<th>Other Employment</th>
<th>Not Engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU 15-16</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU 16-17</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU 17-18</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 15-16</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 16-17</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID 17-18</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 15-16</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 16-17</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD 17-18</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-school outcomes for students with AU, ID, and MD are represented above in Chart E. The rates for not engaged have shown a downward trend for students with AU and ID, although the trend for students with MD has been increasing. The data also show that not engaged rates for these populations are consistently higher than the larger population of all students with disabilities, which has been at 29.5% in 2015-16 and 27.8% in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

The totality of these data demonstrate the importance of the Washington State Education Agency (SEA) engaging with educational leaders, educators, and families to address the meaningful inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities. The data alone signify a need for change, in not only placement of students with significant cognitive disabilities, but also in the preparation needed for educators, including both general education and special education teachers, to provide evidence-based systematic instruction to address daily living, community skills, and academic instruction. It is evident that a systemic change must take place to move this population of students toward a more inclusive general education setting.

Currently, within Washington state, some schools are implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across classrooms, supporting educators and paraeducators to increase purposeful differentiation within classroom lessons, using co-teaching structures, and increasing the use of Assistive and Augmentative Communication technology with students with significant cognitive disabilities. By tapping into these existing models of inclusive structures for those currently providing services, as well as working with our institutes of higher education training pre-service leaders and educators and community and family organizations, Washington state will ramp up and increase its inclusive efforts and support inclusion for students with significant cognitive disabilities, resulting in the majority of students with significant cognitive disabilities receiving

---

instruction with general education peers; impacting not only immediate outcomes, but long term, post-school outcomes, as well.

If applicable, did your state have an approved request to waive the 1% cap from USDoE? If so, was an extension requested?

Yes            or            No  X (Not applicable, as Washington was below the 1% requirement for students participating in the alternate assessment).

STATE CONTEXT

1. Describe actions that have been taken to increase placements in general education environments for children with significant cognitive disabilities. Include information on any actions intended to increase the level of meaningful and active educational engagement with age-appropriate typical peers across multiple settings and activities, and that improve access to grade-level academic and extracurricular settings and content for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. Include challenges faced and anticipated, and the state’s belief(s) about the implications of serving students in the least restrictive environment, and/or any issues unique to the state that should be considered.

Actions Taken
The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has changed leadership in the last two years, resulting in a change in vision. From the highest levels, the OSPI Executive Leadership team, comprised of State Superintendent Chris Reykdal and Deputy Superintendent Michaela Miller, along with Special Education Assistant Superintendent, Glenna Gallo, are strongly supporting the movement toward inclusive practices for all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities. Through this change in leadership, the vision, mission, and priorities have also changed.

OSPI has moved from working in silos in individual OSPI divisions to collaboration between those divisions, including cohesive efforts through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) state plan. Special education is an integral part of learning services working with Data Improvement Network (DIN) partners that include leaders from Educational Service Districts (ESDs) across the state, and aligned with efforts from OSPI leaders in Assessment and Student Information, the Center of Improvement of Student Learning, Educator Growth and Development, Learning and Teaching, Special Programs and Federal Accountability, Student Engagement and Support, Special Education, and Office of System and School Improvement. By working collaboratively within OSPI departments, adult partners are shifting adult attitudes toward change and the understanding that students with a variety of disabilities are in classrooms and schools daily. This change includes a realization that all students are entitled to and deserve an opportunity to learn with their like age peers and that students with and without disabilities benefit from being together in a general education setting.
OSPI has developed vision, mission, values, and equity statements that embrace movement toward comprehensive inclusive engagement opportunities for all students (Figure 1). The mission of OSPI is “Transform K-12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower education, families, and communities”. OSPI has values that “ensure equity, collaboration and service, achieving excellence through continuous improvement and focus on the whole child”. The educational focus within equity “Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations”. The equity statement concludes with ensuring practices that ensure “all students have access to instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools”. It is evident that OSPI and its leadership are committed to changing opportunities for all students. Washington state acknowledges that hard work must be done to support substantive change for our students with significant cognitive disabilities. The practice has been to educate these students in isolation without the opportunity to experience learning in the general education environment, make friends within this setting, and plan for a future with like age peers. The journey of change will be a difficult one, but Washington state is dedicated to all students and will embrace the opportunity to support the movement toward an equitable education for all students with significant cognitive disabilities.
Reflecting input and recommendation from educational stakeholders statewide, OSPI has identified six priorities for Washington state schools aimed at improving outcomes for students with disabilities, as shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2: OSPI Priorities for Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

![OSPI Priorities: Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities](image)

School leadership is key in supporting collaborative efforts among administrators, staff, families, and community organizations to improve student results and reduce disproportionality. A growth mindset must be in place to increase students with disabilities expectations toward outcomes. It is vital that evidence-based practices be incorporated within the learning structure of inclusionary practices. Washington state has embraced a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework[^3] for academic and social-emotional interventions, which has been shown to lead to increased access to a variety of inclusive learning environments. Professional development and on-going training must be provided to support all partners in the educational system toward the goal of improving outcomes for students with disabilities. In order to accomplish this, resources must be allocated through braided funding sources that increase support for students and data-based decision making. Finally, recruitment and retention of administrators, educators and staff is vital in providing high-quality, effective supports for students with disabilities. By focusing on these six priorities, educators will be better prepared and supported to integrate students with significant cognitive disabilities within general education settings.

[^3]: [http://k12.wa.us/MTSS/default.aspx](http://k12.wa.us/MTSS/default.aspx)
During the most recent Washington state legislative session, additional funds in the amount of 25 million dollars were allocated for special education professional development (PD) to increase inclusive practices across the state. Although the professional development plans have not yet been finalized, it is evident that OSPI and Washington state as a whole are dedicated to inclusive education opportunities for all students including those with significant cognitive disabilities. The Technical Assistance (TA) opportunity from TIES will be aligned with the legislatively-funded PD, and include opportunities for PD for school and district leaders, general and special education teachers, and families. These opportunities will be available statewide, through both universal activities for all, as well as by application for tiers 2-3 activities, which will address OSPI priorities, research and evidence-based practices, data-based individualization, K-12 Learning Standards, and IEP development, at a minimum.

Figure 3: Washington’s Cascading System of Supports

Figure 3 represents the statewide collaborative efforts to build an inclusive, MTSS. Washington state’s MTSS Stakeholder Advisory Committee is committed to building an integrated MTSS framework that connects all academic and non-academic interventions, supports, and services available in schools and communities, to support instruction and eliminate barriers to learning and teaching. Within an MTSS framework, multiple levels of instruction, assessment, and intervention are designed to meet the academic and non-academic needs of ALL students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities.
disabilities. Integrated MTSS, a key strategy for achieving the goal of closing educational opportunity gaps in Washington state, includes the following essential components: Core Instruction and Tiered Continuum of Evidence-based Interventions and Supports (Tiers I, II, III); Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring; Data-based Decision Making; Family Engagement and Community Partnerships; and Creating and maintaining the infrastructure to support an integrated MTSS Framework (e.g., leadership, culture and beliefs, teaming, professional learning, alignment/integration of initiatives).

To facilitate smoother transitions for students with significant cognitive disabilities, both entering and exiting the school system, OSPI is involved with several transition-related initiatives and collaborations, which include activities designed specifically to support students with significant cognitive disabilities. Inclusive early learning initiatives include:

- Intensive technical assistance for tiered behavioral supports from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI);
- A statewide Pre-K Inclusion Champions coalition among state agencies, early learning stakeholders, and community providers, to draft common definitions and messaging around inclusive practices and develop an inclusive early learning guidebook;
- Research-to-Action grant funding for the state's nine ESD regions, to build inclusive early learning environments in pilot school districts.

Collaborative efforts to increase access to integrated settings for secondary students with significant cognitive disabilities led to the creation of a transition-planning work group consisting of representatives from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), and the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS). Activities have included:

- Gathering stakeholder input regarding supports for and barriers to community access, integrated employment, and inclusive higher education settings;
- Development and dissemination of transition-planning resources: transition and high school and beyond plan checklists, and a cross walk of state agencies involved in transition planning; and
- Collaboration in support of pre-employment transition services (PreETS), recruitment and training for transition consultants, and statewide transition needs assessments to inform service delivery in integrated settings. In continuing the success identified through cross-division OSPI partnerships, professional

---


development efforts will also be supported through state partnerships with organizations supporting educational leaders, educators, and families.

The 2019 Washington state legislative session approved a new excess cost funding multiplier for students receiving special education services which increases the state funding for students in more inclusive general education settings. Washington's special education excess cost multiplier rate legislation\(^7\) includes the following language:

(A) In the 2019-20 school year, 0.995 for each student eligible for and receiving special education.

(B) Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, either:

(I) 1.0075 for students eligible for and receiving special education and reported to be in the general education setting for eighty percent or more of the school day; or

(II) 0.995 for students eligible for and receiving special education and reported to be in the general education setting for less than eighty percent of the school day.

The mission, vision, OSPI-led activities, and new state funding allocations represent the unified commitment of Washington state leadership to systematically and systemically remove barriers to access toward increasing inclusive instruction for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. To achieve wide scale change, a systemic plan has been developed to address potential challenges, while aligning evidence-based activities, resources, and services, all designed to improve the collective instructional capacity of Washington state public education, to support improved learning for all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities.

**Potential Challenges**

As indicated by the data shared under Washington state demographics, the majority of students with significant cognitive disabilities spend most of their educational day in a special education classroom, isolated from non-disabled peers and even access to grade-level Learning Standards and content. There has been little change in the students’ LRE for the past three years, yet the data do demonstrate some improvement, which can be capitalized upon, moving forward. These data are reflective of current policies, procedures, and practices in place at state and local levels, which may intentionally and unintentionally serve to segregate students with significant cognitive disabilities, for a variety of reasons. These reasons include:

- Beliefs about students with significant cognitive disabilities by school and district leaders, educators, other students, and the community which serve to:
  - Reduce expectations and opportunities for standards-based instruction and content based on unfounded assumptions; and
  - Segregate and marginalize students with significant cognitive disabilities, resulting in lack of preparedness for post-secondary education, community living, and competitive employment.

- Educator and leader preparation programs not providing opportunities to learn and apply evidence-based inclusionary practices, or to consider and plan (through UDL,

instruction or assistive technology) to address the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities (outside of a special education classroom).

- Lack of ongoing training and coaching for administrators and educators for ongoing effective implementation of inclusive practices or use of assistance and augmentative technology.

- Potential over-reliance on paraeducators as the primary means of inclusive support for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

- Isolated instructional practices by general education and special education teachers, who do not have access to research or professional learning communities with expertise around effective instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

- IEPs developed by teams which do not adequately or effectively consider:

  - Ways that the student with significant cognitive disabilities can access or benefit from grade-level content, supported by properly trained personnel;
  - How supplementary aids and services could be provided in conjunction with general education classroom placement;
  - Training needs of staff supporting the student in the general education classroom with non-disabled peers; and
  - Agency linkages with partner state agencies and community organizations to improve transition between support systems.

- Use of resources to maintain or perpetuate status quo, rather than identify areas that efficiently and effectively support inclusion for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

- Perceptions that parents, families, and communities prefer an isolated and “safe” special education classroom and instruction, where the student with significant cognitive disabilities can be protected.

It is anticipated that there may be some resistance from school and district leaders, educators, and parents to the idea that students with significant cognitive disabilities benefit from time and instruction spent in general education classes. Historically, this has not been the practice or experience for many. Often a misunderstanding prevails by educators thinking inclusive education means an additional financial drain on a school district or loss of instructional time for other students in the classroom. This is not the case. Inclusive education means the student is still receiving specially designed instruction but instead of an isolated special education classroom the student will receive the services in a general education setting, benefiting the school community. Because the existing classroom structure would change, teachers may feel ill prepared to teach students with disabilities in the general education class due to lack of training in their teacher preparation programs or lack of experience working with this population of students. Special education teachers, as well as IEP teams, may also hesitate placing students with significant cognitive disabilities in the general education classroom setting because this will need to change how they currently serve students.
2. Describe actions your state is considering to increase placements in general education environments for children with significant cognitive disabilities. Include information on any actions intended to increase the level of meaningful and active educational engagement with age-appropriate typical peers across multiple settings and activities, and that improve access to grade-level academic and extracurricular settings for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**Actions Considered**

To address and improve the inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities, OSPI is considering multiple activities that applied together and across the state, systematically result in improved inclusion and outcomes. These activities include:

- The 2019 Legislative/Budget Appropriations and Policy Shifts that Support Improved Outcomes for Students with Disabilities: The legislative session approved $25 million for inclusive practices professional development, including mentors for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. These monies have not been allocated to specific training but they are designated to support inclusive practices for students with disabilities. This type of state financial incentive demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive education for all students with disabilities at every level, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. Anticipated supports of these funds include: designation of model sites, mentor and coaches for administrators and educators, a communication plan and schedule, and professional development activities available in person and virtually for administrators, educators, paraeducators, and families/parents that address research and evidence-based instructional practices, data-based individualization, Learning Standards, scheduling to provide instruction and interventions within a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), and IEP development.

- A committee has been formed to update a state Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and Differentiation Manual, as a resource for all educators. The committee for this project is from different OSPI divisions working together to provide instructional supports for educators, in universal design for learning (UDL) and differentiation across content areas. When this manual is completed teachers will have access to resources that assist in planning and providing for all types of learners in their classroom.

- Supported by Washington State Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), OSPI has held community meetings across the state to provide educators and families an opportunity to voice concerns regarding a lack of inclusive practices for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These parent groups have encouraged Washington state to apply for TIES TA support to facilitate this work to engage a meaningful partnership with parents, teachers, administrators, and across OSPI, and move forward in providing educational opportunities for students with significant cognitive disabilities across the state.

- In response to stakeholder recommendations by the disability advocacy community with respect to secondary transition supports for students with significant cognitive disabilities, the transition planning work group is exploring data share agreements between OSPI and DDA to share lists of potentially-eligible students who are preparing to exit the school system. The work group is also collaborating with DVR to implement a peer mentoring program for students who are deaf or hard of
hearing, with plans to expand the program to include students with significant cognitive disabilities.

- Partnership with professional and community organizations to discuss and address changes needed statewide and within and across school districts and schools, to identify, support, and address the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities in each classroom. These organizations include Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL), ARC of Washington and King County, Roots for Inclusion, Inclusion for ALL, and TASH, an organization that promotes full inclusion and participation of students and adults with significant disabilities. Each of these organizations focuses on empowering individuals with significant cognitive disabilities. OSPI can learn from each organization and utilize the information to further the movement toward inclusion into the general education setting for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Partnership must extend beyond special education personnel and advocates; however, to make meaningful progress on inclusion. Activities will also include representatives from the Washington Educator Association (WEA), the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP), the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (CSTP), Roots for Inclusion, Washington State Teacher Leader Fellows, and Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA), as well as align with existing efforts through state institutes of higher education with educator and leadership preparation programs, including the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR), ESDs, and the state ESSA plan.

- Increased funding (and dissemination of resources) to the Washington state Special Education Technology Center (SETC)\(^8\), to allow for additional consultations and trainings. SETC provides trainings on the selection and use of low and high tech assistive technology, UDL, and augmentative and alternative communication devices (AAC), consultations to IEP teams, and a lending library that allows IEP teams to “try” assistive technology devices and software prior to purchasing.

\(^8\) [https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/](https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/)
3. Are there districts in your state that have demonstrated leadership and commitment to increasing the inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities into their school communities? How has this been demonstrated?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Examples of Demonstrated Leadership and Commitment to Increasing Inclusion of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lake Washington School District</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Washington School District is at the beginning stages of creating more inclusive learning communities within its schools. This year, a work group of general and special education teachers, paraeducators, building administrators, parents, community members, district administrators and specialists have been meeting to learn more about inclusion and to build upon the successful efforts in schools to foster inclusive learning communities. Work group members have been reading research on inclusive practices, hearing from experts in the field, and visiting other schools and districts. The outcomes for the work group members have been to become more informed about inclusion, share learning with staff in schools and district, and to advise on plans to continue to support inclusion efforts as part of our larger MTSS work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition, Lake Washington School District has been providing co-teaching training and support for secondary general education and special education teachers who are working together in pairs on co-teaching teams in math and English language arts classes. Their plan is to continue offering co-teaching training for additional elementary and secondary teachers next year. The goal is to equip all of the district’s schools to be able to use co-teaching when appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next year, eight pilot schools will work to implement inclusive practices including co-teaching, inclusive instructional intervention blocks, staff training on Universal Design for Learning, and increasing the time students who are currently served in self-contained special education classrooms participate meaningfully in general education settings. Lake Washington is also working to review self-contained programs and enrollment to inform a multi-year plan to increase inclusionary practices so that all students have access to core curriculum and supports for academic and social success, and to provide evidence-based training on specific student needs to equip all staff to support students in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finally, the district will be discontinuing their self-contained preschool programs and move to an inclusion model with 50% students with special needs and 50% students with typical development. Continued training on inclusive instruction will be provided to preschool teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are some challenges for Lake Washington School District, such as the cost and scale of staff training and coaching to support all students in general education settings; coordination of planning time for general education and special education teachers; staffing to support students with high needs in their home school and in general education settings; clearly communicating how inclusion is core to MTSS; and negative staff and community perceptions about inclusion. Even with these challenges, Lake Washington School District is dedicated to the process of inclusive practices for students with disabilities to include students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Mukilteo School District

Over the past three years, the Mukilteo School District’s Special Education department has leveraged equity initiatives to capitalize on the opportunity for increasing the amount of time that students’ with significant cognitive disabilities access learning experiences alongside peer partners in general education. As a result, there has been a significant decrease in the number of students whose LRE was 0-39%, and more students with significant cognitive disabilities are now spending more than 40% of their day in general education.

A few specific program changes have included:
1. Elementary Specialized Programs: Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, the district actively created general education and special education teacher teams to include students with significant cognitive disabilities in an age-appropriate general education classroom. For example, students with moderate to significant cognitive disabilities in the specialized autism program are spending 30% to 50% of their school day in a partner general education classroom.
2. Inclusive preschool: Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, the district implemented three inclusive preschool sessions with six peer partners and five students with IEPs, changing the LRE from “separate class” to “Reg EC Program”. The district is also increasing the number of inclusive classrooms each year until 100% of the preschool classrooms are inclusive settings.
3. High School Inclusion: During the 2018-19 school year the team at Kamiak High School expanded on their Unified Sports program by piloting inclusive P.E. classes. The classroom makeup was approximately 60% peer partners/40% students with significant cognitive disabilities. In the 2019-20 school year Unified PE has become a part of the Course Offerings for all students.

Bellevue School District

The mission of the Bellevue School District is to serve each and every student academically, socially, and emotionally, through a rigorous and relevant education that is innovative and individualized. Over the past five years, the district has focused on increasing access to the least restrictive environment and grade-level standards for students with disabilities into their neighborhood schools by co-teaching and developing a continuum of services at three neighborhood schools (two elementary schools, one middle school). Bellevue School District has engaged in this work in collaboration with the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation center (SWIFT) to align district resources and receive technical support, and using a district-based Continuum of Services team that meets monthly to collect and review data, provide technical assistance to school-based teams, and plan professional development. Additionally, the district has undergone a
curriculum review process to select a curriculum for learners with significant disabilities that aligns with Common Core State Standards.

Highline Public Schools
Highline Public Schools is invested in providing inclusive environments for all learners. The district initially started to consider what inclusive practices meant for all learners with the creation of a lab school at McMicken Elementary in 2016 in partnership with Dr. Cassie Martin from the University of Washington and approached this as an initiative for all students—not just students with IEPs because they believe inclusion is a right for every student. McMicken provided an opportunity to consider how to support student access to rigorous instruction and provide differentiation for all learners in the school. To begin the work, staff went through a process to identify what was working in their school and to come together to build a common understanding of what inclusion meant for their school. The staff then spent time in professional learning to work to identify inclusive practices to focus on and implement. Co-teaching is the inclusive practice utilized within the school, as well as targeted intervention sessions for all students. This work has had overall positive impact on students in the school, as well as staff. The school moved out of the ESSA Focus category for special education and while this was a big celebration, more important is the shift in how staff work with students and how students feel at school. McMicken is a place where every student is embraced as a valued member of the learning community by all staff.

The district will use what they learned at McMicken in other district sites so that more students and staff are impacted, and began work this spring at Hazel Valley Elementary where there is a continuum of services supporting students with low incidence/significant cognitive disabilities from Developmental Pre-school through 5th grade. This site was selected to address inclusive practices for students with low incidence/significant cognitive disabilities and to consider how to meaningfully include all students in learning environments within the school. Their goal is to continue to scale this work across the district and also continue to support co-teaching in middle and high schools through professional learning and coaching cycles provided by a Differentiation Specialist with general education and special education partners.

Other work that they will engage in over the course of the 2019-20 school year is to consider self-contained programs that have long served students identified as having significant academic, social and/or communication needs, as well as adaptive needs. These students are served in general education anywhere from 40%-79% of their day. “While we know that many students require significant support to access core content alongside typical peers, we believe we are widening the achievement gap for these students and feel a sense of urgency to consider the design and purpose of these programs.” This work will have a focus on inclusion, as well as delivery of services outside of a “special program”.

Seattle Public Schools
Seattle Public Schools has designed and implemented a “unified physical education” program. These classes are designed to bring together and pair students with significant cognitive disabilities and peers without disabilities. The course is designed to increase


TIES Center Intensive TA SEA Application
student skills by using peer supports and provide an opportunity to build relationships and friendships between the students.

**Olympia School District**

Olympia School District has a peer mentor program\(^{10}\) at Washington Middle School. This program has been in place for four years and is one opportunity for students without disabilities to work with students with significant cognitive disabilities in a special education or general education setting. One of the highlights of the program is helping students with disabilities transition from middle school to high school. Students that were mentors in middle school are ensuring students with disabilities have someone with whom they can sit at lunch, help finding their classes and are “giving high fives” in the hallway. Although this is not a fully inclusive program, it is a step in the right direction. Because of this program, meaningful relationships between students with and without disabilities have been built outside of the Washington Middle School program.

**Issaquah School District**

The Issaquah School District is excited for the forward momentum toward building a district-wide vision for inclusive practices. In Special Services, work is grounded in a belief that all students belong. In the 2018-19 school year, the district has increased staffing to support inclusive practices by adding a Director of Inclusive Practices, 15 additional special education teachers (focused on learning and implementing inclusive practices), and an inclusion specialist. Professional development has been provided for building administrators to assist in the development of the necessary leadership skills to move this work ahead in buildings. The vision is largely based on the research of Dr. Julie Causton, Dr. Richard Villa, and Dr. Jacquie Thousand; each of whom has an incredible depth of knowledge in creating inclusive schools and communities for all children. Special education teachers have also received training effective instructional and behavioral strategies for inclusive settings, such as Re-Education, Co-Teaching, and strengths-based IEP development aligned to the common core. Next year, work will continue in this area by developing three demonstration sites for inclusive practices at the elementary level and continuing staff training in the areas identified above. All of these efforts include students with significant cognitive disabilities.

**ESD 105 and 114**

ESD 114 and 105, in partnership with the SETC, are providing ongoing professional development and technical assistance to local school districts and state partner agencies (WASA, AWSP, and OSSl) on the implementation of the UDL guidelines to support classrooms, buildings, and districts, ensuring equitable access to learning for ALL students. The ESDs, in partnership with SETC, provided a UDL session at the Special Education Directors conference in Tacoma in August, 2018. District directors and school administrators attended the 90 minute session to learn about the framework and how it applies to state initiatives. On September 12, 2018, Jennifer Acuna (ESD 114), Dana Floyd (ESD 105), Kristen Leslie (SETC) presented "UDL - Designing for ALL" to State OSSl coaches and district leads. The content included specifics for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Additionally, ESD 114 provided onsite training for Cape Flattery School District, Crescent School District, Bremerton School District, and Port Angeles

\(^{10}\) https://teachspednow.wixsite.com/website
School District, as well as to the statewide English Language Arts Teacher Leader Fellows\textsuperscript{11} group.

ESD 105 worked all year with the early learning PLC groups. This included a book study using the book *Six Steps To Inclusive Preschool Curriculum, A UDL-Based Framework for Children's School Success*; Eva M. Horn, Susan B. Palmer, Gretchen D. Butera, and Joan A. Lieber. Preschool teachers met monthly to discuss the book and create lessons using the UDL framework guidelines. A presentation on UDL was also provided to the teachers over three sessions.

ESD 105 also provided a UDL 101 presentation to the Highland School District, Kittitas School District, and the Yakima School District. Two of the districts also participate in the ESD ESSA and Pre-K inclusion grant projects, which have a strong focus on UDL. ESD 105 also sent a team of four staff to Boston to attend CAST's Professional Learning Institute: Universal Design for Learning: Addressing the Variability of all learners this past April. Plans to attend the Presenter’s Academy are in the works as well.

4. Do other state systems (e.g., state agencies serving students with developmental disabilities) exist for the purpose of serving students with significant cognitive disabilities? If yes, identify the system(s) and describe the ways in which it/they might build and/or hinder the SEA’s capacity to support districts in serving all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, in more inclusive environments. Are there structures in place that facilitate SEA collaboration with these other state systems?

**Other State Systems Serving Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities**

Washington has several state agencies that support students with significant cognitive disabilities. Each organization is dedicated to improving student outcomes for students with disabilities. Below, each organization is listed with a short description of their mission and goals for students with disabilities.

**Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)—Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)**

DDA’s mission is: “Transforming lives by providing support and fostering partnerships that empower people to live the lives they want”. Their vision and values are designed to help individuals become empowered and part of the workforce as contributing members of society. OSPI has a working relationship with DDA and partners with them in activities for students with significant cognitive disabilities, designed to increase their engagement in the general population of students, especially at the secondary level where all students are preparing pathways for high school and beyond.

A state leadership work group among DVR, DDA, and OSPI has been convening since 2017 to gather input from stakeholders, develop resources and guidance, and facilitate smoother transitions from school to post-school life for students with disabilities. The work group maintains a particular emphasis on students with significant cognitive disabilities who are likely to become eligible for services from DDA. As described above

\textsuperscript{11} http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/Fellows.aspx
under Actions Taken and Actions Considered, recommendations have centered on community access, job exploration, and independent living skills.

Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)
DCYF's mission is to “Protect children and strengthen families so they flourish.” Their vision is focused on ensuring that “All Washington’s children and youth grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally, and educationally, nurtured by family and community”. DCYF values include inclusion, respect, integrity, compassion, and transparency.

The joint activities referenced under Actions Taken are directly tied to increasing inclusive access for early learners with disabilities, including those with significant cognitive disabilities.

Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP)
WATAP’s mission is: “…to provide a comprehensive continuum of services and resources to help Washingtonians with disabilities of all ages to make informed decisions about assistive technology (AT), and to provide alternative means of acquiring the AT they need…” The Advisory Council’s role is to provide input and guidance for the activities and priorities of WATAP, and to inform and educate organizations and consumers who benefit from WATAP’s programs and resources. By working with WATAP, they may be able to help provide assistive technology to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)
SEAC is a committee that consists of multiple committee members from across Washington state. Members include:

- Parents of a child with a disability;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Educators;
- Representatives from higher education that prepare special education and related services personnel;
- Superintendents, principals, and officials who carry out activities under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- Local special education administrators;
- State agencies involved in financing or delivery of related services to students with disabilities;
- Representatives of private and charter schools;
- Representatives from vocational, community or business organizations;
- A state child welfare employee;
- Juvenile and adult correction agency representative; and
- Represent cultural linguistic diversity of the state.

SEAC is established through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to advise the state superintendent on matters pertaining to the provision of special education and related services. Recommendations and positions impacting special education were provided to the state superintendent for the following topics:

- Federal and state funding
Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS)
The vision statement for CCTS\textsuperscript{12} is "...envisions a world where all individuals live with independence and self-sufficiency...". CCTS’s mission is to "...improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities". CCTS works together with OSPI and DVR to provide technical assistance to state partners, ESDs, school districts, and public schools serving high-school age students. The goal for CCTS is to promote student independence, self-determination, and self-advocacy both during and after leaving high school. CCTS supports educators by helping them use age-appropriate transition assessments and develop strong secondary transition and high school and beyond plans. Transition services include training and supports needed to develop independent living skills, increase access to employment and community settings, and to help meet post-secondary goals for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

By working in conjunction with these organizations, students with significant cognitive disabilities, and the families and school staff who support them will have additional resources and assistance for greater access to general education classroom environments, community settings, and integrated employment opportunities. WATAP is an organization that will provide technology solutions for students to better access the general education environments. SEAC helps ensure policies are reflective of support necessary to help students with significant cognitive disabilities access a more inclusive setting. CCTS focuses on providing programs to students while in high school that help students gain skills for more inclusive futures. All of these organizations promote inclusive education and supports for students with significant cognitive disabilities throughout their educational careers.

\textsuperscript{12} \url{https://www.seattleu.edu/ccts/about/}
5. Please describe any relevant lawsuits or legal action with regard to placement of students with disabilities in educational environments in which the state education agency (SEA) is currently involved and how it may impact the Washington state’s ability to participate as an intensive technical assistance state with the TIES Center.

**Relevant Lawsuits or Legal Action**

There are no relevant lawsuits or legal action with regard to the placement of students with disabilities in educational environments in which the SEA is currently involved that would impact the state’s ability to participate as an intensive technical assistance state with the TIES Center.

**STATE STRUCTURES THAT SUPPORT LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT**

6. Describe any systems-level improvement initiatives in your state (e.g., statewide MTSS, data-based decision making, instructional frameworks, UDL, etc.) currently in use in your state. Explain how these frameworks will strengthen SEA capacity to support districts in improving the active membership and learning of all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, in more inclusive environments.

**Systems-Level Improvement Initiatives**

OSPI has several improvement initiatives to help increase meaningful participation in integrated environments and to improve student outcomes through active membership and learning of all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. Each is designed to support students through designing welcoming learning environments, providing individual supports for self-determination and greater independence, and data-based decision making focused on student growth and engagement. Through these current initiatives, OSPI, in conjunction with ESDs and school district partners, can provide professional development to facilitate universal design in providing instructional and environmental supports for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities in the general education classroom setting. Included below are current state improvement initiatives and focused on the greater access for all students.

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

Collaboration between OSPI departments has resulted in the development of MTSS in Washington state, with the efforts of staff from the Office of Special Education, Office of System and School Improvement (OSSI), Student Supports, and the Office of Teaching and Learning. They have focused on a delivery framework for prevention and problem solving for all students. An integrated MTSS connects all of the academic and non-academic interventions, supports, and services available in schools and communities to support instruction and eliminate barriers to learning and teaching. Within an MTSS framework, multiple levels of instruction, assessment, and intervention are designed to meet the academic and non-academic needs of ALL students. This team has also hosted two conferences in 2018-19 for all educators in Washington state—MTSS Fest and MTSS Fest East.

---

13 [http://k12.wa.us/MTSS/default.aspx](http://k12.wa.us/MTSS/default.aspx)

TIES Center Intensive TA SEA Application
Special Education Technology Center (SETC)
The SETC provides training, consultation, technology loans, and resource information to help school districts and families implement assistive technology (AT) interventions in addressing the special learning needs of children with disabilities. The organization is a key partner in increasing meaningful access for students with significant cognitive disabilities, including a variety of resources and professional development activities in support of Universal Design of Learning (UDL)\(^\text{14}\).

Data Improvement Network (DIN)
Develop and implement cohesive strategies statewide to increase data use and data quality. Build capacity for data-informed decision making at every level of the education system by providing professional learning and support on data sources, data review, and root cause analysis using a cycle of inquiry process. Cross-departmental efforts to provide statewide special education data dives have included building-level LRE data, disaggregated by eligibility category, protocols for identifying supports for and barriers to building inclusive learning environments for all students, and discussion of evidence-based research on inclusive practices and long-term outcomes for students with significant disabilities.

Office of System and School Improvement (OSSI)
OSSI is committed to closing opportunity gaps by working collaboratively with educational partners, researchers, districts and community leaders to create a coordinated, regionalized, and responsive support and improvement model for Washington schools. OSSI provides leadership, technical assistance and resources to schools and districts to support their efforts to prepare every student for post-secondary aspirations, career and life.

National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII)
OSPI is partnering with the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) around Data-based Individualization (DBI). This program is designed to “support the implementation of intensive intervention in reading, mathematics and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning and/or behaviors needs.” The mission of NCII is to build capacity of SEAs, local educational agencies (LEA), and schools to provide targeted and integrated student supports focused on individualized progress monitoring.

National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)
OSPI is working with NCSI to improve outcomes for children with disabilities. NCSI provides technical assistance to support early intervention service programs in improving educational results and functional outcomes for students with disabilities. This organization has helped Washington state move forward in improving Pre-K early literacy through action research, supported Washington state to use the Consistency Index (CI) ensuring student outcomes. The CI reviews consistency between student Evaluations, Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and Services and compares them to student outcomes. By reviewing these components data can be gathered to make informed decisions about programming. By using CI, OSPI could improve inclusive practices for

\(^{14}\) http://www.cast.org/
students with significant cognitive disabilities utilizing NCSIs data based decision making process.

**National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)**

NCPMI is a framework for building social emotional competence within early intervention and early education programs, with a focus on: promoting the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of young children birth to five; reducing the use of inappropriate discipline practices; promoting family engagement, using data for decision-making; integrating early childhood and infant mental health consultation; and fostering inclusion.

7. Describe state/regional structures and supports that may be used or expanded upon to implement and scale up the use of inclusive practices that result in higher levels of learning for all students, and the movement of students with significant cognitive disabilities, to more inclusive settings (e.g., regular classroom environment). Please include in your description examples of services provided through existing structures, how such structures might need to be altered to meet the intent of TIES Center participation, and the amount of time and level of effort you anticipate state and/or regional personnel able to devote to this effort.

**State/Regional Structures and Supports**

Washington state has nine ESDs that work in conjunction with OSPI. A primary function of the ESDs is to support school districts through professional development, on-site support/coaching, and school improvement projects. Within each ESD, special education divisions work closely with district special education directors, administrators and teachers. Through these collaborative relationships, ESDs and OSPI Special Education division have increased capacity to expand inclusive supports and practices across Washington state.

To provide school districts training and support on inclusive practices, ongoing collaboration between special education leadership at OSPI and the ESDs is occurring to build capacity around inclusive practices that support students with significant cognitive disabilities in general education settings. Capacity-building activities will involve in-person trainer-of-trainer (TOT) sessions and ongoing in-person and virtual coaching to maximize meaningful access and inclusive participation for students with significant cognitive disabilities. OSPI received $25 million dollars in state funds for 2019-20 and 2020-21 to support and increase inclusive practices for students with disabilities statewide, which will include inclusive practices for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This two-year project includes funding allocation for contracted personnel dedicated to oversee the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the state inclusion project, which will include budgeting, data collection, and supporting activities for district and school leaders, classroom teachers (general education and special education), paraeducators, and families. The project requires extensive partnering within OSPI and with professional organizations across the state which support educational leaders, educators, parents, and school directors, including institutes of higher education educator and leader preparation programs. This initiative will support comprehensive and coordinated activities designed to increase access to grade-level core instruction through the inclusion of students eligible for special education services in general education classrooms, and result in improved
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data, as described by Indicator 5 in the Annual Performance Report (APR), and improved outcomes as measured by the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), specifically in graduation rates, English language arts and math proficiency and growth, and school quality or student success indicators (SQSS).

Following a data analysis, including the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), and state APR data (i.e., Indicator 5 data (least restrictive environment), Indicator 1 (graduation rates), Indicator 3 (participation and performance), and Indicator 14 (post-school outcomes)), a Theory of Action will be designed and implemented, with participation of representatives of the organizations described earlier. It is anticipated that funds will be used for a combination of scalable activities, including demonstration sites, school/district grants, mentors with expertise in inclusive education, and professional development that addresses the six priorities of OSPI in special education, master scheduling of schools to provide opportunities for tiered instruction and intervention including MTSS and specially designed instruction (SDI), research supporting inclusion and effective instruction of students with significant cognitive disabilities, High Leverage Practices in Special Education, Washington K-12 Learning Standards, and growth-focused IEP development designed to support access and progress in general education classrooms and standards.

OSPI is dedicated to improving inclusive education and meaningful access to general education settings for students with significant cognitive disabilities and acknowledges the foundational work necessary for fostering systems change that will authentically alter current practices. Time and effort will be dedicated to this project through the allocation of personnel and funds in order to meet the pressing need of inclusive practices for students with disabilities. Key elements of complex change that will need to be addressed include creating a common vision, determining incentives, increasing skills and knowledge, providing resources and developing an action plan. OSPI Special Education leadership is in the process of developing a data-driven, evidence-based theory of action for implementing statewide professional development in support of inclusive practices for all students with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities. To implement this large-scale action plan, additional staffing of at least 1.0 FTE will be added to support OSPI leadership across content areas, ESD partners, parents and families, community support providers, and school and district staff in designing inclusive learning environments.

8. Describe the ways in which the state’s system of educator preparation may play a role in implementing and scaling up the use of inclusive practices that result in higher levels of learning for all students.

State System of Educator Preparation
Washington state offers multiple pathways for individuals to become teachers. The traditional route consists of an approved bachelor’s or master’s degree in education. The alternative route is a program where candidates work in schools while earning their certification. This route is designed for individuals who hold an associate’s degree or higher. Washington state has a Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT)\(^{16}\) program that is aimed at supporting the recruitment and preparation for student currently in high school and wishing to be teachers in the future. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is designed for educators who come from business and industry backgrounds that have a desire to teach. There are two options in CTE: one is the college/university route with one year of industry experience, while the second option is three years of industry experience in a specific occupational area.

Currently, Washington state has 31 colleges, universities, and ESDs supporting educational programs that lead to licensure. There are 30 residency teacher programs and 24 alternate route program options for individuals wanting to become teachers.

Each university or college teacher preparation program must include seven domains of learning. These domains are:
Domain 1: Candidates and Cohorts
Domain 2: Candidate knowledge, skills, and cultural responsiveness
Domain 3: Novice Practitioners
Domain 4: State and local educator workforce needs
Domain 5: Data and assessment systems
Domain 6: Field experience and clinical practice
Domain 7: Program resources and governance

Each program has been approved through the Washington State Professional Educator Standard Board (PESB). Elementary Education standards are the following:
1.0 Knowledge of Academic Content
2.0 Understanding of learners and their communities
3.0 Learning Community
4.0 Instruction
5.0 Assessment

Within these standards are expectations for inclusive practices. This is evident in the following standards\(^{17}\):
2.B.1 Gain knowledge of the laws and terms governing student with special needs, and the implications for the classroom teacher
2.B.3 Utilize appropriate resource to investigate students’ special learning needs and identify appropriate instructional strategies.

\(^{16}\) https://www.pesb.wa.gov/pathways-workforce-development/future-educators/rwt/
\(^{17}\) https://www.pesb.wa.gov/preparation-programs/endorsement-competencies/elementary-education/
3.D Support full participation and engagement by all learners, including marginalized students.

4.B.3 Establish and communicate learning targets that are suitable for all students in the class and are adapted to the needs of individual students in order to ensure learner motivation and progress.

4.D.1 Use of a wide range of curriculum materials and teaching strategies to ensure effective instruction for learners at different stages of development and from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

5.G Modify assessment practices so that students with exceptional needs can demonstrate mastery of concepts in alternative ways.

OSPI is currently participating in TA supported by Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform (CEEDAR) to address preparation of educators, and ensure they are prepared to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities, including those with significant cognitive disabilities. This work is being conducted in partnership with special education advocates, educators, PESB, WEA, IHEs, and the Chair of Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (WACTE).

Specifically, Washington state’s CEEDAR Blueprint states, “WA-CEEDAR’s work is grounded in three Statewide Goals developed and launched by the WA-CEEDAR Leadership Team. These three goals encompass (1) Learning Outcomes; (2) Educator Workforce Outcomes; and (3) System Lever Alignments...work is influenced by the vision of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction which anchors change in six arenas: (1) comprehensive supports for all; (2) inclusive and effective learning and teaching; (3) expanded learning for all; (4) safe, effective facilities for all; (5) dual language for all; and (6) multiple pathways for all.

COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

9. Describe the level of SEA interdepartmental collaboration.
   a. What existing relationships do you have outside of special education that you believe will be assets to your participation in the TIES project to improve inclusive practices for students with significant cognitive disabilities?
   b. What relationships will need to be formed?
   c. What is the commitment to ensuring the involvement of SEA personnel beyond the state special education office?

OSPI Interdepartmental Collaboration
OSPI Special Education’s Program Improvement work group has been working collaboratively with other divisions within the OSPI structure. Special Education is working on different projects with teams from Career and Technical Education (CTE), Federal Programs, Office of System and School Improvement (OSSI), Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), Learning and Teaching, Assessment, and Student Information to identify opportunity gaps, analyze data, deliver targeted professional development, and increase access and expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
This collaborative groundwork has been initiated and fostered through current leadership at OSPI. Individual and team relationships within each department at OSPI will need to be further developed to support inclusive environments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Team members from CTE, Federal Programs, OSS, CEDARS, Learning and Teaching, and Assessment and Student Information will need access to evidence-based research, current data, and information about the collective community benefits of the meaningful inclusion of students with significant cognitive disabilities. Although Washington state is moving toward including more students with disabilities in general education settings, students with significant cognitive disabilities continue to be served primarily in self-contained special education classrooms. Inclusive education for all students will be a shift in educational service design across all levels and content areas that will require supports at the state, ESD, district, community, building, and classroom levels.

10. Describe the nature of your relationships with key professional associations and any specific joint initiatives that you believe will contribute to this work.

OSPI fosters multiple collaborative partnerships with professional and community organizations, to discuss and address changes needed statewide and within and across school districts and schools, to identify, support, and address the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities in each classroom. As discussed in item 2, these organizations include PAVE, ASAN, SABE, SAIL, ARC of Washington and King County, Roots for Inclusion, Inclusion for All, and TASH. Each of these organizations focuses on empowering individuals with significant cognitive disabilities. OSPI continues to learn from and with each organization to increase momentum toward inclusion in general education settings for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Partnerships must continue to extend beyond special education personnel and advocates, however, to make meaningful, sustainable progress toward inclusion. Activities will also include representatives from the WEA, AWSP, PTA, WASA, CSTP, and WSSDA, as well as alignment with existing efforts through state institutes of higher education with educator and leadership preparation programs, including CEEDAR, ESDs, and the state ESSA plan.

Along with these organizations, OSPI works together with Evergreen State College to develop courses offered through eLearning for Educators, a State Needs Project funded by OSPI Special Education. These low-cost or no-cost courses are designed to support educators in providing high-quality, inclusive services to students with disabilities. A sampling of courses currently offered through eLearning for Educators includes: Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction, Identification of Students with Disabilities, and a variety of secondary transition courses. This established, positive relationship between OSPI Special Education and Evergreen State College could develop eLearning course work directly related to inclusive practices for students with significant disabilities.

A professional relationship exists with Vanessa Tucker, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA a special education professor at Pacific Lutheran University School of Education and Kinesiology. She is interesting in being involved in this project during her upcoming sabbatical. She is committed to redesigning self-contained special education programs so they can:

1. Implement best practices (evidence-based, High Leverage Practices (HLP)
2. Partner with OSPI to infuse best practices and training in assistive technologies
3. Implement true academic success
4. Promote planful and successful inclusion

11. Describe the nature of your relationships with key parent associations and any specific joint initiatives with parents, and parent organizations, including the parent training and information center(s)(PTI).

OSPI Relationships with Parents
Families of students with disabilities can access supports through the Education Ombuds Office (OEO)\(^{18}\). This office provides supports for families and schools to help resolve concerns that affect students in the K-12 public school setting. OEO “brings schools, families and communities together for collaborative problem-solving”. OEO recently launched the “One Out of Five” project, a collaboration in partnership with two local educators, Adina Rosenberg and Sarah Arvey, as a guide for schools to address Disability History Month\(^{19}\).

Washington State Parent Teacher Association (WSPTA) helps advocate for student programs. “They are a respected parent voice for OSPI.” WSPTA resolutions\(^{20}\) in support of inclusive practices include Resolution 18.30, Access to General Education for Students with Disabilities, and Resolution 18.35, Universal Design for Learning. “WSPTA will advocate for better accountability regarding programs, policies and procedures...that ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment having access to the general education classroom and curriculum with appropriate supports, and learning alongside their typically developing peers...”

Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)\(^{21}\) “provides support, training, information and resources to empower and give voice to individuals, youth and families impacted by disabilities”. PAVE’s vision is “we envision an inclusive community that values the unique abilities, cultures, voices, contributions and potential of all individuals”. OSPI Special Education and PAVE are close partners in family engagement in support of increasing inclusive access to general education settings for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

These organizations support family and student voice in advocating for individuals with disabilities. Each organization provides training and resources for families in the disability community. By working with families, these organizations provide valuable input to OSPI about family and student needs, concerns, and goals for individuals with disabilities.

During the process of this application, input and collaboration was sought with parent groups in Washington. These parent groups will continue to be integral partners in collaborative efforts to increase inclusive education for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

\(^{18}\) https://oeeo.wa.gov/education-issues-topics/special-education/
\(^{19}\) https://oeeo.wa.gov/education-issues-topics/one-out-of-five-disability-history-and-pride-project/
\(^{21}\) https://wapave.org/
Washington state is at a pivotal crossroads in the delivery of special education and related services in inclusive settings for all students with disabilities, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. The state legislature, OSPI leadership, school and district leaders, and family and community partners are committed to closing gaps between research to practice, providing resources and supports for evidence-based inclusive instruction, and maintaining focus on high expectations in support of improved long-term outcomes for students with disabilities. OSPI is honored to have the opportunity to benefit from the expertise and support of TIES in expanding these collaborative, inclusive efforts.

**ASSURANCES**

The State selection criteria and rationale that will be used in identifying the states to receive intensive TA from the TIES Center are listed below.

**State Selection Criteria, Assurances, and Rationale**

The TIES Project will not enter into an agreement to provide Intensive Technical Assistance to an SEA recipient unable to accept the assurances contained in this section.

1. The state will identify districts (the number will be determined in collaboration with the state) that vary in type (e.g., by location, size, number of students with disabilities) to participate in the project and commit to serving all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, in more inclusive settings.

   **Rationale:** Work and learning with the States selected for intensive technical assistance (TA) will provide a basis for the expansion of this learning to other states, districts, and families across the country. Therefore, the districts selected will vary across many dimensions in order to increase the likelihood that the learning will be applicable and useful in other locations.

2. The state will establish a State Leadership Team (SLT) that, at a minimum, will include state-level representatives responsible for special education, curriculum, and assessment; a representative from the state’s parent training and information center (PTI); and representatives from the identified districts and other organizations (e.g., relevant state agencies, professional associations such as teacher associations/unions, etc.).

   **Rationale:** The commitment and support of state and district leaders is critical to making necessary system-wide changes, including the repurposing and/or alignment of resources, roles, functions, and structures, in order to maximize student outcomes and the effective use of inclusive practices statewide. TIES personnel will work with the state to identify a SLT responsible for working with TIES to develop a customized plan of TA. The plan will include activities, timelines, resources, and personnel devoted to the achievement of the action plan. Therefore, the commitment and active participation of the SLT are essential to the goal of increasing state and local capacity to support the use of inclusive practices that improve learning and outcomes for all children, including those with significant cognitive disabilities.
3. The state and identified districts will participate in a policy/practice review related to inclusive practices.

Rationale: TIES personnel will work with state and district personnel to gather information on their respective needs, activities, and trends related to inclusion and the instruction of students with significant cognitive disabilities. This information is not always documented or readily available but will be useful for understanding the unique status of individual States and districts. This information will not only inform TA provision, but will also increase the capacity of state and district personnel to understand and track progress made in addressing their identified needs, activities, and trends.

4. The state, and identified districts and schools, will work with the TIES Center to serve students with significant cognitive disabilities in more inclusive environments by increasing the amount of time that such students participate in inclusive environments. Specifically, the state and identified districts will:
   
a. document the quantity of time that students with significant cognitive disabilities are served across multiple inclusive environments (e.g., the general education classroom) and participate in academic instruction and extracurricular activities based on individual needs;
   
b. increase the amount of meaningful and active educational engagement with age appropriate typical peers across multiple settings and activities and;
   
c. improve the quality of instruction, including the use of interventions and accommodations supported by evidence, in more inclusive environments based on their individual needs; and
   
d. increase the capacity of the state education agency, local education agencies, and school personnel to support and implement inclusive practices and policies in grade-level academic and extracurricular settings and content.

Rationale: These four elements that are the basis of the TIES name—Increasing TIME, INSTRUCTIONAL effectiveness, ENGAGEMENT, and State SUPPORT for inclusive practices—represent the complexity of systemic change to support increased student engagement and improved learning outcomes for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The purpose of TIES is to create sustainable changes in K-8 educational systems so that students with significant cognitive disabilities will be served in more inclusive environments. In order to do this well, a commitment to addressing each element will be necessary.

5. State/regional structures and supports will be used or expanded upon to implement and scale up the use of inclusive practices that result in the movement of students with significant cognitive disabilities to more inclusive settings.

Rationale: In order for states to support districts effectively, SEA and regional personnel must have the skills and knowledge needed to feel confident in providing TA relevant to the instruction of students with significant cognitive disabilities and the use of inclusive practices. This skill development will also inform instructional programs within the state and provide a means of evaluating education policy so that the state can better support districts and schools as they use evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for all students.
including students with significant cognitive disabilities. The toolkit described below in criterion 7 that TIES personnel will develop in partnership with the state will be instrumental in determining the state/regional structures and supports that can be utilized in expanding the use of inclusive practices across the state.

6. **The state will work with parents to promote the use of inclusive practices.**

**Rationale:** Parents are essential members of each child’s team and need to be integral in the plan to promote inclusive practices. Fear and inaccurate information concerning inclusion are fairly commonplace, and strategies to address these issues will be important to the TA plan that is developed and will best be formulated with parent involvement. The State Leadership Team (SLT) must include parent representation.

7. **The state, and identified districts and schools, will participate in the collection, use, reporting, sharing, and dissemination of data related to the inclusion, effective instruction, and learning outcomes for students with significant cognitive disabilities.**

**Rationale:** A key feature of implementation, sustainability, and scaling up is an active, effective, and dynamic evaluation structure for collecting and using data. This structure will take time to build, so it is important that States be willing to establish or adapt a data system that tracks adult behavior as well as student outcomes. TIES personnel will work to develop a toolkit that can be used by states and districts in setting the boundaries for an examination and redesign of structures, processes, and practices to support the use of inclusive practice. The tools will support activities across the phases of readiness, action planning, implementation, monitoring implementation, and evaluation.

8. **The state will work with the TIES Center to design a plan for ongoing sustainability and expansion of the work to a significant number of districts following participation in project activities.**

**Rationale:** The toolkit described above in criterion 7 and its use in evaluating activities across the phases of readiness, action planning, implementation, monitoring implementation, and evaluating the process will be used at both the state and district level. This approach is intended to design systemic approaches to improvement across the overall system of education and its parts (e.g., state, region, district, school, and classroom). The use of structures and processes established across the system as a whole should support the breaking down of isolated practice, integrating and aligning resources and services, creating structures, and redesigning work processes at all levels to improve the collective instructional capacity of the system in supporting higher levels of learning for all children.

**By signing and returning this application, the recipient is providing the assurances set forth in this section.**
In addition to the required signatures below, *we encourage you to strengthen your application* by adding additional lines and include the typed name, role description, and signatures of personnel in your state that are supportive of this application for intensive TA support.
In addition to the required signatures below, we encourage you to strengthen your application by adding additional lines and include the typed name, role description, and signatures of personnel in your state that are supportive of this application for intensive TA support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of State Director of Special Education</th>
<th>Signature of State Director of Special Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glenna Gallo</td>
<td>5/30/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title of Primary Contact for the Intensive TA Application</th>
<th>Signature of Primary Contact for the Intensive TA Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Petra Heppner-Nelson SPED Supervisor</td>
<td>5/30/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
<th>Signature of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cindy P. Ruckelt, Assi. Superintendent, Educator Growth &amp; Development</td>
<td>05/30/2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
<th>Signature of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tia T. Adams, Simmons PTA School Superindent, School Improvement</td>
<td>6/30/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
<th>Signature of Additional Person Supportive of Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tania May, OSPI Director of Special Education</td>
<td>5/30/19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tracy L. Kahlo, PAVE  
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
Tracy L. Kahlo  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
5/30/19  

Dr. Connie Kliever, NEWESD 101  
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
Dr. Connie Kliever  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
5/31/19  

Laura Matson, Director Special Services  
Puget Sound ESD  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
5/31/19  

Sarah Butcher, Co-founder/Director Roots of Inclusivity  
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
Sarah Butcher  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
via email  
5/31/19  

Tammie Jensen-Tabor, Director Special Service, Tumwater School District  
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
Tammie Jensen-Tabor  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
5/31/2019  

Jeff Brown, Executive Director of Student Support Services, Burlington-Edison School District  
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
Jeff Brown  
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application  
5/30/2019  

+SEAC Chair  
+SEAC Vice-Chair
Lindsay Myatich, Special Services Director, Issaquah SD
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Date

Taina Karru-Olsen, Inclusion For ALL
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Date

Abby Bowers, Director of Special Programs, ESD 113
Name and Title of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application
Date
Stacy Dym, Executive Director, The Arc of King County

Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application

Carrie Fannin, Executive Director, Children's Institute for Learning Differences

Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application

Shirley L. Cutshall, Special Programs & Services Director, Northwest ESD 189

Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application

Dave Johnson, Associate Director of Student EA

Signature of Additional Personal Supportive of Application

TIES Center Intensive TA SEA Application