



## Maintaining Funding for the Legislative Direction (House Bill 1365) to Support Educational Technology *2023–25 Biennial Operating Budget Decision Package*

### Recommendation Summary

The 2021 Legislature passed House Bill 1365, which directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish new grant opportunities for schools and to provide educational technology, training, and data reporting. Funding associated with the bill was only provided for the 2021–23 biennium, while the work is expected to be ongoing. The COVID-19 pandemic only elevated the importance of educational technology in our schools. It was, and continues to be, vital that students and their families can easily access learning that is safe, reliable, and secure while they are at home. This request is for \$10,861,000 per year in ongoing funding to accomplish the work outlined in House Bill 1365 (2021).

### Fiscal Details (Funding, FTEs, Revenue, Objects)

Operating Expenditures	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Fund 001	\$10,861,000	\$10,861,000	\$10,861,000	\$10,861,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$10,861,000</b>	<b>\$10,861,000</b>	<b>\$10,861,000</b>	<b>\$10,861,000</b>
<b>Biennial Totals</b>	<b>\$21,722,000</b>		<b>\$21,722,000</b>	
Staffing	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
FTEs	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
<b>Average Annual</b>	<b>5.0</b>		<b>5.0</b>	
Revenue	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Biennial Totals</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	
Object of Expenditure	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Obj. A	\$388,000	\$388,000	\$388,000	\$388,000
Obj. B	\$139,000	\$139,000	\$139,000	\$139,000
Obj. C	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Obj. E	\$129,000	\$129,000	\$129,000	\$129,000
Obj. G	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Obj. N	\$10,100,000	\$10,100,000	\$10,100,000	\$10,100,000

## Package Description

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

Digital citizenship is defined by the Legislature as “norms of appropriate, responsible, and healthy behavior related to current technology use, including digital and media literacy, ethics, etiquette, and security”. The term also includes “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, develop, produce, and interpret media, as well as internet safety and cyberbullying prevention and response” (RCW 28A.650.010). The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and emphasized the importance of educational technology to support student learning and help students and educators develop strong digital citizenship skills. When Washington’s school buildings closed in March 2020 to prevent spread of COVID-19, and districts quickly and valiantly shifted to online learning, teachers adapted their lessons for virtual learning platforms and students did their best to adjust to these major shifts. This reliance on technology amplified digital deserts and disparities among our state’s students. Low-income families faced disproportionate learning barriers due to a lack of access to devices and connectivity.

As a targeted solution to these needs, the 2021 Legislature passed House Bill 1365 (HB 1365).

The purpose of HB 1365 is to:

- a) accelerate student access to learning devices and related goods and services;
- b) expand training programs and technical assistance on using technology to support student learning;
- c) build the capacity of schools and districts to support digital navigation services for students and their families; and
- d) support media literacy and digital citizenship through school district leadership teams.

The legislature fully funded the bill for the 2021-23 biennium, providing OSPI with \$19.7 million for the 2021-23 biennium to implement and administer the technology grant program and \$446,000 for the 2021-23 biennium to implement and administer the media literacy and digital citizenship program. Both of these programs are assumed in the legislation, to be ongoing.

Funding associated with this legislation has allowed OSPI, in partnership with the Educational Service Districts (ESDs) to focus more directly on accelerating 1:1 device programs, increasing access through and to assistive technology, expanding training programs and technical assistance on using technology to support student learning and supporting capacity building to districts for digital navigation services to students and their families, supporting the cross-content integration of media literacy and digital citizenship, providing quality professional learning, and support for media literacy & Digital Citizenship.

As reliance on technology continues to increase, cyber security and student privacy continue to be high risk, critical areas in need of increased support. As districts rapidly moved to remote learning, so did incidents of email phishing and destructive viruses, Zoom “bombing,” and website hacking. We have seen an increased need for students and teachers to protect their personal information online, district business staff to understand the importance of cyber-attack

awareness and online best practices, and how crucial it is for district technology staff to have training, support, and guidance.

Unfortunately, funding to implement the work outlined in House Bill 1365 was provided for the 2021–23 biennium only. There are no ongoing state funds to sustain this work.

### What is your proposed solution?

OSPI requests funds to continue the work as charged by House Bill 1365 and codified in Chapter 28A.650 RCW, RCW 28A.300.840, and RCW 28A 300.845.

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

#### ***Digital Equity & Inclusion – House Bill 1365, Section 4***

RCW 28A.650.065 requires OSPI, subject to the availability of funds, to develop and administer a technology grant program. It is critical that we maintain the momentum, and the systems of support that have been established throughout the state, in partnership with school districts and educational service districts (ESDs) over the past year of work. Without ongoing resources for grants, districts will lose access to supports and resources, causing the state to move backwards in closing technology gaps and supporting learning recovery.

RCW 28A.650.070 requires OSPI to collect and analyze data related to technology initiatives, and to submit a report to the legislature every other November.

This proposal requests:

- \$373,000 per year, ongoing to support stable grant administration, program oversight, data analysis and reporting, technical assistance to school districts, and collaboration with ESDs.
- \$9,850,000 per year, ongoing to continue the digital equity & inclusion technology grant program.
- \$50,000 per year to contract with PSESD to meet data collection and analysis required in Sec. 5 (1) of HB 1365. Collecting and analyzing data related to technology initiatives, including distribution and demographics of the initiatives. Additionally, conduct a biennial survey of school and school district progress to accomplishing a 1:1 student - learning device ratio and expanded technology support and training. This data is used for the legislative report outlined in 5. (2).

#### ***Media Literacy & Digital Citizenship – House Bill 1365, Sec. 6 (RCW 28A.300.840)***

RCW 28A.300.840 requires OSPI to establish a grant program with the purpose of supporting media literacy and digital citizenship through school district leadership teams. The Media Literacy and Digital Citizen grant program statute is set to run through July 31, 2031. In order to support the activities outlined in House Bill 1365, this proposal requests funds to support:

- \$288,000 per year to support grant administration, program oversight, technical assistance to districts to support media literacy and digital citizenship. Funds will also support statewide district professional development, instructional leadership, the

development of best practices and guidance, and other resources to support security & student data privacy.

- \$200,000 per year for ongoing Media Literacy & Digital Citizenship grants to integrate across content areas.
- \$100,000 per year for conferences and professional learning sessions to support and engage school district leadership teams around media literacy, digital citizenship, cybersecurity, and student data privacy

The first year of implementation clearly demonstrated and expressed need by Washington State educators. The partnership with district leadership teams have also informed existing work under RCW 28A.650.050, in which OSPI is responsible for hosting and updating a web-based based location with links to recommended successful practices and resources to support digital citizenship, media literacy, and internet safety. Over the course of the past few years, the ever-changing digital information landscape presents challenges including the spread of misinformation, the loss of civil discourse, and further increasing the need to support educators with curriculum integration and implementation. Resources provided through passage of House Bill 1365 are essential for providing K–12 students with the skills and knowledge they need to meet these ever-emerging challenges. The federal government has been raising alarms around cybersecurity in K–12 schools in the past year. Recommendations outlined in the [K-12 Cybersecurity Act of 2021 and](#) demonstrates the increased need to coordinate cybersecurity plans and provide resources to local entities to help manage new technology projects to prevent future cyber-attacks. This proposal includes expanded resources to support cyber security.

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

Currently, due to funding for the last biennium (fiscal years 2021–23) OSPI manages a budget of approximately \$10 million per year to support work in the areas of Digital Equity and Inclusion as well as Media Literacy & Digital Citizenship. At the end of fiscal year 2023, this amount will be reduced back down to \$168,000.

This reduction will severely limit the ability of OSPI to implement HB 1365, deliver impactful programs, support school districts in critical areas, and eliminate digital disparities. Lack of ongoing resources through the grants established in, and RCW 28A.300.840 resulting in inconsistent implementation across districts with the greatest disparities occurring in our marginalized communities.

## Performance Measures

### Performance outcomes:

Performance measures include:

- Access to technology: fulfill Washington’s goal for all districts to have a 1:1m device program, specifically districts with high free and reduced lunch percentages, rural and small districts, those districts seeking to support student learning with assistive technology
- Gap-closing growth in 8th and 10th grade assessment scores

- Graduation rates by student group

#### Media Literacy & Digital Citizenship

- Increase online professional learning by 15 sessions
- Ongoing bi-annual ML & DC conferences to benefit 240 educators
- Continue ML & DC district grants to grow cross-content skill integration

## Assumptions and Calculations

### Expansion or alteration of a current program or service:

Continuation of funding to continue work outlined in HB 1365 (2021).

### Detailed assumptions and calculations:

The funding needed to continue the work prescribed in House Bill 1365 (2021) is as follows:

#### **Digital Equity and Inclusion**

- Staffing: \$373,000 (3.0 full-time equivalent [FTE]):
  - 1.0 FTE Program Supervisor
  - 1.0 FTE Data and Strategic Planning Program Specialist
  - 1.0 FTE Administrative Assistant
- Devices and grants to school districts: \$9,850,000
- Data analysis: \$50,000 (the original fiscal note did not identify a cost of this work, but it is now known to be \$50,000 per year).
  - Funding would support a contract with Puget Sound Educational Service District (ESD) 171 to accomplish the following:
    - Collect and analyze data on technology consultations, procurement, and training provided by ESDs; and develop and report recommendations for improving administration and oversight of this work.
    - Gather and report the status of the states' progress toward accomplishing the goals of HB 1365.
    - Collect and provide updates on innovative and collaborative activities occurring in communities across the state to support public technology literacy and fluency, as well as universal access to learning devices.
  - Specifically, funds would purchase:
    - \$36,432: 463 hours of staff time
      - 209 hours: Director of Research and Evaluation
      - 180 hours: Equity and Evaluation Consultant
      - 74 hours: Coordinator
    - \$9,000 for report design, travel, and data visualization consultant
    - \$4,998 for indirect

#### **Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship**

- Staffing: \$288,000 (2.0 FTE)
  - 1.0 FTE Program Supervisor

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- Conferences/professional learning sessions: \$100,000. As required in House Bill 1365, OSPI will convene two regional conferences on the subject of media literacy and digital citizenship. Each regional conference is estimated to cost \$50,000. Costs include, but are not limited to: Facility rental fees, guest speaker contracts, travel for participants and presenters, and substitute reimbursement payments to schools if the conferences are held during the school year.
- Grants to school districts: \$200,000

### Workforce assumptions:

This proposal includes 5.0 FTE staff at OSPI to provide program oversight, administration, and implementation of state laws related to educational technology, media literacy, and digital citizenship.

The full estimated costs for each position are as follows:

- 1.0 FTE Digital Equity and Inclusion Program Supervisor: \$144,000 per year
- 1.0 FTE Media Literacy and Digital Citizenship Program Supervisor: \$144,000 per year
- 1.0 FTE Cybersecurity and Digital Citizenship Program Supervisor: \$144,000 per year
- 1.0 FTE Data and Strategic Planning Specialist: \$133,000 per year
- 1.0 FTE Educational Technology Administrative Assistant: \$96,000 per year

### How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

Many students lack sufficient access to the internet and learning devices, especially students experiencing poverty. This proposal aims to provide a universal 1:1 student to learning device ratio, reducing gaps in access and ensuring all students have access to continue their learning away from school. OSPI will continue to provide focused technical assistance and support to small and rural school districts who may not have applied for technology grants in the past.

This proposal's grant program also focuses on inclusive and adaptive technology, including support for multilingual/English learners and students receiving special education services. In the first round of funding, one-third of the funds went to inclusionary and adaptive technology.

As part of the grant program, districts are required to outline technology inequities within the district and how the district will collaborate with regional educational service districts, other districts, and OSPI to implement the grants and close these inequities.

The data collection and reporting required by law and supported through this proposal is an important aspect to increased equity across the state. Ongoing and consistent measurements are needed to ensure opportunity gaps are closing.

## Strategic and Performance Outcomes

### Strategic framework:

This request directly connects to the Governor's Results Washington Goal 1: World-class education. It also directly connects to OSPI's Strategic Goals #1: Equitable Access to Strong Foundations; Strategic Goal #2: Rigorous Learner-Centered Options in Every Community; and Strategic Goal #3: A Diverse, Inclusive, and Highly Skilled Workforce.

## Other Collateral Connections

### Intergovernmental:

This request would allow OSPI to continue supporting school districts and educational service districts with these grants, technical assistance, and other supports.

### Stakeholder response:

There is strong support for digital equity among education stakeholders. House Bill 1365 (2021) received public support in testimony from a number of organizations including the Washington State School Directors' Association, the Association of Washington Business, Washington Retail Association, Washington STEM, and Washington State PTA.

### 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:

None.