



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

## *Comprehensive Civics Education*

### 1. **Purpose:**

The Comprehensive Civics Education proviso provided \$250,000 during the 2022–2023 fiscal year for the following purposes:

1. To develop civics resources
2. To provide support for districts centering on technical assistance and best practices for implementing K–12 civic education
3. To support quality, culturally responsive civic education

The proviso also funded:

- A grant program for school districts seeking support for curriculum development, professional development, and instructional materials.
- OSPI's assessment of statewide learning outcomes in civics.

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

#### **Animating Civic Action Project**

This multi-phase project focused on creating civics resources for use in classrooms statewide. During the first phase of the project, OSPI recorded audio interviews with Washington students and families who volunteered to share personal stories related to civics. Topics included homelessness, immigration, and incarceration. The next phase of work produced transcripts and/or animated videos to accompany the audio stories. Then, expert educators created elementary, middle, and high school lesson plans tailored to facilitate civic engagement in connection with these stories.

#### **Civic Education Grant Program**

This grant program offered districts support for curriculum development, professional development, and/or instructional materials. In accordance with the budgetary language, grant amounts were capped at \$1,500 per first-class school district (student enrollment of 2,000 or more) and \$750 per second-class school district (student enrollment of less than 2,000). To strengthen each district's purchasing power, OSPI allowed districts the option to apply as a consortium. The grant was available to all Washington state school districts and tribal compact schools. During the 2022–23 fiscal year, seven school districts received grant funds totaling \$8,250. Requests for grant funding covered the full scope of intended activities (curriculum development, professional development, and instructional materials), as well as all three grade bands (elementary, middle, and high school).

#### **OSPI Assessment of Statewide Learning Outcomes in Civics**



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In 2022, this proviso funded a survey by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center (NORC) to collect preliminary data on elementary civics in Washington state. The survey collected responses from district administrators in Washington state, speaking specifically about civics instruction at the elementary level. Sharing professional learning with multiple audiences was an outcome of this investment. The OSPI Social Studies department has begun to utilize these data to inform and adapt our statewide services.

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

This grant was created to support districts in enhancing civic education through in-service training and the development or adoption of curriculum and instructional materials. In applying for the grant, districts assure that they will:

- Identify their status as a first-class or second-class school district for use in determining the maximum award amount (up to \$1,500 for first-class districts and up to \$750 for second-class districts).
- Use the grant funds as intended to support in-service training and the development or adoption of curriculum and instructional materials.
- Upon request, provide access to information regarding materials created or adopted, instructional time provided for civic education, and in-service training provided specific to civic education. In preparation for reporting to OSPI, districts were asked to consider the following:
  - Identify and record any educational or civic partnerships created as part of this grant program;
  - Identify and record any curriculum purchased or created as part of this grant program;
  - Identify and record any in-service training purchased, created, or attended as part of this grant program; and
  - Identify and record quantitative data on districts, schools, educators, and students impacted by this grant program.

#### **Beneficiaries in the 2022-23 School Year:**

<b>Number of School Districts:</b>	7
<b>Number of Schools:</b>	11
<b>Number of Students:</b>	213
<b>Number of Educators:</b>	41
<b>Other:</b>	4



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

No

## 5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2023	\$250,000	\$158,013
2022	\$250,000	\$126,889

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Schools
23	7 school districts, 11 schools, 213 students, 41 educators
22	4 school districts, 35 schools, 582 students, 119 educators

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

This proviso was not funded past the 23 fiscal year.

## 8. Program evaluation or evaluation of major findings:

### **Animating Civic Action Project**

To date, resources developed through the Animating Civic Action project include one animated video ("Jared") and one audio interview ("Esther"), as well as three accompanying lesson plans (one each for elementary, middle, and high school). Audio and video resources are available on OSPI's YouTube channel (and linked within the corresponding lesson plans), while lesson plans are available for free (unrestricted use) on Washington's OER Commons. Additional lesson plans and audio recordings are in production.

The civics educational resources produced through this project are standards-aligned, inquiry-based, tailored by grade band, and promote both civic education and engagement. Thus, OSPI finds that they represent best practices in social studies and are responsive to the education community's need for support in civic education. However, the resources have not yet been available long enough to advertise widely or collect formal data on their use.

### **Civic Education Grant Program**

OSPI found that most school districts did not apply for the competitive grants. Seven of 301 eligible school districts and Tribal compact schools completed the requirements of the grant and received funding. The small grant amounts (up to \$750 or \$1,500, depending on the district) are likely insufficient to cover the costs related to curriculum development,



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professional development, and instructional materials, especially at the district level. Three of the seven grantees reported needing additional funding source(s) to cover the cost of their project, while one additional grantee reported the need to adjust their project to utilize a free professional development opportunity. None of the applicants utilized a consortium model when applying for funds under this grant.

Examples of district work funded under this grant include the following:

- Teachers engaged in standards alignment across grades to increase comprehensiveness in civics and social studies
- Educators developed supports for seventh grade multi-lingual learners including guided notes, articles, translated directions, modified tasks, and academic vocabulary supports.
- Teachers from two high schools collaborated on scope and sequence documents, skills expectations, voter registration plans, and discussion on AI tools.

## **OSPI Assessment of Statewide Learning Outcomes in Civics**

NORC completed its elementary civics survey during the 2021-22 fiscal year. Continuing this work during the 2022-23 fiscal year, OSPI staff engaged in several opportunities to bring this data into the national and state dialogue on civic education. Additionally, the OSPI Social Studies department has begun to utilize these data to inform and adapt the department's statewide services. In particular, the survey identified elementary educators as a population needing immediate and robust support in delivering civics content. The survey identified that instructional materials and professional development are two areas in which elementary educators and their district administrators desire additional support.

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

The first major challenge was the restriction of funds available for first-class and second-class districts. SB5092 capped the amounts available to districts at \$1,500 and \$750, respectively. While intent was likely to ensure all districts had access to the funds, the result was that most districts did not apply for the limited amounts available.

## **10. Future opportunities:**

### **Animating Civic Action Project**

Professional development opportunities focused on each of the three lessons developed under this program will maximize both the distribution of the resources and their effective implementation by educators. Additionally, the completion of those resources currently in-production and routine development of new resources would add essential variety, perspective, and representation to the catalog of open educational resources available in support of civics education and engagement.



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## **Civic Education Grant Program**

In response to low application numbers and district feedback that pursuing low amount grants is not a priority for districts, OSPI's most promising approach is to shift its focus to civics classroom materials and educator supports. If OSPI were to receive continued funding to provide high-quality civics materials and supports over time, the need for a civics grant program is likely to follow. Further, a grant model that provides adequate funding for meaningful curriculum development, professional development, and instructional materials would represent the best service to school districts.

## **Staff Development and Statewide Support**

As OSPI staff and members of the Social Studies Cadre continue to provide leadership and support for civics education and engagement statewide, data from the 2022 NORC survey (produced under this proviso) suggest that Washington's elementary educators need immediate and robust support in delivering civics content. Additional investment of funds and focus toward identifying and addressing the challenges faced by elementary educators would be an act of responsive service to Washington's education community.

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

\$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to develop resources, share best practices, and provide technical assistance for school districts to support implementation of comprehensive, culturally responsive, and high-quality civics education. Within amounts provided in this subsection, the office shall administer competitive grant awards of up to \$1,500 per first class school district and \$750 per second class school district to support in-service training and the development or adoption of curriculum and instructional materials. The office shall utilize a portion of this funding to assess the learning outcomes related to civic education curriculum and to support related assessments that gauge the degree to which high quality civic education is taking place in school districts throughout the state.

## **12. Other relevant information:**

[Animating Civic Action: Elementary School Lesson – Stereotyping](#)

[Animating Civic Action: Middle School Lesson – Homelessness](#)

[Animating Civic Action: High School Lesson - Homelessness](#)

[Animating Civic Action: "Jared"](#)

[Animating Civic Action: "Esther"](#)



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

[preliminaryfy23state-fundedprovisograntawardsupdated-42823.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

**14. Program Contact Information:**

**Name:** Hannah Tofte  
**Title:** Program Supervisor of Civic Engagement  
**Phone:** 360-764-0343  
**Email:** hannah.tofte@k12.wa.us