



Supporting Families with a Special Education Family Liaison 2021–23 Biennial Operating Budget Decision Package (DP)

Agency/Program Recommendation Summary

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) currently has an appropriation which partially funds a 1.0 FTE Special Education Parent and Family Liaison to serve Washington's students and families. To fully meet the needs of these constituents, OSPI needs an additional liaison to respond to the high volume of inquiries. OSPI requests an increase in the state appropriation to support 25% of this new position and an increase in federal authority to ensure the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has the capacity to support the remaining 75%. This split funding ensures the position will comply with both state and federal requirements.

Package Description

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

There is currently one Special Education Parent and Family Liaison supporting the entire state of Washington. This liaison communicates with over 800 people per year. Approximately 25% of these contacts send inquiries two or more times per year. The response to each inquiry lasts approximately 30–60 minutes. It is currently taking a few weeks for parents and guardians to get a response, rather than the targeted 48 hours.

What is your proposed solution?

An additional 1.0 FTE Special Education Parent and Family Liaison will cut the current response time in half, improving the level of service to students, parents, and families across Washington.

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

State funds will be used to support 25% of the compensation package needed to hire an additional Special Education Parent and Family Liaison. An additional liaison will enable OSPI to provide better service and reach the targeted 48-hour turnaround time for responses to inquiries.

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

The only solution to the delayed response time to families is to increase the number of staff that can respond to their needs.

Performance Measures

Performance outcomes:

With an additional Special Education Parent and Family Liaison, the backlog of inquiries from families, schools, districts, and community stakeholders will be addressed in a

timely manner. Groups and individuals seeking guidance from liaisons will receive prompt responses. This will result in more rapid service for the students who need it most.

Fiscal Details (Funding, FTEs, Revenue, Objects)

Operating Expenditures	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Fund 001-1	\$38,000	\$37,000	\$37,000	\$37,000
Fund 001-2	\$114,000	\$110,000	\$110,000	\$110,000
Total Expenditures	\$152,000	\$147,000	\$147,000	\$147,000
Biennial Totals	\$299,000		\$294,000	
Staffing	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
FTEs	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Average Annual	1.0		1.0	
Revenue	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
0384 Dept of Ed	\$114,000	\$110,000	\$110,000	\$110,000
Total Revenue	\$114,000	\$110,000	\$110,000	\$110,000
Biennial Totals	\$224,000		\$220,000	
Object of Expenditure	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Obj. A	\$88,000	\$88,000	\$88,000	\$88,000
Obj. B	\$47,000	\$47,000	\$47,000	\$47,000
Obj. E	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Obj. G	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Obj. J	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion or alteration of a current program or service:

This request is an expansion of an existing program. In the last three biennia, an annual appropriation of \$50,000 has been provided solely for a Special Education Family Liaison position with OSPI. The current appropriation supports 40% of the current Liaison. This expansion would add an additional 1.0 FTE being supported with 25% state funds.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

Each inquiry from a parent or guardian, school district, or community member generates a response that takes approximately 30–60 minutes. The current wait time for a response is approximately three weeks rather than the targeted 48 hours. An additional liaison will cut this response time in half. The costs to improve the response time is all staffing. No additional grants or IT work needed.

Workforce assumptions:

This request funds an additional 1.0 FTE Special Education Parent and Family Liaison. The total cost of the position is \$152,000 for FY22 and \$147,000 annually thereafter. Twenty-five percent of this position would be funded by an increase in state appropriation and 75% would be funded by an increase in federal authority.

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

The Special Education Parent and Family Liaison provides neutral guidance to persons seeking guidance on the provision of special education services. Two liaisons would provide this guidance more quickly and efficiently than a single liaison, resulting in more equitable access to information for students, families, educators, and community members.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes**Strategic framework:**

This request supports the proficiency and readiness goals laid out by Results Washington by providing funding for impartial guides to the special education system that are available to customers and providers of public education. When families know how best to work with schools and districts and vice versa, students experience better academic and social outcomes. The work of the Special Education Parent and Family Liaison supports OSPI's vision, mission, and values through the pursuit of family empowerment and equity in the provision of special education services.

Other Collateral Connections**Intergovernmental:**

The Special Education Parent and Family Liaison provides assistance to local education agencies and schools. The addition of a second liaison will have a positive impact on the relationships between families and the K–12 education system in the state of Washington.

Stakeholder response:

Funding of this request will have a positive impact on families of students receiving special education services, and in turn a positive impact on schools and districts serving these families and students.

Legal or administrative mandates:

N/A

Changes from current law:

N/A

State workforce impacts:

N/A

State facilities impacts:

N/A

Puget Sound recovery:

N/A

Other Documents

Reference documents:

N/A

Information technology (IT) addendum:

Does this decision package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software (including cloud-based services), contracts, or IT staff?

No

Yes