



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Washington State Leadership Academy

1. **Purpose:**

The 2007 Washington State Legislature created the Washington State Leadership Academy and approved two years of funding for the development and pilot phases. The intent of the legislation was to form a public-private partnership, with funding contingent upon obtaining additional private support to provide an ongoing program of effective leadership training for principals, superintendents and administrators. The program is focused on higher student achievement for every child by:

- a. Engaging school and district administrators in transformative leadership practice.
- b. Building and supporting strong, effective teams to create sustainable systems that focused on equitable learning systems.
- c. Heightening education leaders' awareness and ability to self-assess the personal characteristics and practices that lead to high performing equitable organizations.
- d. Helping individuals and teams implement leadership and collaborative behaviors that will lead to more equitable and effective systems.
- e. Building and supporting strong, effective teams to create sustainable systems that ensure equity and high levels of learning for all.
- f. Heightening education leaders' awareness and ability to self-assess the personal characteristics and practices that lead to high performing equitable organizations.
- g. Identifying breakthrough strategies to elevate opportunities for all students and accelerate learning.

2. **Description of services provided:**

District teams made up of superintendents, principals, central office administrators, and teacher leaders, participate in this multiyear program that:

- a. Focuses on continual system-wide improvement;
- b. Involves regional collaboration among school districts;
- c. Includes in-district coaching, and
- d. Builds each leader's capacity to lead system-wide change.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

Districts involved must create a Problem of Practice, based upon current student data. Teams also choose effective research-based strategies to develop and implement a Theory of Action designed to increase learning for all staff and students in their district.

Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year:

Number of School Districts: 23
Number of Schools: 106
Number of Students: 30,003
Number of Educators: 196
Other: 0

Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 0
Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 1

FY21 Funding: State Appropriation: \$810,000
Federal Appropriation: \$0
Other fund sources: \$0
TOTAL (FY21) \$810,000

4. **Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?**

- No
 Yes, please explain.

5. **State funding history:**

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY21	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY20	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY19	\$810,000	\$763,098
FY18	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY17	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY16	\$810,000	\$609,098
FY15	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY14	\$810,000	\$810,000
FY13	\$810,000	\$697,554
FY12	\$810,000	\$649,293
FY11	\$810,000	\$450,000
FY10	\$810,000	\$700,000
FY09	\$450,000	\$450,000
FY08	\$300,000	\$255,444

6. **Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:**

Fiscal Year	Number of School Districts	Number of Administrators
FY21	23	196
FY20	17	172
FY19	19	170
FY18	25	201
FY17	25	198
FY16	25	194
FY15	20	128
FY14	22	164
FY13	22	170
FY12	19	125
FY11	26	247
FY10	34	321
FY09	35	222
FY08	20	122

7. **Programmatic changes since inception (if any):**

In addition to administrators, teacher leaders are now often part of school district teams attending the Academy. A direct focus on equity has been added to the curriculum strands.

8. **Evaluations of program/major findings:**

The Washington State Leadership Academy partnered with the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE) to provide WSLA with a comprehensive program review. After collecting data from multiple sources, CEE makes the following recommendations around the following themes: participant perceptions, documentation of changes in leadership beliefs and practices, and resulting effects on student learning.

Participant Perceptions

The program review reveals a positive perception of the overall WSLA program by participants. This was confirmed through responses on exit tickets and interviews of several participating district leaders. Among the reasons for these positive perceptions are:

- Support with the development of a cohesive district leadership team,

- Collaboration opportunities (including with coaches and other districts),
- Fidelity to relevant and beneficial WSLA program and tools,
- Commitment to following through on work between the sessions, and
- High quality coaching

Changes in Leadership Beliefs and Practices

The program review reveals a positive change in leadership practices as measured by WSLA program participant self-reflection. This was confirmed through interviews of several participating district leaders. Among the reasons for these positive perceptions are:

- The solidification of a cohesive leadership team,
- The creation of a clear focus on their problem of practice,
- An increased focus on equitable learning environments for all students in all district systems,
- The nurturing of improved personal leadership to use and support district systems, and
- The creation of a trusting environment for open communication.

There was a clear indication that WSLA coaches have been critical in moving the work forward both in the workshops and in operationalizing the work within the districts.

Effects on Student Learning

Factors impacting the data available for this program review include the COVID-19 health pandemic which resulted in school closures, the absence of CEE Educational Effectiveness Survey (EES) historical data, and the cancellation of Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA) in spring 2020. What data was available (for select districts who administered surveys in the past) reveals a very likely correlation between program participation and the culture and climate improvements that would lead to improved student learning as measured by the nine characteristics of highly effective schools.

Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunities for improvement have been categorized into three areas; general issues, COVID related, and program review support. These are based upon participant feedback through exit tickets and interviews.

General Program Issues:

- Consider additional ways to differentiate the program delivery during the sessions to accommodate districts who are in different parts of the program or process. This would also address the pacing of the program as participants sometimes felt it moved either too rapidly or too slowly.
- Participants are asking for more time with their team and/or coach. Consider building into the curricula additional time for participants to be with their team or coach between sessions.
- Participants noted the value of working with other districts. One superintendent suggested having districts “host” sessions. Combining this with the prior item, consider having mini workshops between sessions with two or more districts at a “host” district location.
- When recruiting districts, differentiate between those with stable leadership teams and those with high turnover and new staff. Possibly have a “Team Building” track that provides additional support and allows those teams to keep pace with the curriculum.
- Participants expressed the desire to see more specific examples of success during the sessions.

COVID Related:

- As much as possible, keep the same coaches with districts. Continuity in the coach is valued and considered critical moving forward.
- Provide leadership development about how to create a vision remotely.
- Find ways to still have some in-person component to the work this year. May want to consider using “host districts” and smaller groups with remote presenters. Distance learning was difficult and personal interaction is important.
- For **Year 2** districts, focus on implementation plans and how to do the work in the current environment.
- As much as possible, show or demonstrate virtual learning models that address administrator leadership issues, namely walk-throughs and evaluations.

Program Review Support:

- Include coach perceptions for evaluating both the program and the impact on districts. Recommend CEE and WSLA co-developing a survey with coaches.
- Continue administering exit tickets, including in remote workshops or with coaches working with individual districts.

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:**

Please see the "Opportunities for Improvement" section from the CEE report in #8.

10. **Future opportunities:**

"WSLA Re-Imagined" was developed for the 2020-2021 cohorts. The entire year will be delivered virtually and is designed to be nimble, agile, and relevant. We are committed to serving and supporting WA districts through the process of building and growing learning systems to a blended/hybrid model, to withstand interruptions and maintain equitable learning for students. We will be district thought partners while they build their plans, as well as grow their teams' leadership.

Seven Leadership Skills to survive COVID-19:

1. Learn successful change management strategies
2. Grow collaboration and ownership
3. Re-imagine equitable learning systems
4. Communicate well in crisis and beyond
5. Empathy, self-care and team building
6. Engage students, staff and community
7. Elevate learning opportunities and success for *all* students

11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

Budget: ESSB 5092 Section 1511(2)(d) - \$810,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2020 and \$810,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 are provided solely for the development of a leadership academy for school principals and administrators. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction shall contract with an independent organization to design, field test, and implement a state-of-the-art education leadership academy that will be accessible throughout the state. Semiannually the independent organization shall report on amounts committed by foundations and others to support the development and implementation of this program. Leadership academy partners shall include the state level organizations for school administrators and principals, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Professional Educator Standards Board, and other as the independent organization shall identify.

12. **Other relevant information:**

NA

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

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