



Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) Strategic Workforce Plan

Partner Agency Endorsed
Decision Packages

Endorsed: November 7, 2024

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

Instructions:

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1. Proposal Title:

Investing in 9th Grade Success to Support On-Time Graduation

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Anna Hernandez-French

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Research from the University of Chicago's To&Through Project shows that a successful 9th grade year is a strong indicator of a student's overall academic success in high school, with those that finish 9th grade on-track being four times as likely to graduate. While Washington's four-year graduation rate has held strong in recent years with a record-high of 83.6% in the 2022–23 school year, gaps remain for some student groups, particularly those furthest from educational justice. Dropout rates among these communities are over 10%, OSPI requests funding to support student success during this critical 9th grade year.

5. What is the proposal?

It is clear from the data that some students, particularly those from historically underserved communities, lack needed supports during that crucial 9th grade year, falling behind their peers and, in some cases, disengaging from the school system entirely. Targeted investment in the Center for High School Success's 9th Grade Success Initiative will drive academic performance in high school and push Washington toward its goal of high school graduation and post-secondary success for each and every student. This investment does not represent a permanent enhancement to financial support for partner districts; rather, the program is designed around coaching and developing in-district expertise that is incorporated into larger district practice. This change in overall school culture allows the districts to eventually phase out 9th grade grant support in favor of a self-sustaining, long-term model.

Broadly speaking, once districts have had 9th grade success teams in place for an average of four to five years, receiving consistent and regular coaching, districts have shown themselves able to sustain high ninth grade on-track rates across all student groups. Once they achieve this level of sustainability, district need for external support and funding focuses on participation in the network and collaborative gatherings with other participating districts. At this point they no longer need the intensive coaching, and many elements of the program are largely self-sustaining. Grant amounts for alumni-

status districts are smaller than those in their first few years. This allows network growth with relatively stable state investment.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$3,484,000	\$3,595,000	\$3,595,000	\$3,595,000
Biennial Totals	\$7,079,000		\$7,190,000	

No FTE.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None, however this request increases appropriation to an existing budget item.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The 9th Grade Success pilot launched by OSPI in partnership with the College Success Foundation in the 2019–20 school year operated in five high schools. Over the 2021–22, 2022–23 and 2023–24 school years, the program was funded through federal COVID-19 emergency relief dollars and expanded to include 51 schools across 40 school districts, and state funding secured through the 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget will fund further expansion to 61 schools in the upcoming 2024–25 school year.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This request supports graduation and meaningful postsecondary pathways access, and supports career-connected learning. Investments in 9th Grade Success over the past few years have already paid off, with three high schools in the Evergreen School District transitioning to alumni-status in 2023. One of these schools, Union High School, now serves as a national demonstration site for other schools and districts interested in implementing this program. Rigorous, academic program evaluation of impact over three years shows Ninth Grade OnTrack rates that are 6.69 percentage points higher than comparison schools, a performance that is consistent across race and socioeconomic groups. This request capitalizes on momentum built over the past few years and continues to expand opportunities to underserved students and support student postsecondary success.

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1. Proposal Title:

Career Preparation and Launch Grants

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Tyler Muench

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington employers are looking for highly skilled labor to fill their positions. The career preparation and launch grants program helps to address this opportunity by developing a highly skilled labor force to meet the said needs of the employers. This grant program also helps students to carve their way into rewarding post-secondary pathways. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests \$6.0 million to support career preparation and launch grants. This request would offer competitive equipment grant funding to assist school districts in creating STEM based learning spaces and purchasing equipment for career and technical education (CTE) programs.

5. What is the proposal?

The Superintendent requests \$6.0 million in continued funding for the competitive career preparation and launch grants initiated in the 2017-19 Biennial Capital Budget. The Legislature appropriated \$4.0 million in the 2023-25 Biennial Capital Budget for competitive grants. OSPI received over \$9.3 million in project requests from school districts statewide demonstrating a significant need for this grant program. In response to this need, OSPI requests that funding for this program be increased to \$6.0 million. As directed by the Legislature in the 2019-21 Capital Budget, OSPI consulted with school districts and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to develop the grant criteria for the program. The proposed competitive grants would continue to use these criteria to administer the program.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2025-27 Biennium	2027-29 Biennium
State Building Construction Fund (Capital Budget)	\$30,000,000	\$6,000,000

No FTE.



7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

OSPI has long been involved in and a leader in driving new resources to districts for school and facility construction.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This request provides increased grant funding availability for schools to create learning spaces and purchase equipment necessary to provide access to high quality career preparation and career launch programs. Washington employers are struggling to find skilled workers to meet today's employment demands. Many skilled jobs remain unfilled due to an unskilled labor market. The career preparation and launch grant funds support the preparation of students to meet the needs of employers and prepare students to pursue post-secondary pathways. Programs directed to support preparation of students to pursue a rigorous higher education or immediate employment have always been supported and funded by the Legislature since the 2017-19 biennial Capital Budget. Not acting on this request would result in lost momentum on building on the successful outcomes achieved from the previous grant programs. It would result in a lost opportunity for the K-12 students to get a head start at post-secondary employability.

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1. Proposal Title:

Driving Equitable Postsecondary Opportunities from College Enrollment through Graduation

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Anna Hernandez-French

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington state has a vibrant economy that offers its residents many high-wage career pathways. However, while 70% of Washington jobs require postsecondary credentialing of some kind, only 55% of Washingtonians secure these credentials within eight years of graduating high school, leaving them unable to access these opportunities. The Washington Student Achievement Council has set a statewide goal of 70% postsecondary degree or credential completion by Washington students. However, the rate of high school graduates that enroll directly in postsecondary credentialing programs has hovered around 60%. OSPI requests funding to support increased college enrollment, particularly of students furthest from educational justice.

5. What is the proposal?

The College Success Foundation (CSF) has helped thousands of Washington students transition successfully from the K-12 system into college and focuses its efforts on students from historically underserved backgrounds. Across the nation, the Foundation serves students of whom 74% are from low-income families, 78% are the first in their family to attend college, and 70% identify as students of color. CSF supports students starting in middle school and sees participants through college completion. State investment in CSF targets and shrinks opportunity gaps for low-income students and students of color by overcoming systemic barriers to success for these students.

While CSF launched its programs serving cohorts of high-needs students within partner schools, the Foundation has transitioned to a whole-school, targeted universalism model that supports partner schools in serving all of their students, amplifying the programs' reach and impact. CSF partners with schools by providing full-time staff trained in developing a one-on-one approach for each student to help that student identify their goals and successfully apply to, enroll in, and graduate college. Students supported by the Foundation have much higher rates of college enrollment and completion when compared to their peers. In Washington, 95% of CSF students graduate high school and 63% enroll in college directly following graduation, compared to a college enrollment rate of 37% for non-CSF low-income students. By

focusing on student groups that experience the biggest gaps in postsecondary degree attainment, Washington works toward increasing its overall postsecondary credentialing rates and advances its objective of offering equitable opportunities for all Washingtonians.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$5,232,000	\$5,232,000	\$5,232,000	\$5,232,000
Biennial Totals	\$10,464,000		\$10,464,000	

No FTE

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None, however this request increases appropriation to an existing budget item.

8. Responsible Entities:

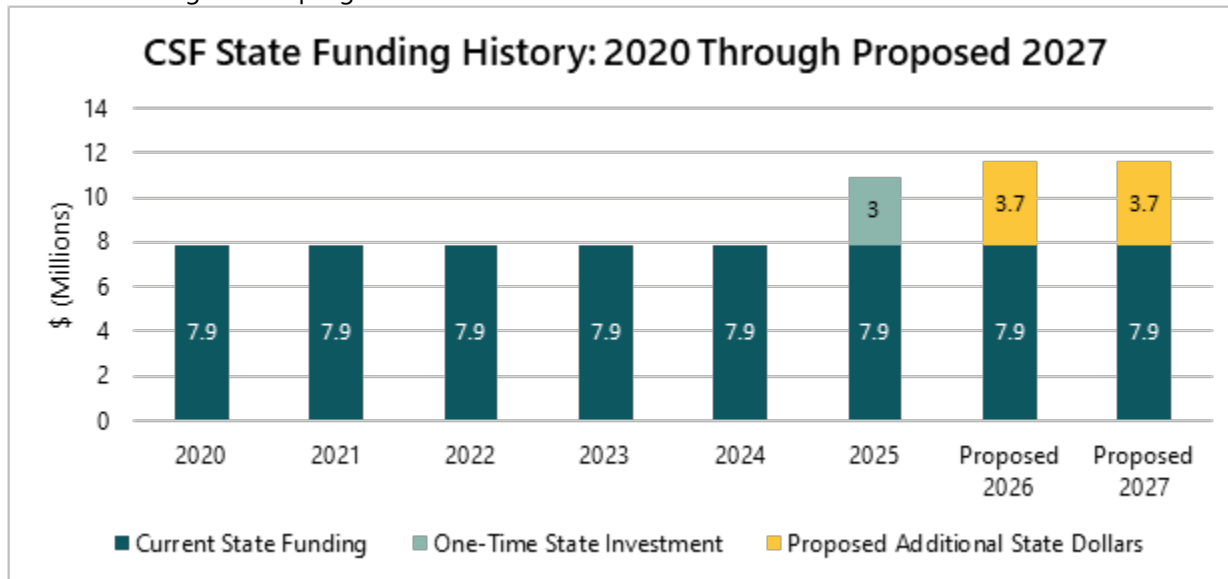
OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

OSPI has been contracting with CSF for years to support postsecondary success and college enrollment for students furthest from educational justice. OSPI requested an increase for CSF in the FY 2025 budget, and this request continues to increase funding for this program.



11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

Continues an investment currently supported through WEIA that aligns with multiple long-term and equity success criteria for career-connected learning. CSF students have higher rates of both high school graduation and direct enrollment into college when compared with their peers. CSF served 24,000 students in 79 schools across the state in the 2023–24 school year. Schools served include middle schools, high schools and colleges. Services include college and career awareness and readiness for students in 11 middle schools, support for 3,000 students transitioning into college, and mentoring and other targeted supports for low-income students. CSF’s Leadership 1000 program delivers an astounding 77% college graduation rate. This request builds on momentum created by past state investment in CSF, including a recent increase in funding. Failure to fund this request would not only hinder expansion, it would require the program to walk back on the expansion funded by the increased investment in the current fiscal year.

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1. Proposal Title:

Increasing Equitable Access to Dual Credit and Reducing Barriers to Credential Attainment

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Mikhail Cherniske

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Preparing students for post-secondary pathways lies at the heart of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) mission. Dual credit courses give students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits simultaneously which provides them with a jumpstart on determining and investing in their career pathways and future success. While dual credit represents a significant opportunity for students, students do not have equitable access to these opportunities due to the required out-of-pocket costs for participation. OSPI requests funding to support a comprehensive approach to providing all Washington students with equitable access to dual credit, making credential attainment more affordable for students and families

5. What is the proposal?

Eliminate out-of-pocket Running Start fees, support summer Running Start, and make dual credit more affordable by removing other fees in support of equitable access to dual credit for all students by:

- **Applying a multiplier of 6% (1.06) to the current Running Start rate** in the prototypical school funding model. This new rate would include tuition, fees, and book costs so students are not financially penalized for accessing their basic education through college coursework while also ensuring CTCs have the funding needed to run these programs. Our proposal phases in the increased state allocation to provide time for policy implementation. The increase in the state allocation for Running Start is an investment in efficiency as costs associated with the program will all be captured in the single allocation, ensuring costs directly follow the number of students served through Running Start. As an added benefit, this adjustment will eliminate the need for colleges to operate separate fee waiver programs for qualifying Running Start students.
- **Increasing the current Running Start rate to 150% (1.5) for the summer quarter** through an enrollment-driven increase to the prototypical school funding model. This funding strategy replaces an existing budget proviso that funds the current enhancement of 130% (1.3), which is insufficient to cover the costs of future enrollment growth, which complicates enrollment and reimbursement practices, and which is set to expire at the

end of fiscal year 2025. This new funding will increase support for the added costs incurred by IHEs and school districts, both of which experience increased administrative workloads leading up to and during summer quarter to support the submission of required summer documentation and enrollment reporting, and to provide support for high school students enrolled in summer Running Start.

- **Funding the cost of both CTCs and high school skill centers providing access to industry-recognized credentials (IRCs).** This funding will eliminate a potential barrier for student participation in dual credit and attainment of IRCs, which itself can become a barrier to access opportunities when entering the workforce. Common examples of IRCs include credentials like a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Home Care Aid (HCA), cosmetology licenses, and other specialized credentials required for employment in specific industries. This proposal expands on the Legislature’s recent investment of \$375,000 to subsidize healthcare-based IRCs required for employment. In addition, OSPI and SBCTC will collaborate to establish a qualified credentials list that reflects only those IRCs required for employment.
- **Subsidizing dual credit consortium and transcription fees** that most colleges and consortia charge either to the school district or directly to enrolled students and their families. The funding gathered by charging these fees covers real costs incurred by IHEs when entering into formal agreements with school districts, and when transcribing credit earned through student completion of CTE coursework. By covering these fees, the state can remove barriers for students and families while also providing needed support to the school districts and CTCs administering these programs
- **Covering the costs of tools, uniforms, and specialized materials** required for participation in and completion of professional, technical, and CTE programs. Funding will be restricted to high-demand programs that confer IRCs necessary for employment in their respective industries. Additional reporting requirements consistent with Skill Center programs will also be funded through this request.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$7,851,000	\$23,021,000	\$28,435,000	\$29,801,000
WA Opportunities Pathway Account	\$23,000	\$99,000	\$126,000	\$132,000
Total	\$7,874,000	\$23,120,000	\$28,561,000	\$29,933,000
Biennial Totals	\$30,994,000		\$58,494,000	

No FTEs.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Statutory Change

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

Eliminating all student and family fees connected to dual credit courses has long been a priority of Superintendent Reykdal’s. Recent efforts have been led by legislative sponsors working closely with OSPI, and recent agency-request legislation has included:

- 2020 SB 6505: Expanding access to dual credit opportunities by eliminating direct costs to students and families.
- 2019 HB 1164/SB5427: Concerning dual credit programs.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This request makes postsecondary credit attainment more affordable, and therefore more widely accessible to students and families. This increased access will in turn increase participating students’ confidence in their ability to succeed in



postsecondary education, driving higher enrollment in institutes of higher education and other postsecondary programs, and allowing participating students to attain postsecondary degrees and/or professional certifications much sooner after completing high school.

This request supports Career Connect Washington's credential attainment long-term success initiative, and supports increased access to high quality career preparation and career launch programming while reducing costs and barriers to students to access and complete this programming.

By eliminating or reducing dual credit and IRC costs to students, OSPI anticipates an increase in student participation in dual credit programs, leading to a greater number of students earning IRCs, college credit, and associate degrees while still enrolled in high school. These changes will drive a reduction in time to credential attainment and higher credential and degree completion for students continuing their college education beyond high school.

More Specifically:

- Improved Equity in Access to Postsecondary Pathways
 - Removing financial barriers will provide more equitable access to dual credit programs, particularly for students from underserved communities. This will ensure that students of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds have equal opportunities to earn college credits in high school, better preparing them for postsecondary success.
- Higher Dual Credit Completion Rates
 - With out-of-pocket fees eliminated, more students will enroll in and successfully complete dual credit programs, leading to more students earning both high school and college credits and increasing the number of students who leave high school with a head start on their postsecondary education.
- Improved Postsecondary Success Rates
 - Expanding access to dual credit opportunities will help more students build the skills and confidence needed to successfully transition into postsecondary education and the workforce. Studies show that dual credit participation correlates with higher college enrollment and college graduation rates, meaning more students will be better equipped to succeed in college and receive their degrees.
- Increased Industry-Recognized Credential (IRC) Attainment
 - Subsidizing the costs of IRCs will remove financial barriers for students, allowing more students to earn these valuable credentials while still in high school. This increased access will provide more students with a competitive edge when entering the workforce or when seeking further education and training, particularly in high-demand industries like healthcare, technology, and construction.
- Improved Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Sustainability
 - By covering transcription and consortium fees at the state level, this proposal removes the financial burden on students and their families, creating more sustainable CTE programs. This investment will ensure continued student access to CTE programs, providing students with more opportunities to gain valuable skills aligned with industry needs, and better ensure that the college credits these students earn are successfully transcribed and accessible for transfer into a postsecondary workforce or college program.
- Enhanced Workforce Development
 - By subsidizing the costs of tools, uniforms, and other specialized materials required for professional technical programs, students will be better equipped to participate in and complete programs in high-demand fields and earn the credentials necessary for employment in those fields. Removal of these cost barriers will lead to more students graduating high school with the skills and certifications needed to enter the workforce directly or continue their education and training in a postsecondary program.

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1. Proposal Title:

Funding the Successful Implementation of a Statewide High School and Beyond Plan Platform

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Anna Hernandez-French

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

The 2023 Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 5243, which charges the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) with securing, implementing, launching, and supporting school districts with adopting a statewide High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) platform. The Legislature also directed OSPI to provide updated implementation costs to the Legislature. OSPI requests funding to ensure a smooth and consistent rollout of the chosen platform that meets the requirements of SB 5243, including administration, implementation support, technical support and assistance, and statewide professional learning for users from educators and counselors to students and their families.

5. What is the proposal?

Support the rollout of a statewide HSBP tool in accordance with the implementation elements listed in SB 5243. For the purposes of this proposal, costs connected to these elements have been grouped under: State Administration and Implementation Support; Universal Online HSBP Statewide Platform Access; Technology Updates and Ongoing Maintenance; Technical Assistance; and Statewide Professional Learning.

- **State Administration and Implementation Support** – Essential to smooth and successful implementation, technical assistance for districts, students, families, and other users of the statewide HSBP platform requires state agency administrative staffing to support the statewide adoption and implementation of the platform.
- **Universal Online HSBP Statewide Platform Access** – To provide access to the statewide platform for students, families, educators, and education partners, the state will need to fund platform licenses for these users.
- **Technology Updates and Ongoing Maintenance** – Through SB 5243, the Legislature envisioned the opportunity for the universal platform to continue to evolve and improve, including the need for maintenance updates, enhanced functionality, and system customization to respond to identified local needs.
- **Technical Assistance** – OSPI proposes utilizing multiple methods to provide technical assistance to districts and platform users to support timely access for needed training. Utilizing both regional support through educational

service district (ESDs) and state level deployment will ensure tailored access to technical training, development, and deployment of an asynchronous access training available to both families and K–12 system users.

- **Statewide Professional Learning** – Key roles within the education system will receive professional development and learning around optimized use of the platform in service of students and families.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$7,255,000	\$7,207,000	\$6,486,000	\$6,484,000
Biennial Totals	\$14,462,000		\$12,970,000	

This request funds 4.6 FTE in the 2025-27 Biennium, and 4.85 FTE in the 2027-29 Biennium.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

OSPI has been designated the lead agency by the legislature in implementing 2023 SB 5243. This request is in line with work directed under this bill, specifically to provide lawmakers with updated implementation costs once a statewide vendor is selected. The selected vendor is SchoolLinks.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This investment will fund implementation of the statewide HSBP as directed by and outlined in SB 5243. Funding will support a consistent statewide rollout of the HSBP platform and successful adoption by school districts across the state. The HSBP provides the most reliable systemic opportunity to expand student engagement in career exploration across the state. This request aligns with the "Technology," "Data," " " and "Student Supports" strategies to advance equity in career-connected learning.

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1. Proposal Title:

Preparing Washington's Future Workforce with Microsoft IT Academy

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Tyler Muench

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

The Microsoft IT Academy provides Washington students with a unique opportunity to gain industry certification while enrolled in public middle schools or high schools. Residing in the home to some of the leading technology companies in the world, Washington students have unique access to high-paying jobs in their own communities provided they are given access to the pathways and skills that lead to career opportunities in technology. OSPI request funding to continue this program in Washington schools.

5. What is the proposal?

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests \$3,007,000 for the Microsoft IT Academy to expand the reach of its services, building a stronger bridge between Washington students and high-paying Washington jobs. Funding will provide access to curriculum and certification exams for in-demand technology skills for all public middle and high schools statewide. Examples include:

- Industry certification exams for in-demand technology skills for use in all public middle and high schools statewide. These certifications include subjects such as artificial intelligence (AI), data science, cloud, cybersecurity, business productivity, and coding in Python or JavaScript using the Coding in Minecraft computer science program.
- Curriculum for all public middle and high schools in the state to support the delivery of the industry certification credentials.
- Comprehensive educator support including professional development, educator materials, support desk, and engagement at events.
- Ongoing monthly reporting to OSPI leadership including an annual State Impact Report.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
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General Fund – State	\$3,007,000	\$3,007,000	\$3,007,000	\$3,007,000
Biennial Totals	\$6,014,000		\$6,014,000	

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:
None.

8. Responsible Entities:
OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):
Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The Microsoft IT Academy received \$3,004,000 in funding in the 2023–25 biennial Operating Budget, Senate Bill 5950, Sec. 522(3)(q), and \$3,000,000 in funding in the 2021–23 biennial Operating Budget.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

The importance of technology credentials to a wide range of careers and postsecondary opportunities is well-established. This request removes barriers to students traditionally underrepresented in technology industries specifically, creating more access for these students to gain important experience and credentialing. This request supports increased access for underrepresented students to career preparation and potential career launch programming.

The Microsoft IT Academy provides Washington students and their educators with a unique opportunity to gain industry certification while enrolled in a public middle school or high school. To date, the program has provided more than 625,000 industry recognized certification exams and credentials to students and educators across the state. These certifications present significant opportunities for the individuals obtaining them. There are roughly 19,000 computing jobs open in Washington state, with an average salary of \$112,623 in the computing profession. The IT Academy program provides globally recognized technology education, skills, and certifications for educator professional development and content students need to succeed in today’s workplace. In addition to high female enrollment rates, 29% of program enrollees identify as Hispanic/Latino, significantly higher than the 6.3% employment rate of individuals identifying as Hispanic/Latino in the U.S. technology sector as reported by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

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1. Proposal Title:

Making Progress on the State's Plan to Oversee the Educational Delivery of Justice-Involved Youth

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Mikhail Cherniske

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

It is imperative that Washington improve services and outcomes for students being educated in juvenile justice institutions. Access to the same fundamental educational opportunities as their peers and the ability to maintain academic progress while involved in juvenile justice programs are critical to these students' success after release. Beginning in the 2027–28 school year, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will be responsible for the delivery of basic education services to justice-involved youth located in facilities across the state. To improve the delivery of services, OSPI requests funding for the county Juvenile Detention Centers (JDCs) and for additional education advocates to support student transitions.

5. What is the proposal?

Funding for additional support for the institutional education system and justice-involved youth through immediate, targeted, and timely investments to both stabilize the current system and prepare it for change in the coming years. OSPI requests funding to support high-quality and consistent instruction for students at the 21 JDCs across the state. Currently, teachers and administrators try their best to meet the diverse, urgent, and extensive educational needs of these students within very limited resources. Current resources allocated under an outdated model are insufficient to provide the education to which these students are legally entitled, all while also supporting the significant social emotional needs of these young people.

OSPI proposes funding for one additional certificated teacher per 25 students, and no fewer than 0.75 new full-time equivalent (FTE) staff at each JDC. This additional resource will support each JDC and provide much-needed additional funding to support these institutions in the lead up to OSPI's taking on oversight of the delivery of basic education to these students.

In addition to the additional JDC staffing, OSPI proposes enhanced support for student transitions when entering and exiting JDCs, whether those transitions be to long-term facilities or back into the community. Currently, every ESD has an educational advocate to support justice-involved student transitions. OSPI requests funding for one educational advocate for each JDC, with a scalable factor of 1.0 FTE per 25 students. The addition of educational advocates to the juvenile justice system has shown great success at the ESD level, and expanding this service to each JDC will better support youth transitions and lead to better outcomes for these students.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$4,651,000	\$6,099,000	\$6,227,000	\$6,358,000
Biennial Totals	\$10,750,000		\$12,585,000	

Approximately 36.6 FTE for ESDs per formula outlined above.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Statutory Change

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

Addressing the education rights and needs of justice-involved youth has been a priority for state lawmakers in recent years. OSPI has been working closely with lawmakers following the passage of 2021 HB 1295: Providing public education to youth in or released from institutional education facilities and 2023 HB 1701: Concerning basic education services to youth who are served through institutional education programs. This request advances this ongoing work.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This request aligns with the "Student Supports" strategy to advance equity in career connected learning by supporting access for a critically underserved population.

Specific outcomes include:

- Stabilized and Enhanced Educational Services
 - With the additional funding requested in this proposal, each JDC will have more consistent and adequate staff providing educational services that are reliably delivered to all students. This additional staffing and support will lead to better, more stable educational experiences for justice-involved students, regardless of the size of the cohort at any given time.
- Improved Student Engagement and Support
 - The introduction of educational advocates at each JDC will improve the facilities' ability to manage student transitions into, within, and out of the juvenile justice system. These advocates will play a crucial role in maintaining educational continuity, reducing the educational disruption that sometimes accompanies these transitions, and supporting reintegration into communities and schools.
- Preparation for Future System Changes
 - The proposed funding will act as a bridge during a time of transition for the system itself, adding stability to current institutional education programs and laying the groundwork for the eventual implementation of new funding models and oversight structures under OSPI set to be in place by 2027. This funding will ensure that the system is better equipped to handle upcoming changes without compromising the quality of education provided to students during this transition.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

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1. Proposal Title:

Statewide Support for Student Mental and Behavioral Health

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Mikhail Cherniske

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Across the nation, students are facing unprecedented mental and behavioral health challenges that negatively impact their ability to learn, develop, and maintain their health and wellness. With roles and responsibilities assigned across different local and state agencies, the fragmented system built to support youth mental and behavioral health has undermined recent investments intended to provide support. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to strengthen the K–12 mental and behavioral health system through investments in statewide coordination and leadership, regional student assistance, and more social workers in schools.

5. What is the proposal?

OSPI requests stable and ongoing funding dedicated to state, regional, and local strategies and services that support student well-being. This proposal has three parts that address current mental health needs at each level of our education system:

- **Statewide K12 Leadership and Coordination** – By increasing OSPI's role and capacity to support K–12 student mental and behavioral health in coordination with other relevant state agencies, this proposal aligns with recommendations from the CCYBHWG and reports from the Office of the Washington State Auditor. Funding additional staff at OSPI to oversee state-level coordination and evaluation of student mental and behavioral health strategies, initiatives, and programs will help schools better identify, assess, and connect students to behavioral health supports both in school and in interconnected community settings.
- **Adding Physical, Social, and Emotional Support (PSES) Staff to Schools** – To better support students statewide, this proposal seeks funding for additional social workers in schools through a staffing increase in the prototypical school funding model. This increase will support school districts' efforts in recognizing, screening, and responding to student emotional or behavioral distress, and support adoption and implementation of district screening and response plans required under RCW 28A.320.127.

- **Fully Fund the Student Assistance Program (SAP)** – Building off success over the past few years, this proposal also funds additional student assistance professionals through the regional school-based mental and behavioral health SAP. This regional program was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic funded and by federal ESSER dollars, with funding taken over by the state in fiscal year 2024. The program’s funding was reduced in fiscal year 2025. This proposal also funds increased regional implementation of mental and behavioral health supports, including substance abuse prevention and intervention services in communities across Washington with limited access to these kinds of services.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$24,027,000	\$27,736,000	\$28,054,000	\$28,406,000
WA Opportunities Pathway Account	\$71,000	\$92,000	\$93,000	\$94,000
Total	\$24,098,000	\$27,828,000	\$28,147,000	\$28,500,000
Biennial Totals	\$51,926,000		\$56,647,000	

This request funds 4.0 FTE per year.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Statutory Change

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

OSPI has proposed legislation to create the centralized support network referenced in this proposal, notably in 2024 HB 2280/SB 6216: Establishing a statewide network for student mental and behavioral health. This request builds on current funding, which is assumed to be ongoing at the fiscal year 2025 amounts. The detailed assumptions and calculations section captures the additional funding request by activity.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This request aligns with "Student Supports" strategy to advance equity in career connected learning. Specific outcomes include:

- Improved Statewide Coordination of Student Mental and Behavioral Health Services
 - Increasing statewide leadership and support around K–12 student mental and behavioral health will lead to more cohesive and coordinated mental and behavioral health services across all school districts in Washington state. This leadership and support will reduce fragmentation and siloing of efforts across the system and create the path for the effective sharing of resources and implementation of best practices across regions.
- Increased Access to Mental and Behavioral Health Services for Students
 - With the expansion of the SAP and additional staffing allocations, more students, particularly those living in underserved regions of the state, will have timely access to mental and behavioral health services. This investment will provide more consistent and widespread support for school districts, students, and families who desperately need these services.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

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1. Proposal Title:

Maintaining Targeted Support and Expansion of the Washington Educator Workforce

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Anna Hernandez-French

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington state continues to face a persistent teacher shortage, particularly when it comes to educators who are specially trained and endorsed to teach special education. In recent years, the Legislature has invested in new and innovative educator workforce recruitment and retention strategies, including teacher residencies. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to continue state support for a teacher residency apprenticeship program that has proven to be successful, placing over a dozen special education teachers in Washington classrooms following graduation of its first cohort in August 2024.

5. What is the proposal?

Washington state public school students need competent and qualified teachers in their classrooms to provide them with their positive right to a program of basic education. The state must take immediate action to tackle Washington's teacher shortage in a way that is responsive to the K-12 system's need not just for more teachers, but for the best teachers for Washington students, requires a multi-faceted approach that casts a wider net. The state must invest in both the workforce we have and the one we want to build by funding new and innovative programs, both traditional teacher residencies and apprenticeship models that tap into both the high-quality instructional practices of traditional teacher residency programs and the proven benefits of work-based learning and compensation models. State support for more and different types of educator workforce recruitment programs will allow targeted state funding to meet the unique needs of different potential candidate pools while continuing to support existing programs with proven success in recruiting, training, and placing Washington educators. Traditional strategies aimed at recruiting candidates directly out of high school can pair alongside programs that reach out into the existing workforce, and encourage these nontraditional candidates, particularly those with experience within the K-12 system in roles like paraeducator and substitute teacher who are looking to transition into certificated educators. Programs hoping to recruit nontraditional candidates need to offer the financial support and security that make such a transition both attractive and feasible. As noted above, while the state works to address a current teacher shortage, emergency substitutes are increasingly relied upon to meet many of the

immediate classroom staffing needs. As emergency substitutes spend more and more time instructing students, it is essential to invest in connecting, supporting, and developing substitute teachers, providing the training and professional growth they miss by not going through a certification program. A modest investment in supports and professional growth opportunities for Washington’s 15,000 emergency substitutes will enrich the thousands of classrooms in which these educators are serving Washington’s students.

This proposal funds two key elements:

- Special Education Apprenticeship Residency in Teaching** – To address the specific and most urgent need for special education teachers, OSPI proposes additional state investment in an existing teacher residency apprenticeship program that has proven successful in training high-quality, diverse, special education-endorsed teachers in special education classrooms around Washington state. This state-approved program runs a high-quality, two-year apprenticeship that follows the teacher residency model combining formal teacher preparation courses and curricula with a full year and a half of in-class coteaching. Cohorts of apprentices are paired with experienced mentor teachers and supported by both a field supervisor who gives feedback and provides instructional support to members of the cohort, as well as a coach who focuses on the partnership between the program, the district, and the communities in which the program operates. Apprentices start out as paraeducators in special education classrooms, and over the course of a year and a half of in-classroom experience, gradually take on more responsibility as primary classroom instructors, always under the supervision of their mentor and co-teacher who remains the teacher of record. The program provides four clinical style rotations for apprentices to teach in different special education classroom settings such as life-skills, resource, behavioral, and general education inclusion. The rotations also occur through all the grade bands of the K–12 school. Mentors are current classroom teachers who are accomplished in their practice and understand the true impact of skillful and inclusive instruction. Apprentices also participate in both onboarding and offboarding to help them transition into the apprenticeship and then from the apprenticeship into their permanent placement as special education teachers.
- Training and Support for Emergency Substitutes** – Another important element of the educator workforce are substitute teachers, the individuals called upon to fill short- and long-term classroom instructional vacancies. The more the workforce is impacted by the teacher shortage, the more the K–12 system relies on substitutes. When no certificated substitute is available, school districts employ emergency substitute teachers to fill instructional vacancies. The emergency substitute teacher certificate does not have a bachelor’s degree requirement and has no training requirement. Many paraeducators are tapped to become emergency substitute teachers for short and longer-term assignments. While Washington navigates and addresses the larger issue of teacher shortage, it is essential to invest in the adults that serve students where certificated staff are not available. Connecting, supporting, and developing emergency substitute teachers, and providing the training and professional growth they miss by not going through a certification program, will enrich the thousands of classrooms in which they are currently supporting Washington’s students. For those interested in pursuing certification, these supports can help them grow professionally and to pursue teacher certification through an educator preparation program, including an apprenticeship program. Through five strategic investments, Washington can support the over 15,000 substitute teachers currently working in our schools.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
General Fund – State	\$9,063,000	\$12,453,000	\$15,868,000	\$19,337,000
Biennial Totals	\$21,516,000		\$35,205,000	

No FTE.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

None.

8. Responsible Entities:

OSPI

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):



10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

OSPI has long been involved in advocating for the emerging and ongoing needs of the state's K12 educator workforce and the available career pathways for new would-be teachers. Following the recommendations of the Teacher Residency Technical Advisory Workgroup, authorized by the 2021 Legislature, OSPI has submitted multiple budget requests and worked with legislators sponsoring legislation connected to teacher residencies and the educator workforce. OSPI submitted a budget request for the 2023 legislative session, *Sustaining a Strong Educator Workforce Through Teacher Residencies*, that would have funded a robust, statewide teacher residency program. That same year we worked with the legislative sponsor of HB 1565: Supporting and strengthening the professional education workforce. that would have established, among other things, a living wage for residents participating in a statewide and state-funded high-quality teacher residency model in line with recommendations from the technical advisory workgroup.

During this same period, OSPI used a portion of the agency's allotted federal emergency relief ESSER dollars to invest in a new special education teacher residency program led by the Washington Education Association (WEA). Special education was chosen as the endorsement focus for the program because it is the area of highest need across the state. WEA's program has built itself to be in-line with the technical advisory workgroup recommendations, including: ensuring a living wage and benefits package is given to each candidate; ensuring candidates have a strong network of support including a mentor with whom the candidate co-teaches to learn and practice teaching and classroom management skills across an entire school year; and ensuring candidates are training in districts that will have positions open for candidates to fill upon program completion. WEA's program has also explored and aligned itself with the state's apprenticeship model, receiving one-time federal funding to explore and establish itself as a registered apprenticeship program. As ESSER funding ended, OSPI has sought state support to continue this program, which is what this request continues.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This program is a registered apprenticeship, and one of the first in the country to provide a pathway to certification through the apprenticeship system with a focus on endorsement in special education. The program supports increased diversity of educators, and the workforce pathway for education and training. By funding this request, Washington state will prepare 28 cohorts of special education teacher resident apprentices over the next four years, graduating and placing over 400 special education teachers in Washington schools. Funding this request will also provide continued professional learning and networking opportunities to approximately 15,000 emergency substitute teachers.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

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1. Proposal Title:

Creating New Opportunities for Career-Connected Environmental Learning

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Chris Reykdal

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Anna Hernandez-French

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington state houses a number of important and ever-growing industries centered around environmental science and sustainable natural resource systems. To successfully transition Washington students into this growing and essential economic sector, these students need both exposure to environmental science learning standards and classroom content throughout their K–12 experience as well as career-informed, practical coursework offered by career and technical education (CTE) programs. OSPI requests funding to expand an existing CTE program offered by the Pacific Education Institute (PEI) focused around career-connected environmental learning.

5. What is the proposal?

The Pacific Education Institute (PEI) has developed the Youth Engaged in Sustainable Systems (YESS) pathways program to offer CTE opportunities to students interested in environmental science and sustainable natural resource systems. YESS focuses specifically on economically disadvantaged students, working with the school district to identify ways to reach underserved youth, including youth that need summer school support to re-engage in school or to provide credit recovery. Increased funding will allow PEI to continue to develop, monitor, and encourage best practices across the school districts that participate in the YESS program.

The six-week YESS program provides students opportunities to engage in hands-on, projectbased learning alongside their peers, developing their ability to work, collaborate, and communicate as a team with peers from different backgrounds with whom they might not otherwise come in contact, in addition to gaining industry-specific knowledge and skills. Students who participate in the YESS program enter the next school year with a strong support system and skills transferable both inside and beyond the sustainable resources industries

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund Source	2026 FY	2027 FY	2028 FY	2029 FY
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General Fund – State	\$1,866,000	\$2,768,000	\$2,768,000	\$2,768,000
Biennial Totals		\$4,634,000		\$5,536,000

No FTE.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:
None.

8. Responsible Entities:
OSPI.

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):
Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The Legislature has invested in OSPI’s partnership with PEI for several years, particularly in their FieldSTEM program through an Operating Budget proviso (currently Senate Bill 5950, Sec. 522[3][j]).

FieldSTEM is designed to support the K–12 system—from school districts to individual educators—to engage in and teach environmental sustainability. PEI aligns its FieldSTEM programming with state learning standards and integrates its hands-on natural science education into all subjects, fostering a deeper and more holistic understanding of environmental sustainability and the important place it holds for people both personally and professionally through K–12 and beyond.

Further capitalizing on the state’s investment by adding new funding to support the YESS pathways program will expand OSPI’s partnership with PEI into the CTE space and allow the program to serve an important economic and educational need.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

Washington and its economy needs knowledgeable and experienced workers in its environmental science and sustainable natural resource industries. As climate change presents the state with new and deepening challenges, this need is felt more strongly than ever. The YESS program Supports increased credential access for high-demand pathway critical to Washington’s environment and industries, and increases career preparation and potential career launch for students interested in this pathway.

One of the goals of an increased collaboration between PEI and OSPI on the YESS pathways program is more sophisticated data collection strategies, potentially connecting with datasets and systems such as OSPI’s Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) to better track outcomes for student participants.

The YESS program currently surveys its students each year on their experiences with the program. Nearly half of participating students surveyed in 2023 reported that they had not considered pursuing a career in natural resources before taking the program, and 50% said they were interested in a career in natural resources after completing the program. Further, 76% said that the program prepared them to pursue their career goals. Finally, 85% said that the program increased their confidence and career skills.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

1. **Proposal Title:** Agricultural Workforce Services
2. **Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**
3. **Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Josh Dye, josh.dye@esd.wa.gov
4. **Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):**

Agricultural workforce services are a central component of Washington's nation-leading agricultural economy. As the demand for agricultural workers expands and the complexity of the work increases, the Employment Security Department (Employment Security) plays a growing role in supporting those workers, the businesses that employ them and their communities. The number of H-2A guest workers in Washington has more than tripled over the past decade, and the state is now among the top five in the country for the number of guest workers. Employment Security faces increased costs associated with U.S. Department of Labor compliance. The agency also spends a great deal of time and expense on outreach to adequately support domestic workers, their families and businesses. Employment Security's investments support foreign and domestic workers and ensure the industry can maintain the stable workforce needed for the agricultural economy to thrive.

5. What is the proposal?

Employment Security seeks funding to address growth of the Agricultural Seasonal Workforce Services (ASWS) Office, as H-2A program use has increased and reflect service demands from our advisory body. This office conducts H-2A program administration and oversight.

Updated H-2A rules require states to review foreign labor applications, inspect temporary worker housing, and oversee program compliance and integrity. Despite continued growth of the H-2A program in Washington state from 2019 to 2024, and increased administrative requirements from USDOL, federal (FLC) funding has not kept pace with the increased costs of doing the work.

Base funding for the ASWS Office is provided through the Employment Services Administrative Account (fund 134, also known as the Claimant Placement Program or CPP). The ASWS Office receives \$1,632,000 per year to conduct H-2A administration and oversight activities, including compliance activities. Employment Security requests that this base funding be provided through the General Fund State account.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund 001-1 General Fund - State

The ASWS Advisory Committee has made specific recommendations to Employment Security to:

- Improve the effectiveness of recruiting U.S.-based farmworkers to clearance job orders.
- Provide more meaningful employment services to these farmworkers.

In the [2020 Agricultural and Seasonal Workforce Services \(ASWS\) legislative report](#), the ASWS Advisory Committee recommended Employment Security should:

- Connect workers and employers faster through process changes, including more direct and ongoing engagement with domestic job applicants.
- Directly inform employers of domestic applicants for H-2A job openings.
- Track referral outcomes more consistently.
- Complete a customer experience study to better understand the experience of farmworkers and employers in the ESD application and referral process.

Based on these recommendations and findings from the customer experience study, Employment Security requests state funds to support flexible positions to expand and improve management of clearance orders, which will help place more workers in these jobs.

Management analyst 4

Employment Security proposes creating a position that will create a central point for oversight of domestic farmworker recruitment, referral and placement. Follow-up on referrals is the most difficult and time-consuming function in the clearance order process for EC staff. This work is imperative for Employment Security to ensure qualified applicants are hired, field checks are performed (as required when domestic workers are placed on job sites), and workers' rights are protected. Centralizing this work will improve consistency, timeliness and reliability.

Three WorkSource specialist 4s and a 0.5 FTE WorkSource specialist 6 supervisor

The ASWS Advisory Committee recommends adding additional staff to best reach able, willing and qualified domestic farmworkers. Because existing Wagner-Peyser funds for farmworker outreach cannot be used for this purpose, Employment Security requests state funding for outreach. These staff would expand outreach to farmworkers and H-2A employers across Washington, with a focus on Central Washington, where the highest density of H-2A activity is located.

These employees would effectively be state-funded MSFW staff, with the flexibility to provide service beyond what is allowed in federal regulations.

Communications consultant 5 (0.5 FTE)

Employment Security requests funding for a communications consultant 5 (0.5 FTE). The communications consultant will:

- Conduct market and customer research.
- Create strategic communications and marketing plans.
- Create, execute and maintain web content.
- Write messaging to job seekers and employers for a variety of products.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

The state investment requested with this decision package will supplement services performed using federal dollars.

8. Responsible Entities:

Employment Security Department
Department of Labor and Industries



9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Policy Level new funding request

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The ongoing base funding for this program is \$1,632,000 per year and 14.0 FTEs. This is funded with state administrative services account. The ASWS Office receives \$1,632,000 per year to conduct H-2A administration and oversight activities, including compliance activities. Employment Security requests that this base funding be provided through the General Fund State account.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

If the Wagner-Peyser funding shortfall widens or remains unfunded, employment services to employers and job seekers will be reduced further, including services associated with domestic farmworker recruitment. Any work tied to referring and placing workers in agricultural clearance orders are required by Wagner-Peyser Act federal regulations to be performed by state merit (Employment Security) staff. This requirement limits the state's ability to rely on community-based organizations or private agencies to perform this work.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

- 1. Proposal Title:** Career Connect Washington
- 2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**
- 3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Josh Dye, josh.dye@esd.wa.gov
- 4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):**

Career Connect Washington (CCW) is a public-private partnership of more than 200 entities across Washington state focused on career connected learning. Through the career connected learning grant program, established in 2019, Employment Security has leveraged state and federal funds to issue grants to more than 180 program builders, nine regional networks, ten industry sector leaders, and other partners. These grants are active in every region and key industry sector. Employment Security requests an increase in funding to build on the early success of the program to address persistent educational opportunity gaps and meet the ongoing talent needs of employers.

5. What is the proposal?

In 2019, the Legislature established the Career Connected Learning Grant Program at Employment Security ([RCW 28C.30.050](#)) to fund creation of a statewide, sustainable career connected learning system. The program benefits Washington's employers, secondary education institutions, post-secondary education institutions, apprenticeship systems, and students.

Since 2019, Employment Security has used state and federal funds to issue 183 grants for new and expanded career connected learning programs in every region and key industry sector in Washington. These include 20 registered apprenticeships and two recognized apprenticeship preparation programs. Demand for this program continues to grow.

Employment Security requests:

- An increase to WEIA funds appropriated to the career connected learning grant program to scale up high quality career connected learning opportunities that address persistent educational opportunity gaps and meet the talent needs of employers. This additional appropriation would be used exclusively for program development grants.
- FTEs to manage the increased workload.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund 24J Workforce Education Investment Account

Employment Security requests:

- \$6 million per year (\$12 million per biennium) of ongoing WEIA funds to be used exclusively for program development grants. These funds will address a projected shortfall resulting from the conclusion of one-time federal fund investments while also allowing for a managed growth approach that funds the highest quality programs.
- Management Analyst 5 (2.25 FTE) to oversee procurement and selection of Program Builders, develop contracts, manage contractor performance, and conduct all ongoing monitoring and oversight.
- Fiscal Analyst 4 (1.0 FTE) to manage quarterly fiscal reporting, monthly expenditure accounting, vendor payments and additional workload associated with the increase in pass-through funding.
- Contract Specialist 2 (1.0 FTE) to manage increased demand for contracted services through community partners. Develops RFPs and related materials. Manages and tracks compliance with contract work.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

CCW has successfully leveraged a variety of resources, beyond State appropriations and federal WIOA discretionary dollars, to expand and enhance its programs and impact for Washington students, particularly those kept furthest from opportunity. This includes federal funding, such as the US Commerce Good Jobs Challenge Grant also known as the Washington Jobs Initiative, which provides \$23.5 million to train 5,000 Washingtonians and place at least 3,150 individuals in quality jobs. Additionally, the USDOL Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant awarded \$5.6 million to further scale Registered Apprenticeship and Recognized Pre-apprenticeship programs in high-priority industries and to underserved populations. These federal grants and partnerships with private employers have focused on creating career connected learning opportunities in high-demand sectors like healthcare, IT, construction, and advanced manufacturing, with wraparound support services such as childcare and transportation. CCW collaborates with over 200 entities, including employers, education institutions, labor organizations, and community-based organizations which contribute time, expertise, and resources.

However, these leveraged resources have largely been project-specific. As such, additional State funding is necessary to ensure the continuity of high-quality program development, meet the increasing demand for Career Explore, Career Prep and Career Launch programs, and to cover the operational and ongoing needs of the broader CCW initiative. Without additional funding for program builders and staff, the system risks limiting the future impact of existing leveraged resources.

8. Responsible Entities:

Several entities are responsible for managing and executing various aspects of CCW as a public-private partnership.

- Employment Security Department (ESD): Administers the CCW grant program at RCW 28c.30.050 and oversees grantmaking, performance management, and monitoring of grants to Regional Networks, Sector Leaders, and Program Builders. ESD is also the lead entity for the USDOL Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grant and administers grants to Sectoral Partnerships under the Good Jobs Challenge.
- Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC): Coordinates the Cross-agency Work Group at RCW 28c.30.030 - .040, reports to WEIAOB, administers Career Launch enrollment grants to baccalaureate institutions operating Career Launch programs, is the lead entity for the Good Jobs Challenge grant, and oversees outreach and reporting on program progress.
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction: Oversees funds to educational service districts to support Career Connected Learning Coordinators, administers grants to CTE programs to provide Career Launch enrollment FTE funds, and provides capital grants to CTE programs.
- Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board): Serves as the program evaluation partner for the Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grant, conducting a net-impact analysis to help ensure programs meet performance targets and deliver equitable outcomes. Additionally, as a member of the Career Connect Learning Cross Agency Work Group (RCW 28c.30.030), the Workforce Board helps coordinate workforce development efforts across state agencies and ensure alignment with statewide workforce strategies.
- The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges: Administers Career Launch enrollment FTE grants to CTCs operating Career Launch programs, capital grants to CTCs operating Career Launch programs, and manages the Career Launch Endorsement Review process required by RCW 28c.30.040(1)(a).
- Department of Labor & Industries Apprenticeship Section: Serves as the federal reporting and technical assistance partner for the USDOL ABA grant, serves on all ESD CCW RFP review committees, and provides ongoing training and technical assistance to Program Builders who are building or expanding Registered Apprenticeships and Recognized Pre-apprenticeships.

- Private sector partners, including the Washington Roundtable (WRT), Washington State Labor Council, and Washington STEM: Co-lead the statewide implementation strategy, engage private sector employers and labor partners, and provide technical assistance for program expansion and support.
- Career Connected Learning Coordinators, Regional Networks and Sector Leaders (ESD and OSPI grantees): These networks work together to engage local employers, schools, and community organizations to expand employer participation and scale career connected learning opportunities tailored to the unique needs of their geographic regions and industry sectors.

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Policy Level new funding request

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

CCW was funded during the 23-25 biennium at \$15,557,000. Base funding for CCW in the 25-27 biennium is \$14,482,000.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

CCW sought and received just enough federal funding to keep pace with the initial reach of the program. With the demonstrated success of the program, the demand for this type of resource continues to grow. Further investing in proven solutions like CCW is why the WEIA fund was created.

The career connected learning grant program was established in state law in 2019 as a direct response to the findings and intent of the legislature. Grant program funds create the career connected learning pathways that close the post-secondary achievement gap in Washington. Employment Security also competes for, and receives, federal grant funds to scale career connected learning programs.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

- 1. Proposal Title:** Economic Security for All (EcSA)
- 2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**
- 3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Josh Dye, josh.dye@esd.wa.gov

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Employment Security Department (Employment Security) requests ongoing funding to meet public demand for the Economic Security for All (EcSA) program, which was codified in 2024. EcSA is a grant program for local communities to coordinate existing poverty reduction resources so they're easier for people to access, and to help people pursue career plans to move beyond poverty. Getting people benefits when they're in need helps them move out of poverty and take part in Washington's economic prosperity. Employment Security's request includes funding adjustments for caseload, making ongoing a one-time investment, and administrative staffing to reflect the program's permanent status.

5. What is the proposal?

Economic Security for All (EcSA) is a poverty reduction initiative with a strong focus on equity. It supports comprehensive, locally driven service delivery to help people experiencing poverty achieve and sustain economic self-sufficiency. Voices of lived experience of poverty guided the development of EcSA at the Poverty Reduction Workgroup (now named the Economic Justice Alliance). Initially launched as a pilot in 2019, EcSA expanded into a statewide program, and was ultimately codified into law through [SHB 2230 in 2024](#).

Employment Security makes three requests:

- 1) Update base budget to include funding for people at and above 200% FPL.** EcSA has ongoing maintenance funding for people below 200% FPL and for business services, but only one-time funding for people above 200% FPL. Employment Security requests \$6,005,385 in EcSA's base budget to continue service delivery for people at or above 200% FPL. During the 2024 legislative session, the final operating budget funded participants in the EcSA program that are above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) with the employment services administrative account 134-1 (Claimant Placement Program) fund. The appropriation was one-time only. Under the 2024 law, this population is still eligible to receive EcSA services as "people who demonstrate financial need," however, current funding that serves this population ends on June 30, 2025.
- 2) Keep pace with increasing caseload.** Customer demand for EcSA remains high. EcSA grew rapidly during the 2023-25 biennium, serving 1,262 people in SFY23 and 2,758 in SFY24. The unduplicated two-year total was 3,404. Employment Security requests \$2,069,235 to cover services for the higher caseload.
- 3) Keep pace with inflation for business navigators.** Inflation was 8.0% in 2022 and 4.1% in 2023. This adjustment maintains service levels.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Fund 001-1 General Fund - State

Base funding for EcSA is \$15,312,000 for the current biennium. This includes covering the total cost of direct customer service to EcSA participants who begin services with an income below 200% FPL (\$12,026,000) and statewide business services (\$2,600,000) for a total of \$14,626,000. Employment Security's administrative costs are \$686,000.



Requests made in this decision package are \$9,092,120. The proposed ongoing program total becomes \$24,404,120 as a single line item in the budget.

Employment Security's budget request:

- Makes the one-time \$5,292,000 proviso for serving individuals with incomes at and above 200% FPL part of the program's base budget.
- Adjusts caseload funding to keep pace with increased usage.
- Keeps pace with inflation for business services, which was 8.0% in 2022 and 4.1% in 2023 ([Consumer Price Index, 1913- | Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis \(minneapolisfed.org\)](#))
- 1.6 FTE to support program administration of \$492,000.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

The EcSA model requires that local providers to use a bundled services model that supports participants to use any and all available training and support dollars, including Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Washington College Grant, housing, Working Connections childcare subsidies and more.

8. Responsible Entities:

EcSA is coordinated by Local Workforce Development Boards to provide services and coordinate local partner organizations. At the state level, ESD is the administrator in consultation with partner agencies and stakeholders. An EcSA Advisory Board and Technical Advisory Subcommittee ensure statewide consultation and shared leadership.

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Policy Level new funding request

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

EcSA began as a pilot program in 2019, and then expanded statewide in 2021 using federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. In 2022 the state legislature funded the model with General fund-state at \$6,208,000 per year. In 2023 the legislature added additional investments for business navigators at WorkSource centers (\$1,448,000 per year, GF-S) and a one-time appropriation to serve people at or above 200% FPL for the 2023-25 biennium (\$2,646,000 per year, fund 134 – Employment Services Administrative).

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This proposal maintains funding that would otherwise lapse in the coming biennium and allows local communities to continue providing services that work and are moving people out of poverty and into self-sustaining career pathways. In an evaluation conducted by Social Policy Research, it was found that:

- Individuals that leave the program (“exitters”) had post-completion earnings considerably higher than their pre-participation levels, with median quarterly earnings increasing by more than \$2,000.
- 13% of EcSA participants were unhoused or had recently experienced homelessness at enrollment. This proportion is almost four times higher than that reported for Washington's WIOA adult population.
- Unhoused participants experienced post-program increases in employment that were similar to those of housed participants. Their earnings gains were higher than those of housed participants.
- EcSA participants find work in higher earning employment sectors than their peers.

Employment Security and our LWDB partners wish to continue building on this success.



Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

- 1. Proposal Title:** Justice Involved Employment Support
- 2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**
- 3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Josh Dye, josh.dye@esd.wa.gov
- 4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):**

Incarceration imparts a dramatic impact on incarcerated individuals, their families and friends, communities, and the economy. Incarceration plays an insidious role in the rates of poverty, homelessness, and behavioral health issues for both the individual and their children. In Washington, 96% of formerly incarcerated people return to their communities and more than half are at risk of returning to prison. To support successful reentry into communities, the Employment Security Department (Employment Security) seeks funding to provide in-person pre- and post-release employment readiness services to justice involved individuals (JIIs) across Washington. These services will remove barriers to employment and reduce recidivism while reducing strain on our prison system and community resources for people experiencing homelessness and poverty.

5. What is the proposal?

Individuals in correctional confinement preparing to release and transition back into the community, a process commonly referred to as reentry, face substantial barriers to success. They often need help with employment, housing, education, mental health, substance abuse and medical care. These needs are challenging to navigate, and without adequate support both pre- and post-release, many return to criminal behavior.

Unemployment is a major risk factor for recidivism. In June 2018, the Department of Corrections (DOC) reported that 55% of incarcerated individuals were considered at high-risk of committing another crime (recidivate). Among this high-risk group, the most common need was employment.

Results Washington has a target to increase the percentage of justice involved adults who are employed post-release from 30% to 40%. The state is not meeting that target. Employment Security needs staffing and strategies to help people with criminal records, including the approximately 19,276 released justice impacted individuals (JII) across the state on DOC Active Supervision, find employment and find it faster. If the state does not provide more intensive reentry employment support, Washington will continue to experience high rates of recidivism.

In 2016, Governor Inslee signed Executive Order 16-05, "Building Safe and Strong Communities Through Successful Reentry." The order specifically calls for Employment Security, as the state workforce agency, to:

Facilitate access to the statewide WorkSource system for Department of Corrections (DOC) ... so that they may input employment and training information obtained by incarcerated individuals to better assist the Employment Security Department (Employment Security) in helping these individuals plan for new careers upon release by connecting them to training programs and employment opportunities.

Employment Security proposes a sustainable reentry model so WorkSource can be more proactive and support JIIs before their reentry. This comprehensively supports the transition from correctional facility to employment. The reentry model includes 1) dedicated staff to support this population in each region at multiple WorkSource locations (where appropriate), including Employment Security staff working within DOC facilities, 2) standardizing levels of service, marketing, engagement, and data collection statewide, 3) reintroducing Employment Security enrollment, employment and training services in all DOC facilities, and 4) enacting seamless "warm handoffs" to counties of destination from every state correctional facility.

This proposal will improve employment outcomes for the reentry population and significantly improve outcomes for BIPOC communities, as they have been most subject to incarceration and its consequences. Black and American Indian or Alaska Native people in Washington are incarcerated at a rate over five times higher than white people. Building a statewide reentry system to support JIIs will help people find gainful employment, break the cycle of poverty and increase equity for BIPOC communities.

This proposal creates dedicated reentry positions within Employment Security. These positions will prepare JIIs for their transition to employment in the community, engage businesses across the state to identify employers willing to offer job opportunities and provide resource and system navigation so JIIs get the help they need —such as housing, transportation, clothing, and mental health services — to stay employed.

Improved employment outcomes lower poverty, homelessness, and crime in communities, and provide a greater tax base for communities to draw upon. Improving employment outcomes for this population reduces recidivism, resulting in significant savings for taxpayers.

This program will provide all these benefits to the community, while simultaneously improving the quality of life that JIIs experience after release. It does this by offering supportive services customized to the reentry population's unique needs, removing barriers to employment as well as providing access to skills and training to be successful in employment.

This proposal positions Employment Security to provide an array of employment services within DOC facilities, in collaboration with DOC Reentry Navigators. These services include:

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Employment Security requests \$14M in General Fund – State funding for the 2025-2027 biennium. To successfully launch this program Employment Security requests 41.1 FTEs and staff training dollars.

These positions will include Reentry Employment Specialists to provide employment services to people who will soon be released, Reentry Business Engagement Specialists to build a community of employers willing to employ this population, and Resource System Navigators to help JIIs navigate resources to retain employment (e.g. housing, transportation, clothing, food and mental health services).

Additional staff are requested to manage the program, supervise staff located in 19 different locations across Washington, to develop and maintain state policy guidance, provide analysis of the program, to collect business and case management system functional and technical requirements, as well as reporting and data requirements and to promote and market the Justice Involved Employment Services program statewide.

Staff training to support this program includes National Reentry Workforce Collaborative Reentry Specialist Training for all staff who work directly with the JII population, training for safety and to counter bias, stigma and fear for all staff and partners in the WorkSource offices who may see an increase in reentry customers and general legal and policy training about legal financial obligations, local and federal equal opportunity employment guidelines, and how to vacate convictions for Justice Involved Employment Services program staff.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

Employment Security would leverage existing staff and ensure participants receive information about other programs and funding available through WorkSource and system partners.

The support of key partnership organizations is also a high value leveraged resource. This model was developed in close coordination with the following organizations:

- The **Statewide Reentry Council** (SRC, part of the Department of Commerce) advocates for Washington state laws, investments, and attitudes that improve reentry outcomes and increase public safety by supporting equitable systems that are more humane and restorative.
- The **Center for Justice and Human Dignity** (CJHD), a national organization focused on safely reducing incarceration across the United States; improving conditions for incarcerated individuals and correctional staff, and promoting successful reentry and reintegration.
- The **Department of Corrections** (DOC), the entity managing all state-operated adult prisons and supervises adults on community supervision who live in the community.

8. **Responsible Entities:** Employment Security Department, Department of Corrections

9. **Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):** Policy Level new funding request

10. **What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)**



Employment Security's carry-forward level for the re-entry program is \$2,318,000 per year and 20 FTE beginning in fiscal year 2020. Those funds are currently being used to support direct services for job seekers with criminal convictions in WorkSource centers across the state, reentry initiatives by local teams to engage incarcerated individuals inside DOC facilities and funding of a dedicated Employment Security Reentry Manager position.

Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This comprehensive proposal has the greatest chance of success. This package establishes an operational baseline for a standard program serving the statewide reentry population as they return to communities across Washington. It supports reentry customers at every step from transitioning out of prison to getting — and keeping — a job.

The decision package places services in prisons as well as reentry centers. It includes warm handoffs to people's counties of destination and will help them navigate resources to overcome barriers in their community. It also builds a network of employers willing to hire people transitioning out of prison. This level of support would reduce recidivism statewide and meet the executive order.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

1. **Proposal Title:** Washington Service Corps
2. **Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**
3. **Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Josh Dye, josh.dye@esd.wa.gov
4. **Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):**

Since 1983, the Washington Service Corps (WSC) has been a leader in civic engagement, developing and strengthening communities. The current funding model is not sustainable, leading to fewer resources going to organizations that fight to support communities in need. Employment Security proposes increasing state resources to sustain those valiant efforts and front-line organizations making a difference. This investment will fill that gap between federal funding and programmatic needs, ensuring the program will continue as designed to support those communities most in need and honoring those long-standing partnerships that have made positive impacts across the state for more than 40 years.

5. What is the proposal?

The WSC's purpose is to secure, implement and maintain federal AmeriCorps grants through the state commission, Serve Washington. It partners with community host organizations to run annual projects and provide customers access to AmeriCorps programming. This programming allows members in AmeriCorps positions to help Washington nonprofit organizations, schools and agencies that do not have the bandwidth or funds to manage AmeriCorps grants but have communities who require access to these vital groups.

Through this model, WSC provides AmeriCorps positions, stipends, health care, education awards, oversight, training and support to these groups as they implement projects. The program has new and long-standing community partnerships, and a reputation for positive impacts across Washington.

Federal AmeriCorps grants require supplemental funding from the grantee's own agency and partner organizations. This creates a three-pillar funding model for a functioning program. For the past decade, WSC has operated on only two funding pillars: 1) The federal AmeriCorps grants and 2) a community match from host site fees.

This gap widens every year due to program and cost of living increases. Funding from AmeriCorps has not kept pace with increases, so the program must continually increase its host site fees. This makes the program less affordable to organizations and more difficult to deliver programming. WSC needs to reinstate the third pillar of state funding to cover annual core operating costs, recover from reduced staffing and reduce host site fees.

WSC has managed federal grants and programming for over 40 years. In previous years, it had proper staffing to support and operate its efforts. However, WSC has not had agency funding to fully support program operations since 2011. The program currently has the smallest number of staff in over a decade. WSC is minimally staffed due to under-filling program enrollment targets because of post pandemic impacts to local economies.

Current funding structure:

Since 2011, WSC has operated on a fixed-amount grant through AmeriCorps. A fixed-amount grant does not allow AmeriCorps funds to cover administrative costs (WSC staffing costs make up 55% of the program's operational costs). This requires WSC to find additional revenue. Beginning in 2011, Employment Security was unable to continue funding the program, requiring WSC to increase its host site fees to fill its funding shortfall.

These host site fees cover the remaining 20% of member living allowance costs and all operational costs. In addition to staffing costs, operational costs include healthcare coverage for members, formal training for members and site staff and external program evaluations required by AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps recently announced that effective federal fiscal year 2025 it will increase the required minimum living allowance to \$20,400 – an increase of \$2,800 – without also increasing the amount of funds a grantee can request to make up for the increase. This means the burden to meet the minimum living allowance and operate the program under the

current funding model will fall to host sites. This will also force WSC to further increase its host site fee to compensate, and as demonstrated in recent increases, which will very likely result in the loss of some of its current sites.

Employment Security proposes to secure state funding to sustainably pay for WSC staff costs. This will significantly reduce the host site fees and make the program more attractive and affordable to potential hosts. This funding would allow WSC to regain essential staffing levels and successfully operate the program with high-quality support for sites and members.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

Employment Security requests \$2.064M per fiscal year in General Fund-State dollars to fund 13.5 FTEs to administer the Washington Service Corps program.

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

- AmeriCorps federal grant – funding is on a three-year grant cycle and funds the member stipends.
- Operating budget generated from host site fees from partnering organizations.

8. **Responsible Entities:** Employment Security, Washington Service Corps

9. **Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):** Policy Level new funding request

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

Annual revenue from host site fees depends on the number of host sites and enrolled members, so it is subject to change based on factors not within WSC's control. The current employment market and high costs of living in many counties affect member enrollment and budget shortfalls at sites affect the number of sites who can afford to host a member.

By default, these small entities are not large-revenue organizations. They rely heavily on volunteers, so WSC tries to keep its minimum host site fee as low as possible each year. But over the past five years the program had to raise the host site fee by 12% due to increased costs, most notably the cost of employee salaries has risen 21%, the cost of member health insurance has risen 9%, and the minimum member living allowance set by AmeriCorps has increased by 28%.

A steady decline in member enrollment and host sites results in less revenue in the face of steadily rising operational costs year-over-year. It puts a huge strain on the program. A stable, consistent funding source is necessary to allow the program to sustain current programming and pivot to grow to meet the needs of the state.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

WSC has explored other funding opportunities over the past four years. The program received funding from the Schultz Family Foundation, Washington state Department of Agriculture and Washington state Department of Commerce to support its efforts to help reduce food insecurity, and from the Washington State Libraries to support efforts in digital literacy. This funding helped offset host sites fees, provide broader access to WSC for small organizations and create successful community outcomes and member experiences. However, these funding sources offered little to no funding allowances to support staffing costs. This directly affected existing WSC staff. It caused more stress on the program staff to perform and meet funding requirements while conducting their normal duties. These funding opportunities were temporary, short-term solutions that did not offer long-term sustainability for WSC and their host sites.

The proposal to secure state funds to cover current staffing costs provides the program with a sustainable, long-term solution to stabilize the operating budget, regain appropriate staffing levels to operate the program and develop a host site fee structure that is equitable and accessible for organizations of any size to partner with WSC.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

Instructions:

This form is to be completed by state agencies interested in the Workforce Board members potentially endorsing their decision package(s) for inclusion on the Board's workforce system endorsement list for 2025. Please use a separate form for each project.

Submission Details & Due Date:

All requests for consideration of endorsement must be sent to nova.gattman@wtb.wa.gov **no later than 10:00 am Oct. 8, 2024**, to ensure timely review by the Endorsement Committee. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The Endorsement Committee will review all proposals for alignment with TAP goals and those with the potential for broad consensus across Board partners. The Committee may invite a short presentation and Q/A. The final list for consideration will be reviewed at the Nov. 7 Workforce Board meeting for full Board approval.

1. Proposal Title:

Integrated Eligibility & Enrollment Roadmap Continuation

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

Terry Redmon, Assistant Secretary, Economic Services Administration, Department of Social and Health Services

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

Seth Nathan, seth.nathan@dshs.wa.gov

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

This decision package requests funds, in partnership with the Health and Human Services Enterprise Coalition, to continue implementation of the [Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment \(IE&E\) Roadmap](#). This includes funding for the continued implementation of an accessible, mobile-first Health & Human Services Portal to enable Washingtonians (clients, navigators, community partners) to apply for and enroll in multiple HHS programs efficiently. It also supports continued IE&E Roadmap investments in case worker portal implementation and associated supporting capabilities to improve service for clients, staff, and external partners.

5. What is the proposal?

This request includes funding to implement the following IE&E Roadmap capabilities that essential to transform the customer and staff experience, and reduce reliance on legacy mainframe systems. The IE&E Program will focus on capabilities that can be purchased or transferred from other states, reducing the risks associated with custom software development. Details of the capabilities to be implemented in this biennium are described below.

- **Health and Human Services Portal:** Clients and external partners will be able to conduct pre-screening to quickly determine potential eligibility for HHS programs. Clients and external partners will be able to apply for multiple programs, including providing documentation and other materials to support initial eligibility determinations, as well as renewals/eligibility reviews.
- **Case Worker Portal:** Staff and external partners will be able to manage benefits applications, client information, and access third-party sources of information (e.g., e.g., Income Verification Express Service [IVES], Asset Verification System [AVS], State Data Exchange [SDX]) in order to make eligibility determinations for initial applications, renewals/eligibility reviews, and any changes in circumstances.

- **Core Supporting Capabilities:** In addition to key client and staff portals and functions, a number of capabilities will be implemented to support core eligibility functions. These include:
 - **Modernized Customer Support:** This provides customers with advanced, multi-channel ways to interact with HHS programs and staff (e.g., through modernized voice response systems, telephonic signature, potential AI chatbot), with the least effort and clarification needed.
 - **Reporting and Analytics:** This capability will allow staff across the IE&E lifecycle to conduct analyses through a centralized platform for standard reporting (e.g., federal mandated reports, formal research reports) or ad-hoc analyses (e.g., transactional data to support performance management and coaching, reporting in response to requests from internal or external partners).
 - **Document Management, Communications Center, Letter Generation & Print:** Documents provided by clients, and associated metadata, are uploaded, retained, and organized for staff members to access and review, including intelligent processing of paper documents. Clients, staff, or external partners receive communications (e.g., push, email, SMS) with updates on applications, eligibility status, etc. Clients receive paper or digital documents that detail updates on their case.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:
\$277,014,000 (\$82,701,000 GF-State) and 121 FTEs

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

This funding request builds upon existing maintenance level activities and IE&E activities previously funded by the legislature.

8. Responsible Entities:

DSHS, WaTech and other HHS Coalition members.

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The IE&E Program has completed investments in existing eligibility systems, specifically the DSHS Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES) Complex, including migrating to a modern database solution, transitioning maintenance and operations vendors, and moving mainframe operations to the WaTech managed mainframe services hosted by Ensono.

On the modernization journey, the IE&E Program has launched the foundational cloud platform in Microsoft Azure and is launching the first client-facing solution (MyWABenefits) in November 2024, giving clients access to their eligibility & enrollment status across programs. The IE&E Program has also conducted human-centered design of applications, renewals and correspondence to identify ways to improve these key touch points from a client perspective.

Lastly, the IE&E Program has refreshed the overall [IE&E Program Roadmap](#) and is establishing the roadmap for the HHS Portal in Fall 2024.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

More than three million vulnerable Washingtonians access their full potential through more than 75 health and human services programs, such as Medicaid, Basic Food, childcare, and cash assistance. Over one million Washington residents are served by programs in at least two HHS Coalition agencies, and more than 200,000 clients are served by at least three agencies. These Washingtonians, particularly those served by multiple organizations, are faced with providing the same information to multiple organizations through lengthy applications that are not all currently available online or in mobile-responsive formats. Client eligibility, enrollment, and case management for all the programs supported across the HHS Coalition organizations are each dependent on a complex web of IT systems.

Implementation of this project will lead to a reduction in the time spent applying for benefits, greater accuracy in information received from clients, improved user experience for applicants and staff, and reduced benefits churn by

enabling clients to recertify benefits quickly and easily. This project adds value to the Washington’s workforce system’s integrated service delivery goals by ensuring customers can access the resources they need to advance on their individual career pathways. This proposal also aligns with Strategy 2 of the Governor’s Poverty Reduction Workgroup [10-Year Plan to Reduce Poverty and Inequality in Washington State](#) and the [Five-Year Plan to Reduce Intergenerational Poverty and Promote Self-Sufficiency](#), of the Legislative-Executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force, which is to *“Build an integrated human service continuum of care that addresses the holistic needs of children, adults, and families.”*

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

Instructions:

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Submission Details & Due Date:

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The Endorsement Committee will review all proposals for alignment with TAP goals and those with the potential for broad consensus across Board partners. The Committee may invite a short presentation and Q/A. The final list for consideration will be reviewed at the Nov. 7 Workforce Board meeting for full Board approval.

1. Proposal Title:

2. Behavioral Health Provider Supervisor Stipend Program

3. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

N/A – Washington State Department of Health

4. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

kelly.cooper@doh.wa.gov

5. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington is seeing more people struggling with mental health issues, substance abuse, and feeling disconnected. This funding will help with services like suicide prevention, support for pregnant and parenting individuals, and building strong communities for young people.

6. What is the proposal?

Linked here: <https://abr.ofm.wa.gov/api/public/decision-package/summary/78184>

In Washington, the cost of meeting supervised experience requirements can be a significant obstacle to becoming licensed as a behavioral health provider. The behavioral health supervisor stipend program, which was not fully funded in the 2024 budget, is seeking \$3,566,000 in ongoing biennial funding to address this issue. This program was established through Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2247 and House Bill 1724 to help offset the expenses associated with supervising associates completing their supervised experience requirements.

Eligible supervisees under this program include:

- Licensed independent clinical social worker associates (LICSW-A),
- Licensed advanced social worker associates (LASW-A),
- Licensed mental health counselor associates (LMHC-A), and
- Licensed marriage and family therapist associates (LMFTA).

Eligible supervisors include:

- Licensed mental health counselors (LMHC),
- Licensed marriage and family therapists (LMFT),
- Licensed independent clinical social workers (LICSW),
- Licensed advanced social workers (LASW),
- Psychologists,



- Psychiatric advanced registered nurse practitioners (ARNPs), and
- Psychiatrists.

E2SHB 2247 stated the department shall establish the stipend program no later than July 1, 2025. The legislature appropriated funding to fully cover the costs of starting the stipend program, but not the full amount for the stipends themselves moving forward.

This proposal requests \$3,566,000 (GF-S) in ongoing biennial funding for the supervisor stipend program

7. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

FY 2026 costs: 0.2 FTE and \$1,631,000 (GF-S)

FY 2027 costs: 0.3 FTE and \$1,935,000 (GF-S)

8. Potential Leveraged Resources:

N/A

9. Responsible Entities:

Washington State Department of Health

10. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Proviso

11. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The initial Behavioral Health Workforce Report, in response to 2SHB 1724, was presented at the December 6, 2023 hearing of the Joint Select Committee on Health Care and Behavioral Health Oversight.

Presentation linked here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/committeeschedules/Home/Document/263216>.

12. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

This is a crucial time in Washington as there is a behavioral health crisis, particularly in the areas of opioids, suicides, and overdoses. The shortage of behavioral health workers is making the situation worse. Increasing the number of behavioral health providers in the workforce will help tackle these urgent issues. This proposal is the most effective solution as it will enable the department to fully implement the stipend program for all eligible associate supervisors.

The department assumed that 20% of eligible supervisors would participate in this program for a total of 1,756 associates for the 2527 biennium.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

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1. Proposal Title:

Improving Credentialing Timelines

2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):

N/A – Washington State Department of Health

3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:

kelly.cooper@doh.wa.gov

4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

Washington is facing a severe health care workforce shortage that creates barriers to residents receiving needed services. In response, the Department of Health (DOH) took significant actions to transform its approach to credentialing. This funding request is for an additional year to continue implementing the department's health professional credentialing improvement work and maintain an existing improvement team.

5. What is the proposal?

Washington is facing a severe health care workforce shortage that creates barriers to residents receiving needed services. In response, the Department of Health (DOH) took significant actions to transform its approach to credentialing. This funding request is for an additional year to continue implementing the department's health professional credentialing improvement work and maintain an existing improvement team.

The department regulates over 388,000 health professionals across 85 health professions. This vast scope underscores the need for streamlined processes to manage the sheer volume of professionals and credentials efficiently. In 2023, the department received 82,867 credentialing applications and issued 63,324 new credentials, working to ensure qualified applicants can quickly move into the workforce. Currently, the average time between an application and credential issuance is 121 days, compared to last year at 93 days. The number of pending applications to date is 50,147, compared to 41,351 in 2023. Reasons for these delays vary across professions and include waiting on official transcripts, exam results, validation of supervised hours or internships, and other factors. The department acknowledges that these numbers are too high and that it will take some time to course correct this large body of work.

Faster credentialing ensures timely deployment of skilled practitioners where they are needed most. Over the last biennium, the department has started to turn this work in a different direction, including starting to apply

recommendations from 2SHB 1724 (2023) listening sessions and the Pathways Pilot to improve credentialing timelines for psychologists, which the department partnered on with Results Washington.

This proposal requests funding to continue implementing the department's health professional credentialing improvement work. This will reduce backlogs for all health professions that the department regulates and decrease the time between when a person applies for a credential and when they are issued a credential. Continuing to invest in this work for an additional year will allow the department to apply these learnings and determine sustainable funding and staffing models. Key strategies involve implementing process improvements, such as data-driven management, and improving information access for applicants.

For this proposal, the department's staffing strategy is to maintain credentialing positions from an investment the legislature made last biennium for an additional year. During this time, the department will finalize a sustainable plan for this ongoing credentialing improvement and continue to implement the improvements it is already executing. With such a large project and body of work – spanning 85 professions and multiple complex business areas, this will allow the department time to determine appropriate future staffing needs.

This is an opportune time to address credentialing implementation for several reasons:

- Washington state is experiencing a health care workforce shortage, especially in behavioral health and long-term care settings. It is imperative that the workforce meets the needs of all Washingtonians and that there are no barriers in accessing quality health care.
- Credentialing backlogs have been increasing over the last year few years, as well as the time between when the department receives an application and when a credential is issued.

Due to recent funding, the department has made increasing improvements to its credentialing work that it is starting to apply to all professions it regulates. To start, the department is focused on tackling the professions with the highest backlogs – behavioral health and long-term care.

For the first time since before the pandemic, the department is resolving (e.g., issuing, closing, or denying) the same number of credentials as applications received each month. To fully address credentialing backlogs, however, the department needs to resolve more credentials than the number of applications received, for a significant period of time. This proposal will considerably help the department work toward that goal.

Another way the department is improving its credentialing work and addressing backlogs is by targeting review of the extensive supplemental application materials the department receives with applications and intake processes. Recently, the department is starting to see improvements in these two areas for behavioral health and long-term care professions. Examples include:

- The number of supplemental materials reviewed for behavioral health professional applications was reduced from 2,278 in 2023 to 1,084 currently. (-52%)
- The number of supplemental materials reviewed for long-term care workers (i.e., home care aides) went from 5,851 in 2023 to 3,183 currently. (-46%)
- The number of intakes (i.e., new applications pending review) for behavioral health professional applications was reduced from 1,174 in 2023 to 705 currently. (-40%)
- The number of intakes for long-term care workers (i.e., home care aides) was reduced from 5,204 in 2023 to 4,670. (-10%)

This proposal is needed to continue these backlog improvements for behavioral health and long-term care professionals, as well as implementing these improvements for all other professions.

This proposal is the best option for rapidly improving credentialing timeframes and addressing the above issues. It will yield the fastest benefits for applicants, their employers, and Washingtonians needing health care services.

The department is continuing to use real-time data and new performance metrics, to ensure the credentialing process is streamlined and effective for applicants in all health professions. With additional funding from this proposal, the

department will continue to apply improvement frameworks to all the professions it regulates. This includes intense engagement with customer feedback, data-driven management, appropriate staffing and resource allocations, creation of nimble and program-specific teams, timeline target setting based on regular data updates, and updating written materials, websites, FAQs, applications.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:
FY 2026 costs: 60.6 FTE and \$6,363,000 (GF-S)

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:
N/A

8. Responsible Entities:
Washington State Department of Health

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):
Proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

The initial Behavioral Health Workforce Report, in response to 2SHB 1724, was presented at the December 6, 2023 hearing of the Joint Select Committee on Health Care and Behavioral Health Oversight.

Presentation linked here: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/committeeschedules/Home/Document/263216>.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

Funding this request will maintain current staffing and contractual investments to address significant delays in credentialing health care providers. Currently, the average number of days between application and issuance of a credential is 121 days. The department wants to reduce this number. Addressing this issue will increase access to qualified providers and improve access to care for all Washingtonians.

The department's most important expected outcome is to apply the learnings and improvements the department made in its recent Pathways Project pilot to improve credentialing timelines for psychology, as well as the department's 2SHB 1724 (2023) listening session.

Key expected outcomes include:

Bring credentialing timelines for all professions that the department regulates to an acceptable and appropriate level. This includes determining ideal timelines for each profession and setting incremental goals to ensure the department meets those timelines.

- Establishing a robust set of performance metrics for all professions the department regulates and outward facing dashboards for the public to see the department's metrics and goals.
- Finalize a sustainable staffing levels plan for ongoing credentialing improvement work.
- Establish sustainable, nimble, and program-specific credentialing teams.
- Increase transparency of credentialing work for customers and other interested parties.
- Improve long-term credentialing stability by producing staffing models to project future needs.
- Ensure resources are properly aligned and can be fully supported by professional licensing fees.
- Streamline credentialing processes.
- Improve quality and availability of information for applications across professions.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

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1. **Proposal Title:** Health Workforce in Rural Areas

2. **Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):**

3. **Staff Contact for the Proposal:** Kelly Shaw, Director, Health Workforce and Primary Care Systems Development, WA Department of Health, 360-48-8693, kelly.shaw@doh.wa.gov

4. **Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):**

The 2023-24 Legislature appropriated funding for the development of a Rural Nursing Education Program. This program has been designed and developed and it is now ready for full implementation. The fully online Rural Nursing Education Program (RNEP) was developed in collaboration with community colleges and rural healthcare facilities. WABON consulted with the Department and program leaders during development to assure state educational standards are being met.

Health Professional Shortage Area designations are critical to our state's rural and underserved communities by making them eligible for various state and federal programs, including loan repayment through the Washington Health Corps and the National Health Service Corps. In order to meet the increased number of potential designations (currently over 1,100 in WA), additional staff resources are needed.

5. **What is the proposal?** The Department of Health is requesting funds to implement RNEP's 100% online associate degree Registered Nursing program. RNEP will provide education and clinical training for individuals in rural communities, with lower incomes and fewer resources, to become licensed Registered Nurses (RNs) while remaining in their own communities. The program also provides wrap-around services, such as tuition assistance, tutors, childcare, travel expenses, computers, and food security to support the rural students during their education and training. The program aims to sustain lasting change to a nursing pathway ultimately improving access to quality care for people living in rural Washington. The decision package requests FTE and program expenses.

The Department is also asking for a 1.0 FTE position to assist in surveying over 4,000 healthcare professionals required to designate Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) and Maternal Care Target Areas (MCTAs), gathering and analyzing data, The Department currently has .65 FTE dedicated to this work.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

<u>Rural Nursing Education Program</u>			<u>FTE</u>
	FY2026	FY2027	
Total	1,006,122	1,281,092	2.7
<u>Shortage Area Designation (HPSA)</u>			
	FY2026	FY2027	
Total	143,702	139,733	1.0

7. Potential Leveraged Resources: The department submitted a HRSA grant to fund this program for four years. Unfortunately, that grant was approved, but not selected for funding. Critical Access Hospitals are providing tuition reimbursement for some pre-requisite courses, but they do not have funds to pay for the entire nursing program.

8. Responsible Entities: WA Department of Health, rural healthcare facilities, community college partners.

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other): Agency decision package.

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.) The Department received a budget proviso last legislative session to develop the program, but did not receive funds for implementation. The Department has worked with a small group of people over the past two years to develop the program. We have presented the program to rural hospitals and community colleges and have selected 5 rural communities (Othello, Davenport, Grand Coulee, Republic, and Ritzville) and Big Bend Community College to participate in the first year with plans to expand statewide in subsequent years.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact? The Health Services and Resource Administration’s (HRSA) Health Workforce Nursing Projection’s for 2021-2036, show that Washington State has the 3rd highest nursing shortages in the country. Assuming retirement at age 67, Washington will lose 20% of the current RN population by 2029 and 40% by 2039. Despite the enormity of this issue, there is also a geographic maldistribution of nurses which further exacerbates the impact in rural communities.

Evidence shows that training people locally to become nurses increases the likelihood that those graduates will remain working in their local communities. A stakeholder group established by the Washington Board of Nursing (WABON) and the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN) convened to identify rural nursing gaps. The lack of a 100% online rural nursing education program in Washington was identified as a priority. Although some community colleges offer hybrid learning, the ability to become educated and trained as a registered nurse in Washington’s rural communities does not currently exist.

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1. Proposal Title:
Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Employment and Training
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):
Terry Redmon, Assistant Secretary, Economic Services Administration, Department of Social and Health Services
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:
Lisa McCarthy, Program Administrator, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, Community Services Division, Economic Services Administration, Department of Social and Health Services
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):
There has been a significant increase of immigrants arriving in Washington, resulting in growing demand for culturally responsive and linguistically specific employment and training services available through DSHS Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance's programming. Increased funding for the Limited English Proficient Pathway and the FAP Employment and Training programs will create capacity serve this growing demand, and support immigrants in becoming more economically stable through employment.
5. What is the proposal?
Funding to support increased costs and utilization of E&T services for refugees and immigrants. Increased capacity to provide E&T services for this growing population supports immigrants in building economic stability through employment.
6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:
\$4,843,000 GF State and 1.0 FTE over the 25-27 biennium.
7. Potential Leveraged Resources:
Multiple funding sources are blended to support LEP Pathway services, including funds from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, TANF block grant, and general state funds (GF-S). The FAP E&T program is supported by general state funds only. Preliminary SFY24 caseload data calculations project continued growth in the number of refugees and immigrants accessing ORIA's overall E&T services, meanwhile state funds per client have decreased by nearly 70 percent and continue to trend downward.

8. Responsible Entities:
DSHS, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance.
9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):
Proviso
10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)
This proposal would expand capacity in existing programming to support an influx of refugees and immigrants joining Washington's local communities in recent years.
11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?
Increased funding for E&T services is necessary to assist these newcomers in establishing a strong foundation, and to support providers who contract with the department's Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA) to administer these critical services.

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1. Proposal Title:
Extended Foster Care – Incentive Payment Program
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal:
Julie Watts, DCYF Government Affairs – Julie.watts@dcyf.wa.gov
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):
The Department of Children, Youth and Families has proposed creating an incentive payment program for youth enrolled in Extended Foster Care. The Extended Foster Care program provides an opportunity for young adults who were in foster care when they turned 18 to agree to continue to receive foster care services while working on their goals towards independence. This program will better support these youth to address barriers to completing school and starting a career.
5. What is the proposal?
The incentive payment program would provide up to \$150 a month to youth who are participating in certain federal eligibility requirements, including being enrolled in postsecondary education, work programs, employment or not able to engage in such activities due to a medical condition. So long as they are participating in these federal requirements, they would receive the incentive payment. This proposal would also increase the funds available to provide concrete goods (household and personal care items, educational materials, help with rent or utilities, etc.) for youth in EFC.
6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:
\$3.904M General Fund-State for the 2025-27 biennium
7. Potential Leveraged Resources:
Concrete goods funding may be partially reimbursed by federal funding through Title IV-E.
8. Responsible Entities:
DCYF
9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Agency Decision Package. No legislative changes required.

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)
DCYF administers the Extended Foster Care Program. In 2024, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 5908 which requires the department to propose and incentive payment program and begin implementation in 2025 if funds are approved.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

[State data](#) shows that 15% of youth ages 18-21 exiting foster care are homeless within 12 months of exit in calendar year 2021. These young people face major barriers to participating in school, finding work and achieving independence as they approach this important life transition.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

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1. Proposal Title: Adolescent Services – LifeSet and Independent Living
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant):
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal: Mary Sprute Garland, Senior Policy Advisor, DCYF
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words):

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$3,510,000 (\$3,075,000 General Fund State) and 0.5 full time equivalents (FTE) in the 2025-27 Biennial Budget to provide young people with services and supports through the Independent Living and LifeSet programs, as they exit systems of care and transition into adulthood.

5. What is the proposal?

This decision package requests funding for the Independent Living and LifeSet programs. These programs teach life skills to young people exiting systems of care, resulting in a successful transition to independence and adulthood.

Independent Living

Independent Living (IL) is a voluntary program available to youth between the ages of 15-22 who are or were in foster care. Eligibility for the program includes youth who were in an established dependency with DCYF or a Tribal court and in an out of home foster care placement for at least 30 days after becoming dependent between the ages of 15-17. Once a youth becomes eligible for the program, they are eligible until their 23rd birthday. IL services are provided by local community-based providers and tribes, designed to promote self-sufficiency and responsible living. These independent living skills include supports for employment assistance, education, financial management, daily living skills, vocational training, emotional support and help establishing stable and healthy relationships.

The IL program serves 750 youth per month statewide and is funded by federal and state sources. The enacted 2023-25 biennial budget provided an additional \$750,000 of one-time state funding in FY24 and FY25 for a rate increase to contracted independent living providers. This funding expires at the end of FY25. Therefore, to sustain the current rates and to continue serving the same number of young people served today, DCYF requests \$750,000 per fiscal year as ongoing funding.

LifeSet

LifeSet is an individualized evidence-based program, developed by Youth Villages, designed to empower young people ages 17 to 22 who have been involved in the foster care, juvenile justice, and behavioral health systems; to improve their lives, become independent, and succeed in school or at work as they exit these systems of care. The LifeSet program provides intensive community-based

services that are comprehensive and tailored to each young person's needs. Trained specialists help young people identify and achieve their goals. These specialists help young people establish positive, healthy relationships and connections, provide education and employment supports, find housing, provide financial literacy education, improve mental wellbeing, and assist in developing life skills to ensure continued success and stability in transitioning to independence or adulthood. Specialists engage with young people face to face at least once a week providing support and guidance, communicate regularly throughout the week via email, text messages, or phone calls, and are available 24/7. Each team can serve 3240 individual youth daily with 74 youth expected to be served annually after the first year of implementation based on average lengths of enrollment.

The LifeSet program is currently funded in six counties: King, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Spokane, and Snohomish. This request seeks to expand services to two additional counties, one per fiscal year: Clark County in FY26 and Pierce County in FY27. With this expansion, over 600 eligible young adults are expected to be served statewide.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs:

\$3,510,000 (\$3,075,000 General Fund State) and 0.5 full time equivalents (FTE) in the 2025-27 Biennial Budget

7. Potential Leveraged Resources:

N/A

8. Responsible Entities:

Department of Children, Youth, and Families
Contracted service providers

9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other):

Budget request/proviso

10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.)

Independent Living and LifeSet are models that are currently operated by DCYF. We are proposing expansion.

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact?

Funding for the independent living is expiring so funding will enable DCYF to not cut services to youth.
Funding for LifeSet will address the needed transition supports for youth exiting publicly funded systems of care.

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1. Proposal Title: Comply With New CCDF Requirements
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant): N/A
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal: Melissa Cheesman, melissa.cheesman@dcyf.wa.gov
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words): The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is requesting additional funding to comply with recent changes to federal requirements. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published updates to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) regulations through a Final Rule, effective April 30, 2024, and codified in 45 CFR 98. The new federal requirements lower child care costs for families, improve the program's child care provider payment rates and practices, and simplify enrollment in the child care subsidy program.
5. What is the proposal? On March 1, 2024, the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published updates to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) regulations through a Final Rule, effective April 30, 2024, and codified in 45 CFR 98. The new federal requirements lower child care costs for families, improve the program's child care provider payment rates and practices, and simplify enrollment in the child care subsidy program.

ACF offered a temporary waiver for an extension of up to two years to states that are not in compliance with the provisions of the Final Rule on April 30, 2024, if needed to come into compliance. DCYF has submitted a waiver request, allowing time to receive the required legal and budget authority and allowing for the ability to make system changes necessary for implementation.

Successful implementation of the new CCDF requirements will directly improve family access to high quality care by expanding family eligibility and indirectly by supporting provider's payment practices that mirror the private market as well as the way families pay for child care services. Increased provider participation is necessary for future Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy benefit expansion required under RCW 43.216.802(3).

This decision package requests authority and funding to:

- Support eligible children and families with 12 full months of benefits beginning July 1, 2025. This requirement is not eligible for a waiver and was cited by ACF’s Office of Child Care (OCC) as an area to correct in the 2024 onsite visit.
 - Increase WCCC authorization period to ensure a full 12 months are available as required by the new CCDF rules.
 - Allow for a full 12 months when an eligible child is added into the household (this requirement resets a family’s 12-month authorization period).
 - Align child care subsidy payment practices with the private market by July 2026 (waiver allowed):
 - Paying providers prospectively (instead of retrospectively), and
 - Paying based on enrollment (instead of by attendance).
 - Only require overpayment collection for families approved under presumptive eligibility when federally required.
6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs: DCYF requests \$94,914,000 (\$94,727,000 General Fund-State) and 4.0 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) in the 2025-27 Biennial Budget to comply with the 2024 Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Final Rule.
 7. Potential Leveraged Resources: Approximately \$10 million in federal funds to offset compliance costs.
 8. Responsible Entities: The Department of Children, Youth, and Families and the Office of the Administration for Children and Families.
 9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other): N/A
 10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.) CCDF is Washington state’s primary source of federal funding for child care subsidies for families and funds to improve child care quality.

DCYF is required to submit a CCDF Plan every three years. The Plan functions as Washington state’s application for the CCDF grant and describes all DCYF’s activities funded by the grant and how they comply with federal CCDF law and rules, such as:

- Working Connections Child Care subsidy program
- Early Achievers
- Child care licensing

For more information on the 2025-27 plan renewal use this [link](#).

11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact? This is needed to support positive outcomes for children over their lifetimes (future workforce), income eligible families sustain employment (current workforce), and child care providers (current workforce). DCYF currently authorizes 12 months of child care with the first month of care beginning when the family is eligible or when care begins with an eligible provider. The first month is often a partial month leading to an authorization that is less than the full 12 months required under CCDF. Expanding the family’s authorization period ensures that children receive a full 12 months of child care. This change will increase access to approximately 14,668 families, annually, with implementation beginning July 1, 2025.

DCYF must also ensure that children who are added to a household during the family’s authorization period also receive a full 12 months of child care. DCYF establishes eligibility at the family level, requiring a family with an eligible child added to the household to receive an extension of authorization for 13 months. This will increase child care access for approximately 377 families annually, with implementation beginning July 1, 2025.

DCYF is requesting authority to implement prospective and enrollment-based payment practices beginning July 1, 2026, to support approximately 4,200 licensed providers serving approximately 45,000 children. The July 1, 2026, implementation date allows for the necessary system changes to support the required payment practices while also

allowing for extensive outreach, communication, and support to providers who participate in child care subsidy programs.

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Submission Details & Due Date:

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The Endorsement Committee will review all proposals for alignment with TAP goals and those with the potential for broad consensus across Board partners. The Committee may invite a short presentation and Q/A. The final list for consideration will be reviewed at the Nov. 7 Workforce Board meeting for full Board approval.

1. Proposal Title: WCCC Eligibility 75% SMI & Dual Language
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant): N/A
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal: Melissa Cheesman, melissa.cheesman@dcyf.wa.gov
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words): The 2021 legislature passed the Fair Start for Kids Act which increases Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) income eligibility to 75 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) beginning July 1, 2025, as codified in RCW 43.216.802(3). Expanding income eligibility for WCCC provides families, or income eligible families, with increased access to high quality child care. Child care is essential to Washington's economy, family self-sufficiency, and child outcomes. High quality child care supports child development and kindergarten readiness. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) also requests increasing the dual language rates by an average 2.4 percent for inflation as required by RCW 43.216.755.
5. What is the proposal? The 2021 legislature passed the Fair Start for Kids Act which increases Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) income eligibility to 75 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) beginning July 1, 2025, as codified in RCW 43.216.802(3).

Expanding income eligibility for WCCC provides low-income families, or income eligible families, with increased and equitable access to high quality child care. Child care is essential to Washington's economy, family self-sufficiency, and child outcomes. High quality child care supports child development and kindergarten readiness.

Supporting families with increased income thresholds which includes expanding WCCC tier 2 eligibility to 80 percent SMI allows working families to accept pay raises or additional hours without losing WCCC eligibility. The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) grant requires lead agencies to implement tier 2 eligibility when their income eligibility is less than 85 percent SMI. DCYF will establish a co-pay of \$350 for the 80 percent SMI income range which will be no more than 6.3 percent of the gross income of a two-person household.

Expanding WCCC income eligibility to 75 percent SMI and extending tier 2 eligibility to 80 percent SMI will support an estimated additional 7,983 families and 13,571 children with increased access to WCCC per year.

To support the additional 7,983 families, DCYF requests a phase in of FTEs with a total staff need of 51.0 FTEs by year two for increased caseload support and training needs as well as contract funding for outreach support. The FTE breakdown by year is provided in the table below:

Position Type	FY26	FY27	Total
Public Benefit Specialist 3	21	19	40
Public Benefit Specialist 4	3	2	5
Public Benefit Specialist 5	2	1	3
Social Service Training Specialist	1		1
Management Analyst 4	2	2	2

Funding these FTEs will achieve the following goals:

- Maintain current call center wait times, timely application processing, training of contact center staff, and eligibility determination accuracy.
- Support a culturally and linguistically responsive communication and outreach campaign to eligible families to increase awareness about subsidy eligibility and service contract to support families in completing the application process.

Funding for outreach planning and contracting support will provide specific outreach and assistance for WCCC eligible families through third party referrals to help families find and enroll in high quality child care.

DCYF also requests to increase the dual language rates to an average of 2.4 percent to adjust for inflation as required by RCW 43.216.775 using the US implicit price deflator.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs: DCYF requests \$256,925,000 (\$256,739,000 General Fund-State) and 40.0 full time equivalents (FTE) in the 2025-27 Biennial Budget to increase Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) Eligibility to 75 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) effective July 1, 2025, as required under RCW 43.216.802(3), and to increase dual language rates to adjust for inflation under RCW 43.216.775.
7. Potential Leveraged Resources: N/A
8. Responsible Entities: DCYF
9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other): N/A
10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.) Continues to implement the provisions of the Fair Start for Kids Act which includes regular reporting to the governor’s office and legislature.
11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact? This is needed to support positive outcomes for children over their lifetimes (future workforce), and income eligible families sustain employment (current workforce). Law requires the increase in income eligibility for WCCC to 75 percent SMI by July 1, 2025. DCYF is estimating that an additional 7,983 families and 13,571 children will have increased access to WCCC per year.

Workforce Board 2025 Legislative Session

Potential Agency Endorsement Requests

Instructions:

This form is to be completed by state agencies interested in the Workforce Board members potentially endorsing their decision package(s) for inclusion on the Board's workforce system endorsement list for 2025. Please use a separate form for each project.

Submission Details & Due Date:

All requests for consideration of endorsement must be sent to nova.gattman@wtb.wa.gov **no later than 10:00 am Oct. 8, 2024**, to ensure timely review by the Endorsement Committee. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The Endorsement Committee will review all proposals for alignment with TAP goals and those with the potential for broad consensus across Board partners. The Committee may invite a short presentation and Q/A. The final list for consideration will be reviewed at the Nov. 7 Workforce Board meeting for full Board approval.

1. Proposal Title: Child Care Subsidy Base Rates
2. Workforce Board Member Sponsor Name (if relevant): N/A
3. Staff Contact for the Proposal: Melissa Cheesman, melissa.cheesman@dcyf.wa.gov
4. Short Proposal Description (ideally, 100 words): The 2021 legislature passed the Fair Start for Kids Act, which requires that Working Connection Child Care (WCCC) subsidy base rates must achieve the 85th percentile of market and directed DCYF to develop a true cost of high-quality care rate model as codified in RCW 43.216.828. To maintain child care subsidy base rates at the 85 percentile of market, DCYF requests funding to increase the child care subsidy base rates for licensed and certified centers to the 85 percentile of the 2024 Market Rate Survey beginning July 1, 2025.
5. What is the proposal? The 2021 legislature passed the Fair Start for Kids Act, which requires that child care subsidy base rates must achieve the 85th percentile of market and directed DCYF to develop a true cost of high-quality care rate model as codified in RCW 43.216.828. The enacted 2023-25 biennial budget provided funding for subsidy base rates to achieve the 85th percentile of market based on the 2021 Washington State Child Care Market Rate Survey. To maintain child care subsidy base rates at the 85 percentile of market, DCYF requests funding to increase the child care subsidy base rates for licensed and certified centers to the 85 percentile of the 2024 Market Rate Survey beginning July 1, 2025.

This will increase subsidy rates an average of 27 percent statewide. The increase in subsidy base rates was also included in the bargained subsidy rates for licensed family homes in the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Service Employee International Union (SEIU) 925.

The 2024 Market Rate Survey and Cost of Quality Care model both show rate increases are necessary to support family access and child care providers in meeting the needs of the children they serve. The study findings clearly show that child care providers of all types reported increases in the rates they charge families for their services in nearly every geographic area and child age category. Even with private pay and subsidy rate increases, families cannot afford the true cost of care. While child care subsidy rates have increased substantially in recent years, they have in most cases fallen behind the increases providers report in the private market. Child care subsidy rates have slipped below the 85th percentile of the market rate benchmark in nearly every case.

DCYF worked with the Child Care of Washington’s Early Educator Design Team following a human centered design approach to recommend specific costs used in the cost of high-quality care model. The Design Team’s recommendations were incorporated to capture the true cost of high-quality child care and supports a living wage. Using the current rate regions, the 85 percentile of the 2024 Market Rate Survey is less than the full cost of high-quality child care. The cost comparison varies by age group and region.

Statewide, the 85 percentile of the 2024 Market Rate Survey in current subsidy regions is:

- 62 percent of the cost of quality care for infants.
- 73 percent of the cost of quality care for toddlers.
- 75 percent of the cost of quality care for preschool age children.
- 95 percent of the cost of quality care for school-age children.

6. Estimated Cost, Fund Source, & FTE Needs: The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$298,273,000 General Fund-State in the 2025-27 Biennial Budget to maintain child care subsidy base rates for child care centers at the 85 percentile of market, which results in a rate increase, based on the 2024 Market Rate Survey pursuant to RCW 43.216.828. The increase in subsidy base rates was also included in the bargained subsidy rates for licensed family homes in the Collective Bargaining Agreement with Service Employee International Union (SEIU) 925.
7. Potential Leveraged Resources: N/A
8. Responsible Entities: The Department of Children, Youth, and Families
9. Proposal Format (proviso, statutory change, other): N/A
10. What has been done by your organization regarding this work in the past? (If proposal would add to or continue an existing initiative. Answer N/A if not relevant.) As required by RCW 43.216.828, DCYF must recommend WCCC subsidy rates that achieve the 85 percentile of the most current market rates survey. Additionally, DCYF with partners and through engagement have develop a cost of quality care model as an alternative for recommending subsidy base rates that provide living wages and benefits for the child care workforce.
11. Why is this needed now and what is the impact? This is needed to support positive outcomes for children over their lifetimes (future workforce), income eligible families sustain employment (current workforce), and child care providers (current workforce). This will increase subsidy rates an average of 27 percent statewide. The increase of WCCC subsidy rates to the 85 percentile supports:
 - Approximately 30,000 families and 51,000 children impacted initially.
 - The number of families and providers will continue to increase as subsidy eligibility expands in July 2025 and again in July 2027.
 - Approximately 1,600 licensed center providers will receive a rate increase.

DCYF is required to increase family income eligibility for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) pursuant to RCW 43.216.802 to 75 percent State Median Income in July 2025. DCYF assumes this will add approximately 8,000 families to the WCCC caseload in the 2025-27 Biennium. Maintaining the subsidy base rates at the 85 percentile of market is necessary to retain and increase provider participation. Paying child care providers base rates at the 85 percentile of the market, results in increased rates, which continues to support provider employee retention and makes steps towards a rate that reflects the true cost of quality and supports a living wage.