

# *Leadership Internship Program*

## **Statutory and/or Budget Language**

\$477,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$700,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the leadership internship program for superintendents, principals, and program administrators.

## **Purpose**

The Washington State Educational Leadership Intern Program funds public school districts for the partial release time of district employees participating in administrative (principal, superintendent and program director) internship programs. The program is designed to provide interns with rigorous, authentic, and quality training experiences. This program, aligned with the goals of educator retention and school improvement, provides leadership training and essential skills to administrators, with the outcome of greater student achievement.

## **Description of Services Provided**

The Washington School Principals' Education Foundation (through the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)) under contract with OSPI administers the grant awards for superintendents, principals, and program administrators. Services include:

- a. Develop Leadership Internship Program application materials and program materials.
- b. Develop and keep current the Intern Program database, which includes information such as the participant's name, address, school, district, grade level, region, gender, program completion date, training participation, etc.
- c. Process Leadership Internship Program applications, prepare preliminary data for advisory committee, and organize and facilitate the candidate selection process.
- d. Prepare and distribute acceptance and rejection notices to applicants.
- e. Provide the Superintendent's designee with a breakdown of the applicants upon request. Breakdown shall include information such as the number of applications received, the number funded, etc.
- f. Collaborate/partner with other organizations and advisory committees such as the Association of Washington School Principals, Washington Association of School Administrators, and school districts to define required training/workshops/conference activities.
- g. Organize, implement, and notify participants of the training activities.
- h. Provide information to the Superintendent's designee regarding trainings, workshops, and conference activities upon request.



- i. Develop and conduct workshops for program participants.
- j. Organize and maintain all data related to principal interns, including demographic data, level in which internship shall be completed, and job placement data at end of internship year.
- k. Communicate regularly with interns on professional issues, meetings, in-service, publications, and other training opportunities.
- l. Provide enhanced three (3) day in-person cohort-based series of learning (plus 6 additional Zoom sessions) and support for all interns across the state. This professional learning will help interns in a variety of ways, including providing professional learning on the following topics:
  - Becoming a racially literate school leader
  - Creating and developing an action plan for your internship
  - Setting goals for a successful internship
  - FERPA and Confidentiality
  - ASB, Booster Club & PTA
  - Applying an equity lens during your internship
  - Engaging students in systemic change
  - Elevating student voice
  - Conducting equity audits for systemic change
  - Holding courageous conversations
  - Conducting a job search and preparing for the interview
  - Understanding and implementing school-wide inclusive practices
  - Defining my impact

## Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

Schools must assure that:

- The candidate shall be enrolled in a Professional Educator Standards Board-approved school principal preparation program.
- Each school district shall determine which applicants meet its criteria for participation in the principal internship support program. When submitting the names of applicants, the school district shall identify a mentor principal for each principal intern applicant.
- School Districts and institutes of higher education approved principal program and internships must comply with WAC 181-78A.

## Beneficiaries in the 2023-24 School Year

<b>Number of School Districts</b>	73
<b>Number of Schools</b>	152
<b>Number of Students</b>	79,040
<b>Number of Educators</b>	171
<b>Other</b>	N/A

## Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

## State Funding History

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount Funded</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>
2024	\$477,000	\$476,625
2023	\$477,000	\$393,330
2022	\$477,000	\$423,920
2021	\$477,000	\$407,973
2020	\$477,000	\$425,403

## Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>
2024	171
2023	177
2022	195
2021	177
2020	194

## Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

2023-24 marked the first year that included affinity group work during the Aspiring School Leaders Network. The goal of these racial affinity groups is to give people with similar racial or ethnic backgrounds an opportunity to discuss and navigate shared issues that are important to them and their journey towards racial equity and racial justice. The facilitation in these spaces aims to acknowledge shared experiences, provide support, encourage wellness and advocate for change. For future school leaders, the collective work in leading and creating schools that are both inclusive and racially affirming is of paramount importance. This is one of the reasons we wanted to bring affinity groups to our time.

## Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

Participant evaluations are completed annually and reviewed by the Intern Grant Advisory Committee. This evaluative information, combined with feedback from our Advisory Committee is used to adjust and make improvements to the program. Findings include enhanced awareness and subsequent teaching, learning, and acquisition of pertinent skill sets needed to be a successful administrator in the current educational environment in schools and districts.

## Major Challenges Faced by the Program

Overwhelmingly, AWSP continues to hear that additional substitute release days are needed in order to adequately prepare someone to step into an administrative role. When the grant started, interns received 45 release days for administrative experiences and job shadowing. Now the language suggests 20 days. As district sub rates continue to increase, the ability for us to offer a minimum of 20 full release days severely limits the number of interns we are able to fund. The appropriation has continued to be inadequate to support programmatic needs and accomplish the goals and intent of the program.

## Future Opportunities

This program has been and continues to be essential to the preparation of qualified, effective building and district administrators. The program needs a substantial increase in funding to better meet the preparation needs of future school leaders across the state. The state principal workforce continues to see an increase in retirements and people stepping away from the job. The realities of leadership and the need to increase preparation is outlined in a research report written by Dr. David Knight, co-Director of Education Policy Analytics Lab and the Center for Early Childhood Policy and Equity, (<https://digital.lib.washington.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/39656210-3616-4377-9918-ea9a46b91fe5/content>). The Leadership Internship Program encourages and supports new candidates to meet the demands of increased leadership openings across our state. The full support of this program is vital in providing all students with effective, highly qualified and diverse leaders.

## Other Relevant Information

The Wallace Foundation's (2021 Research Report) , "How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research" states, "An effective principal's impact is stronger and broader than previously thought, making it "difficult to envision" a higher return on investment in K-12 education than the cultivation of high-quality school leadership." Without continuing to invest in future school leaders and creating an equitable, authentic system of preparation we will continue to see leaders leave in the first three years. This program is critical to the future of leadership in our state and the outcomes of our students.

## Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#)

## Program Contact Information

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