



Increasing Staffing Allocations to Support Stronger, Safer Schools

2023–25 Biennial Operating Budget Decision Package

Recommendation Summary

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests funding to complete implementation of the first of two research- and evidence-based phases of the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup's (2019) recommendations. The remaining components of the first phase focus on eliminating opportunity gaps by adjusting the prototypical school funding model. At the proposed staffing levels, school districts will be better positioned to meet the needs of all students by increasing the allocation for several key staff, increasing the allocation for substitute teachers, funding additional critical professional development for school staff, and adding continuous improvement coaches to the prototypical model no later than the 2025–26 school year. The total for this request is \$1 billion in the 2023–25 biennium.

Fiscal Details (Funding, FTEs, Revenue, Objects)

| Operating Expenditures | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | FY 2027 |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund State - 01 | \$335,607,000 | \$670,796,000 | \$996,442,000 | \$1,087,544,000 |
| Opportunities Pathways | \$1,687,000 | \$3,371,000 | \$5,007,000 | \$5,465,000 |
| Total Expenditures | \$337,294,000 | \$674,167,000 | \$1,001,449,000 | \$1,093,009,000 |
| Biennial Totals | \$1,011,461,000 | | \$2,094,458,000 | |
| Staffing | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | FY 2027 |
| FTEs | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Average Annual | 0.0 | | 0.0 | |
| Revenue | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | FY 2027 |
| N/A | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Total Revenue | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Biennial Totals | \$0 | | \$0 | |
| Object of Expenditure | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | FY 2027 |
| Obj. C | \$97,000 | \$28,000 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Obj. N | \$337,197,000 | \$674,139,000 | \$1,001,449,000 | \$1,093,009,000 |

Package Description

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

Washington's K–12 education system is not yet meeting the needs of all of our young people. Opportunity gaps experienced by students across the state are evident in the academic, social, and economic outcomes of our education system.

The needs of students have changed significantly over the past several years and the model for supporting school districts has not kept up. The prototypical school funding model, established in state law, is inadequate to meet the diverse needs of our students (including providing for high-quality ongoing professional development for educators) and is impacting educators' ability to eliminate the opportunity gaps they see every day.

This request includes seven components. The problem, opportunity, or priority this request addresses is described below for each component.

- 1. Professional Development:** Our world is rapidly changing, and educators must receive the tools and supports necessary to shift their own practices in order to truly support each and every student as they prepare for postsecondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement. If the state expects educators to shift their practices to better prepare our future leaders for the 21st century and beyond, then school districts must be resourced to provide the needed high-quality professional development to get there. We support our students by supporting their educators.
- 2. Increase in Principal Allocation:** Being a school principal requires skillful leadership of all building-level initiatives (academic and otherwise) as well as the recruitment, retention, and capacity building of staff. Principals are responsible for the health and safety of and academic and social-emotional growth for each student. School leadership and improved student achievement are connected (Wallace Foundation, 2011); and school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). The current prototypical model under-resources principal positions at 1 principal position per 319 students across all grade bands. This includes associate or vice principal positions.
- 3. Continuous Improvement Coaches:** Supporting student achievement requires continual improvement efforts that adjust to and meet the needs of educators and students. There is a significant body of research suggesting the work of continuous improvement coaches and instructional facilitators is beneficial to teacher retention, teacher-student interactions, and student achievement (Allen, et al., 2011; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Gray & Taie, 2015; Lockwood, et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). This is an un-resourced need in the current prototypical model.
- 4. Family Engagement Coordinators:** Family engagement coordinators work with the guidance and counseling team to engage and assist families in participating as full partners in their children's education. "... Research indicates that a welcoming school environment and information communication from the school are strongly associated with family involvement in high school, and informative communication is also associated with family support of students at home" (Park & Holloway, 2013). Furthermore, "Family involvement

coordinators should not be charged with delivering specialized social services, rather they are in a position to leverage the strengths of families and the benefits that they can bring to schools. For example, the family involvement coordinator does not do 'home visits' in the way that a social worker would, rather they may schedule 'meetings with families' in their homes if that is the best way to connect with them and begin to build relationships" (OSPI and Office of Education Ombuds, n.d., pp. 8).

- 5. Student and Staff Safety:** Feeling safe is fundamental for a positive school climate and learning environment. The Workgroup recommended that along with a student-to-staff ratio change, the language used for this line item be updated to "Student and Staff Safety," as not all schools will hire security personnel in response to the unique needs of their students. Consistent with this decision, the research on school security is varied.
- 6. Substitute Teacher Allocation:** Teacher and substitute shortages continue to affect both hiring needs and day-to-day building operations within Washington's schools. The allocation to help cover substitute teacher costs has not increased since the prototypical school funding formula was implemented in the 2011–12 school year. The current allocation of 4 days per allocated teacher at a rate of \$151.86 per day is not representative of actual average teacher absences nor the cost of securing substitutes on an ongoing basis.
- 7. Increased Allocation to Provide for Classroom Supplies:** It should be the state's responsibility to provide for the basic supplies and materials needed for schools to provide a high-quality basic education to all of Washington's students. The lack of adequate state funding to support classroom materials puts an inequitable burden on parents and families, as schools regularly turn to families to supply items like pencils, paper, notebooks, and even tissues and snacks. This burden also impacts educators, who often pay for additional materials and supplies out of their own pocket to ensure their students have what they need to thrive in the classroom.

What is your proposed solution?

This proposal makes continued progress in implementing Phase I of the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup's (2019) recommendations while also focusing on essential adjustments to the prototypical school funding model. Recommendations are comprised of seven major components related to increasing the basic education allocation to school districts through the prototypical school funding formula:

1. Providing more staff professional development focusing on racial literacy and cultural responsiveness to close persistent opportunity gaps.
2. Increasing the allocation for principals.
3. Providing an allocation for continuous improvement coaches.
4. Increasing the allocation for family engagement coordinators.
5. Increasing the allocation for student and staff safety.
6. Increasing the allocation to cover the costs of substitute teachers.
7. Increasing the allocation for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC) to include a specific line item to provide an allocation for consumable classroom supplies.

Each of these components are addressed in more detail in the subsections below.

Component 1: Professional Development

This proposal will provide additional days of professional development for certificated and classified staff in schools allocated through a percentage increase in salary and benefits. This increase phases in over three years, resulting in six days for certificated instructional staff (CIS) and classified staff (CLS), and three days for certificated administrative staff (CAS). Table 1 includes the total number of days.

Table 1: Professional Development Days

| Staff Type | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| CIS | 3.00 | 4.00 | 5.00 | 6.00 |
| CLS | 0.00 | 3.00 | 4.00 | 6.00 |
| CAS | 0.00 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 3.00 |

The professional development would include, in part, mandatory learning focused on racial literacy and cultural responsiveness. This focus is necessary to accelerate the closure of persistent opportunity gaps, many of which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Training on these topics is critical for educators and staff to effectively serve **all** students. Professional development on racial literacy will be expected of all district personnel statewide on an ongoing basis.

This request is aligned with Phase I of the recommendations of the Workgroup. Funds for professional learning shall be allocated via a percentage increase in salary and benefits as shown in Table 2. This is an allocation, meaning professional learning does not need to be delivered in any specific modality or time increments.

Table 2: Professional Development Percentage of Salary Increase

| Staff Type | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| CIS | 1.67% | 2.22% | 2.78% | 3.33% |
| CLS | 0.00% | 1.67% | 2.22% | 3.33% |
| CAS | 0.00% | 0.56% | 1.11% | 1.67% |

Adding professional development for certificated and classified school district staff may not result in additional time in all instances. Some school district staff work based on year-round (i.e., 260 days) contracts. It is a recommendation that these staff participate in the essential professional development topics for the benefit of all students.

Component 2: Increase in Principal Allocation

This proposal increases the allocation for principals within the prototypical school model to an overall ratio of 1 principal per 300 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. Table 3 outlines the phased-in approach to achieve a ratio of 1 principal per 300 FTE students by the 2025–26 school year.

Table 3: Recommended Phase-In for School Principal Allocation

| Phase-in by Grade Band | 2022–23 School Year | 2023–24 School Year | 2024–25 School Year | 2025–26 School Year |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Grades K–6 | 1.253 | 1.280 | 1.307 | 1.334 |
| Grades 7–8 | 1.353 | 1.382 | 1.411 | 1.440 |
| Grades 9–12 | 1.880 | 1.920 | 1.960 | 2.000 |

Component 3: Continuous Improvement Coaches

This request includes a proposal for a new staffing position within the prototypical school funding model defined as continuous improvement coaches. These coaches are critical to supporting classroom teachers to implement research- and evidence-based instruction with high fidelity. A continuous learning coach is a skilled educator who regularly delivers professional development consistent with the Washington State Professional Learning Standards (RCW 28A.415.432). In addition, this position will identify successful strategy needs and patterns between classrooms. School and district leaders must have timely information to organize supports and address areas of learning. Similarly, the state can learn through having continuous improvement coaches and sharing information accordingly.

Table 4 shows the proposed phase-in of continuous improvement coaches by prototypical school level in each of the next three school years based on the current definitions of prototypical school size. This proposal also includes adding this staffing position to the Physical, Social, Emotional, and Support (PSES) staff compliance.

Table 4: Recommended Phase-In for Continuous Improvement Coaches

| Phase-in by Grade Band | 2022–23 School Year | 2023–24 School Year | 2024–25 School Year | 2025–26 School Year |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Grades K–6 | 0.000 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |
| Grades 7–8 | 0.000 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |
| Grades 9–12 | 0.000 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |

Component 4: Family Engagement Coordinators

This request proposes a ratio of students to family engagement coordinators of 477:1. The phase-in values for this position over the next three school years is shown in Table 5. This proposal also includes adding this staffing position to the Physical, Social, and Emotional Support (PSES) staff compliance.

Table 5: Recommended Phase-In for Family Engagement Coordinators

| Phase-in by Grade Band | 2022–23 School Year | 2023–24 School Year | 2024–25 School Year | 2025–26 School Year |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Grades K–6 | 0.083 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |
| Grades 7–8 | 0.000 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |
| Grades 9–12 | 0.000 | 0.333 | 0.666 | 1.000 |

Component 5: Student and Staff Safety

This request proposes to increase the allocation in the prototypical model for student and staff safety to a ratio of 521:1. The phase-in values for this position over the next three school years is shown in Table 6. This proposal also includes adding this staffing position to the Physical, Social, and Emotional Support (PSES) staff compliance.

Table 6: Recommended Phase-In for Student and Staff Safety

| Phase-in by Grade Band | 2022–23 School Year | 2023–24 School Year | 2024–25 School Year | 2025–26 School Year |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Grades K–6 | 0.790 | 0.790 | 0.790 | 0.790 |
| Grades 7–8 | 0.092 | 0.295 | 0.497 | 0.700 |
| Grades 9–12 | 0.141 | 0.527 | 0.914 | 1.300 |

Component 6: Substitute Teacher Allocation

This proposal increases both variables—cost and number of days— included in the current funding structure. Days provided per allocated teacher increases from 4 to 12 which is a more representative number of actual teacher absences requiring a substitute, including professional development. The dollar allocation is increased from \$151.86 to \$189.82 per day beginning in the 2023–24 school year.

Component 7: Increased Allocation to Provide for Classroom Supplies

This proposal would add a separate line item in the allocation for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC) in general education specifically for consumable classroom supplies. These funds are intended to be used to help stock classrooms with items such as tissues, markers, pens, pencils, and other consumable learning materials that are essential for students to participate in their basic education. In exchange for the higher MSOC allocation, OSPI will write rules prohibiting local education agencies (schools) from charging families directly for or requiring contributions of these necessary consumable classroom supplies. Starting in the 2023–24 school year, the MSOC allocation in general education for consumable classroom supplies shall be \$25 per student. The allocation for MSOC in career and technical education (CTE) and Skill Center programs shall be increased by the same \$25 per student amount, without the addition of a new specific line-item description. This amount will be increased by inflation as required by current law, increasing from \$25 per student in 2023–24, then to \$25.53 per student in 2024–25, and then to \$26.06 per student in 2025–26.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

This request phases-in enhanced staffing levels and professional development resources that prioritize research- or evidence-based strategies to reduce opportunity gaps and strengthen support for all school and district staff. Building level-leaders (principals) play a critical role in ensuring schools can provide comprehensive school-based student support. School districts will be able to hire additional principals, family engagement coordinators, student and staff safety personnel, and continuous improvement coaches with these additional funds. These additional staff allocation increases will provide for enhanced school leadership (which is directly tied to

student achievement), facilitate more family engagement in the learning process, and help create safe learning environments for all students. In addition, this request adds professional development for all staff with a specific focus on racial literacy and cultural responsiveness. Additional professional development resources will benefit students by introducing and implementing changes in practices. Increased the rate and days for substitutes will align the state's support more closely with the impacts actually experienced and funded by school districts.

The investments are specifically chosen as the right mix of increased capacity that will result in improved academic outcomes for students and shrinking opportunity gaps.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

Alternatives outside of adjustments to the prototypical school funding model were not discussed as these recommendations are the artifacts of a specific charge of the Legislature to form a workgroup to suggest changes within that structure. The Workgroup did consider alternatives with respect to which staffing ratios should be increased to meet the target of reduced opportunity gaps and strengthened supports for educators as part of their work. [The Staffing Enrichment Workgroup's full report is available on the OSPI website.](#)

Performance Measures

Performance outcomes:

This request aims to reduce opportunity gaps for all students and ensure each student is prepared for postsecondary success. These impacts are measured and reported through the Washington State Report Card and the Washington School Improvement Framework.

With this request, OSPI also expects to see increases in the number of:

- School districts supporting a meaningful High School and Beyond Plan.
- Students who graduate on time and ready for their postsecondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.
- Students enrolling in post-graduation training opportunities.

OSPI tracks data for the following related performance outcomes:

- College-ready transcripts.
- Postsecondary enrollment for 4- and 2-year colleges.
- Postsecondary remediation rates for math and English language arts.
- Dual credit program participation.
- Graduation rates.
- 9th grade success rates.
- SAT and ACT scores.
- Financial aid for college.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion or alteration of a current program or service:

This request increases the school principal allocations in the prototypical school funding model, while also increasing the allocation for substitute teachers, introducing professional improvement coaches, and adding professional development days to the current salary allocation funding. This also increases funding for consumable classroom supplies and makes a first step toward eliminating the obligation of or reliance on families to pay for such supplies.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

All costs related to adjustments to the prototypical school funding model used caseload forecast enrollment assumptions and salary and benefit values currently approved in the biennial budget.

Table 7: School Year Cost Breakdown by Recommendation

| Recommendation | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Principals | \$12,760,000 | \$26,299,000 | \$39,830,000 |
| Family Engagement Coordinators | \$72,459,000 | \$160,904,000 | \$250,438,000 |
| Student and Staff Safety | \$34,278,000 | \$69,925,000 | \$106,087,000 |
| Continuous Improvement Coaches | \$101,105,000 | \$207,857,000 | \$314,811,000 |
| Professional Development Days | \$78,614,000 | \$140,599,000 | \$215,629,000 |
| Substitute Teacher Allocation | \$104,473,000 | \$104,907,000 | \$107,249,000 |
| MSOC Increase | \$30,555,000 | \$31,302,000 | \$39,646,000 |
| District Support Staff Driven by Increase to Prototypical Model | \$848,000 | \$1,746,000 | \$2,636,000 |
| OSPI IT Programming Costs | \$125,000 | \$0 | \$0 |
| School Year Total | \$435,217,000 | \$743,539,000 | \$1,076,326,000 |

Table 8: School Year Cost Breakdown by Fund Source

| Fund Source | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund | \$433,040,915 | \$739,821,305 | \$1,070,944,370 |
| Opportunities Pathway | \$2,176,085 | \$3,717,695 | \$ 5,381,630 |
| School Year Total | \$435,217,000 | \$743,539,000 | \$1,076,326,000 |

Table 9: Fiscal Year Cost Breakdown by Fund Source

| Fund Source | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund | \$335,606,709 | \$670,795,717 | \$996,441,680 | \$1,087,544,008 |
| Opportunities Pathway | \$1,686,466 | \$3,370,833 | \$5,007,245 | \$5,465,045 |
| Fiscal Year Total | \$337,293,175 | \$674,166,550 | \$1,001,448,925 | \$1,093,009,053 |

Workforce assumptions:

There are no additional OSPI staff included in this request. School staffing allocations in these recommendations are for allocation purposes only. Local school districts will determine how to utilize the additional staffing resources to best meet the needs of their community outside of the state's Physical, Social, and Emotional Support (PSES) staff compliance requirements.

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

This proposal impacts student equity by increasing the allocation for professional development to include all staff. This will help to ensure our school employees have skills and strategies needed to meet the unique needs of all students in Washington.

At the forefront of every program, policy, and decision, OSPI actively focuses on ensuring all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools. OSPI regularly engages with a wide array of partners and stakeholders to continuously connect with students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making. OSPI facilitates and participates in a significant range of committees and workgroups, regularly engaging with a variety of stakeholders to ensure voices are heard and ideas are incorporated.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic framework:

This request supports the Results Washington goals related to K–12 education because the request aims to increase the number of students who graduate and reduce opportunity gaps for all students. In addition, this request supports OSPI's goal of ensuring all students have multiple pathways to high school graduation.

Other Collateral Connections

Intergovernmental:

School districts would welcome additional resources to provide comprehensive supports to students. Additional support could facilitate and improve community partnerships. School district fiscal and educational leaders were part of the workgroup which led to the final recommendations included in this proposal.

Stakeholder response:

School districts and local communities would welcome additional resources targeted at the school level which will allow for our K–12 education system to better meet the needs of our students.

Legal or administrative mandates:

Part of OSPI's goal is to provide districts with resources to help respond to various legislative changes over the past decade.

Changes from current law:

Revisions will be needed to statutory language in [RCW 28A.150.260](#) to increase existing staff ratios. OSPI also requests the Legislature change the title of “parent involvement coordinator” in the prototypical school funding model to “family and community engagement coordinator,” which is a more appropriate representation of the roles of this position.

State workforce impacts:

Not applicable.

State facilities impacts:

None.

Puget Sound recovery:

N/A

Other Documents

Reference documents:

- The [Staffing Enrichment Workgroup report](#) is available on the OSPI website. References cited within this proposal are provided on pages 39–41 of the report.
- A copy of the state budget model driving the cost estimates can be provided upon request.