

# *Integrated Student Supports (ISS) Protocol Overview*

## Washington's ISS Protocol

Child Trends (2017) defines integrated student supports (ISS) as “a school-based approach to promoting students’ academic success by developing or securing and coordinating supports that target academic and nonacademic barriers to achievement” (p. 12). Their review of research indicates that ISS is a promising approach for improving student learning and promoting healthy development (Moore, H.L, et. al., 2017).

The ISS Protocol is implemented through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). MTSS is a framework that guides how supports are organized and delivered by educational professionals, in partnership with families and communities. The ISS Protocol Implementation Guide, which will be published soon, outlines a coordinated set of steps and activities in the MTSS framework. Therefore, MTSS and the ISS Protocol work together to support the needs and inform the services for each and every student.

## State Requirements

Starting September 1, 2025, local education agencies (LEAs) **must** use the ISS Protocol to plan and implement data-informed, evidence-based supplemental supports for Learning Assistance Program (LAP) as required by Substitute House Bill (SHB) [1208](#). LEAs **may** use up to 15% of their LAP base funds and 15% of high poverty funds per eligible school to provide direct supplemental services to participating students through partnerships with community, or other, out-of-school organizations.

While schools and LEAs will be required to use the ISS Protocol to plan and implement LAP supplemental supports, for optimal student academic and nonacademic outcomes, the Protocol should be used more broadly to integrate related state and federal requirements.

## Steps in the ISS Protocol

The steps in the Protocol are intended to lead to actionable information that will intentionally address the academic and nonacademic needs of students in an integrated and coordinated manner. There are five steps in the ISS Protocol that are completed by LEA and school teams in an annual cycle:



Each step in the Protocol includes an objective, expected products, step-by-step activities at the school and LEA level, and a link to the self-assessment to assess readiness and implementation. There are circumstances when the school and LEA teams may need to be combined to lead implementation of ISS, such as, in a very small school district. In this situation, the activities in each step could then be completed by one implementation team.

## Implementation Guidance and Resources

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to monitor implementation of the ISS Protocol. The following resources, which will be published soon, have been developed to support LEA and school implementation.

- **ISS Protocol Implementation Guide:** Schools and LEAs are encouraged to use the ISS Protocol Implementation Guide to effectively and efficiently implement the components of the Protocol.
  - **ISS Protocol Self-Assessment:** Schools and LEAs are **encouraged** to use the self-assessment embedded in the implementation guide to assess their readiness for ISS implementation. Schools and LEAs are **required** to use the self-assessment to assess their implementation of ISS and report the results in annual reporting for LAP.

- **School-Level ISS Protocol Template:** Information gathered on this template can be used to coordinate annual state and federal requirements (see Appendix B in the ISS Protocol Implementation Guide) and implement the ISS Protocol with fidelity and intentionality. All schools, including schools identified for improvement supports (Tier 3 Plus, Tier 3, Tier 2, Tier 1), are encouraged to use this template to support annual School Improvement Plan (SIP) requirements.
- **LEA-Level ISS Protocol Template:** Information gathered on this template can be used to coordinate annual state and federal requirements (see Appendix B in the ISS Protocol Implementation Guide) and implement the ISS Protocol with fidelity and intentionality. All LEAs, including those that contain one or more schools identified as eligible for Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, or Tier 3 Plus improvement supports, are encouraged to use this template to support improvement efforts
- **Video Walkthroughs of Guidance and Resources:** Schools and LEAs are encouraged to view these walkthroughs prior to engaging in the ISS Protocol Implementation Guide and templates.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Question 1

#### Integrated Student Supports Protocol and the impact to LEAs and schools

- Does the Protocol change who is eligible for LAP services?

**No.** The Protocol does not change the intent and purpose of LAP, which is to (1) promote the use of data when developing programs to assist students who are not meeting academic standards; and (2) guide school districts in providing the most effective and efficient practices when implementing supplemental instruction and services to assist students who are not meeting academic standards.

Consistent with previous participation requirements, enrolled students eligible to participate in LAP services are:

- Students in TK through 12th grade who are not yet meeting academic standards in basic skill areas, including reading, writing, math, or readiness associated with these skill areas.
- Students in 9th through 12th grade who are not yet on track to meet graduation requirements, which includes 8th and 9th grade students who need additional transition support into high school.

- How might the Protocol change how schools and LEAs coordinate and deliver supports to students participating in LAP?

The Protocol may change how schools and LEAs coordinate and deliver supports to students participating in LAP. When implemented as designed, the steps of the Protocol will provide actionable information that intentionally address the academic and non-academic needs of students in an integrated and coordinated manner. Some examples of ways the process might change for schools and LEAs include the following:

- alignment in communication between schools and LEAs;
- understanding and utilization of root cause analysis to match students with appropriate supports;
- awareness and utilization of resources outside of the LEA and school to address needs (e.g. staff, services, tools, professional learning, funding);
- collaboration in the development of a matrix outlining available supports and services; and
- utilization of fidelity tools to measure implementation efforts and adjust supports as needed.

## Question 2

### Partnerships with community-based organizations

- Why are partnerships with community-based organizations and other out-of-school providers important?

Students' learning and development is impacted by more than just the quality of the experiences they have in school. Their progress is also impacted by the experiences they have at home and in the community, the relationships or partnerships between individuals in these different settings, and the policies, cultural norms and values that govern interactions in these spaces (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Ensuring their success is therefore a shared responsibility between the school, families, and the community. Strong reciprocal partnerships between schools and the community (i.e., expanded learning providers, health and human services agencies, housing and basic needs providers) support positive student development (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998; Moore, & et. al., 2014).

- Are LEAs **required** to use their LAP funds for partnerships with community, or other, out-of-school organizations?

**No.** When implemented as designed, the steps in the implementation guide will provide actionable information that allows schools and LEAs to leverage all necessary existing resources, including those in their communities, to address the academic and nonacademic needs of students in an integrated and coordinated manner. Upon completing steps 1 through 3, schools and LEAs may determine a partnership with an out-of-school-organization is needed to address students' needs. In these circumstances schools and LEAs may use up to 15% of total districtwide base funds and 15% of high poverty funds per eligible school to provide

direct supplemental services to LAP-served students through partnerships with community or other out-of-school organizations. As a reminder, when any LAP funds are used, LAP reporting requirements also apply.

If schools and LEAs choose to enter a partnership with an out-of-school organization for LAP, these partnerships must be developed in accordance with the Protocol established in [RCW 28A.300.139](#). Agreements between LEA and community partners must include the following:

- Specify that LAP funds may only be used to provide direct supports and/or services to participating students.
- Identify the academic and/or nonacademic supports and/or services that will be made available to students by the community partner. Agreements should also describe how those supports and/or services align to the needs of the students as identified in the needs assessment process required by the Protocol.
- Identify how supports and/or services provided by the community partner reinforce supports provided by school staff to promote student progress towards meeting academic standards. ([RCW 28A.165.037](#)).

### Question 3

- Are there resources that are required to be used by schools and LEAs when implementing the ISS Protocol?

**Yes and No.** Yes, OSPI is required to monitor schools and LEAs in the implementation of ISS Protocol and will be using the Self-Assessment tool found in the Integrated Student Supports (ISS) Protocol Implementation Guide.

No, the additional resources which are provided to assist in implementation, such as the school and LEA templates, although recommended are not required.

- If we are a one-building LEA, which template would you recommend we use?

It is recommended that one-building LEAs use the school-level template to support their planning and implementation of the ISS Protocol.

## Training and Technical Assistance

OSPI will provide training and technical assistance in alignment with the recommended implementation timeline above to support strong implementation. These upcoming opportunities will be shared via [GovDelivery](#) as well as posted on the [ISS](#) and [LAP](#) webpages.

If you would like additional support or information, please contact:

#### OSPI's Learning Assistance Program

- Call (360) 725-6100
- Email [LAP@k12.wa.us](mailto:LAP@k12.wa.us)

#### OSPI's Center for the Improvement of Student Learning

- Call (360) 725-6052
- Email [CISL@k12.wa.us](mailto:CISL@k12.wa.us)

## REFERENCES

Moore, K.A., Caal, S., Carney, R., Lippman, L., Li, W., Muenks, K., Murphey, D., Princiotta, D., Ramirez, A., Rojas, A. and Ryberg, R. (2014). Making the grade: Assessing the evidence for integrated student supports. *Child Trends*. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/wpcontent/uploads/2014/02/2014-07ISSPaper.pdf>.

McIntosh, K., & Goodman, S. (2016). *Integrated multi-tiered systems of support: Blending* Moore, K. A., Lantos, H., Jones, R., Schindler, A., Belford, J., & Sacks, V. (2017). Making the grade: A progress report and next steps for integrated student supports. *Child Trends*. Retrieved from [https://cms.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ISS\\_ChildTrends\\_February2018.pdf](https://cms.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ISS_ChildTrends_February2018.pdf)

*RTI and PBIS*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.