



Career Preparation and Launch Grants

2023–25 Capital Project Request

Project Title: Career Preparation and Launch Grants

Starting Fiscal Year: July 1, 2023

Project Summary

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests \$6 million to support career preparation and launch grants, which were last funded in the 2021-23 biennial Capital Budget as workforce development grants. This request would offer competitive equipment grant funding to assist school districts in creating STEM-based (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) learning spaces and purchasing equipment for career and technical education (CTE) programs.

Project Description

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 \$2.0 million in the 2021-23 biennial Capital Budget for competitive grants. OSPI received over \$5.4 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 grant program would continue to use these criteria to administer the program.

What will the request produce or construct (i.e., building predesign or design, construction of additional space, etc.)? When will the project start and be completed?

This competitive grant program will provide funds to school districts to support the preparation of students for post-secondary career pathways. This will help build a strongly skilled labor market which will eventually lead to employers being able to tap into the niche skills of the future citizens. The grant program awards will be made to numerous school districts and the projects will have varied start and end dates.

How would the request address the problem or opportunity identified by your proposed project? What would be the result of not taking action?

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 be 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 taking action 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.

What alternatives were explored? Why was the recommended alternative chosen?

The gist of the career preparation and launch grants has been embodied in the CTE equipment grant program and STEM Classrooms and Labs grant program funded in previous biennia. 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. Based on the same, it was deemed more effective to have one comprehensive, competitive grant program to support career preparation and launch program.

Which clientele would be impacted by the budget request? Where and how many units would be added, people or communities served, etc.

K-12 students statewide will have access to appropriate learning environments for technical and career learning. These students will have the opportunity to be better prepared for post-secondary pathways. Students entering their careers will be better qualified to start in higher-paying skilled positions. Local businesses will benefit by having a highly qualified workforce.

Will non-state funds be used to complete the project? How much, what fund source, and could the request result in matching federal, state, local, or private funds?

Non-state funds will not be used to complete the project.

Describe how this project supports the agency's strategic master plan or would improve agency performance. Reference feasibility studies, master plans, space programming, and other analyses as appropriate.

This project supports State Superintendent Chris Reykdal's K-12 education vision of his goal for Washington's public education system to prepare every student who walks through our school doors for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

Does this project include IT-related costs, including hardware, software, cloud-based services, contracts or IT staff?

No

If the project is linked to the Puget Sound Action Agenda, describe the impacts on the Action Agenda, including expenditure and FTE detail.

This project does not impact the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

How does this project contribute to meeting the greenhouse gas emissions limits established in RCW 70A.45.050, Clean Buildings performance standards in RCW 19.27A.210, or other statewide goals to reduce carbon pollution and/or improve energy efficiency? Please elaborate.

N.A.

Does this project contribute to statewide goals to reduce carbon pollution and/or improve energy use? If yes, please elaborate.

N.A.

Historical Significance

No

Location

Statewide

Describe Growth Management Impacts

Local school districts are responsible for determining whether and how they need to participate in the planning process with the city or county planning authority.

Grant Recipient Organization

Local School Districts

RCW establishing grant

28A.525

Application Process Used

OSPI will continue to use the competitive grant program criteria established in collaboration with WA STEM and other stakeholders.

Funding Requested

2023-25 \$ 6,000,000

2025-27 \$

2027-29 \$

2029-31 \$

2031-33 \$