



# Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## **Failing Schools**

### 1. **Purpose:**

Funding is provided to implement Chapter 159, Laws of 2013, related to transforming persistently failing schools. Two main activities are supported through this funding:

- Creation and operation of a differentiated system of school improvement activities, including accountability, supports, and recognition of schools in Washington.
- Operation of the Required Action District program.

### 2. **Description of services provided:**

- Grants to Tier III and Tier II schools to support School Improvement Plan development and implementation.
- Grants to districts with 2/3 of their schools identified for Tier II and/or Tier III supports.
- Grants to Required Action Districts to support implementation and monitoring of required action plans that were informed by intensive needs assessments.
- Funding in each Educational Service District to provide regional coordination and supports of equitable school improvement activities, including data use to drive improvement activities.
- Professional learning and development programming across WSIF measure areas (ELA/Math proficiency and growth, attendance, dual credit, 9th grade on track, graduation) for all schools, with more intensive supports provided to Tier II and Tier III schools.
- Staffing to coordinate and implement the revised Required Action District program to align with improvement activities authorized under ESSA.

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

Washington created an accountability system based on the metrics in the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF). Schools were identified for tiered levels of support, as described below. To be eligible for funding under this proviso, schools or districts had to be identified for supports.

- Required Action Districts receive the most intensive levels of support. They are identified through a process outlined in statute and rule which focuses on the most persistently low-achieving schools.
- Tier III schools are identified for comprehensive supports. They are the bottom 5% of all schools as measured by the "all students" group and

comprehensive low-graduation (for high schools with less than a 67% 4-year graduation rate).

- Tier II includes schools with three or more student groups with scores below the identification threshold for “all students” and schools with the lowest measure on the English Learner progress measure.
- Districts with 2/3 or more of their schools identified for supports are eligible for district grants.

**Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year:**

**Number of School Districts:** 101  
**Number of Schools:** 149  
**Number of Students:** 0  
**Number of Educators:** 0  
**Other:** 0

**Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs):** 8.4

**Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding:** 3

**FY21 Funding: State Appropriation:** \$14.352 million  
**Federal Appropriation:** \$0  
**Other fund sources:** \$0  
**TOTAL (FY21)** \$14.352 million

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

- No  
 Yes, please explain.

5. **State funding history:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount Funded</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>
FY21	\$14.352 million	\$13.181 million
FY20	\$14.352 million	\$13.157 million
FY19	\$14.352 million	\$11.887 million
FY18	\$9.352 million	\$7.374 million
FY17	\$9.352 million	\$8.471 million
FY16	\$7.235 million	\$6.260 million
FY15	\$6.7 million	\$6.165 million

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

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Number of Districts</b>
FY21	149	101
FY20	149	101
FY19	175	117
FY18	59	41
FY17	62	46
FY16	258	111
FY15	275	15

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

OSPI has made a few changes in system and school improvement funding in the 2020–21 school year.

- Reduced total number of contractors in order to increase per-school grant funding (no longer paying contractors with state funding).
- Refocused contractors on working with school and district leadership to expand systems of support and strengthen development and implementation of school improvement plans.

OSPI continues to implement and monitor the changes that were made in the 2020-21 school year into the 2021-22 school year.

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

A key measure of success of this programming is improvement in the accountability system (WSIF) for the schools identified for improvement. The school improvement activities funded under this proviso are set on a three-year cycle. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and no SBA testing for the 2019-2020 school year, the state filed a waiver, that was approved to extend the initial cycle for an additional year, schools currently identified for supports are beginning a fourth year of full funding and support (2021–22 school year).

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted how these schools will be evaluated for success at the end of the extended cycle. Each of the WSIF measures for the final year of identification (2019–20) were either disrupted (attendance, 9th grade on track, dual credit completion) or impossible to measure, as the statewide assessments measuring proficiency and growth were not possible to administer. OSPI is continuing to work to determine the best way to assess the improvement schools made in order to identify schools for improvement for the next three-year cycle.

The current focus on creating regional leadership and coordination through the Educational Service Districts, in collaboration with OSPI’s Office of System and School Improvement, has added efficiency and effectiveness of connecting identified schools and districts with intensive supports from regional leaders while deepening connection between the state office to guide investments.

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

School improvement efforts are resource intensive and require significant investments in financial and human capital resources in order to create rapid improvement. This is due to the deep systemic issues at play for many of our schools identified for improvement, many of which were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic:

- lower retention of classroom teachers and some administrative positions;
- challenges in hiring qualified and experienced educators, especially in high-needs areas like special education or English learners;
- lack of resource for social-emotional learning support staff, such as school counselors, social workers, school nurses, psychologist;
- lack of time for professional development and learning and non-instructional time for educators to plan and provide tiered supports for students; and
- diverse needs of students and families stretching available supports.

10. **Future opportunities:**

Reidentification for the next three-year cycle of system and school improvement will highlight areas where programming under this proviso has been effective and provide direction on where additional investments would speed improvement for students.

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

ESSB 5092, Sec. 1511 (1)(b) - \$14,352,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2020 and \$14,352,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 are provided solely for implementation of chapter 159, Laws of 2013 (K-12 education – failing schools).

12. **Other relevant information:**

N/A

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

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#).

14. **Program Contact Information:**

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