

Safety Net Committee Support

Statutory and/or Budget Language

\$481,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$481,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for additional full-time equivalent staff to support the work of the safety net committee and to provide training and support to LEAs applying for safety net awards.

Purpose

The purpose of this appropriation is to provide additional full-time equivalent (FTE) staff to support the work of the Safety Net Committee and to provide training and support to LEAs applying for Safety Net awards.

Description of Services Provided

Regional trainings, unlimited support to applicants (phone, email, zoom), reviews of applications submitted by the LEAs, and administrative support to the Special Education Oversight Committee.

Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

RCW 28A.150.392 requires that schools must demonstrate need for special education funding beyond the amounts provided through the special education funding formula under RCW 28A.150.390.

Beneficiaries in the 2023-24 School Year

Number of School Districts	138 school districts, 4 charter schools, 2 state schools, 1 Educational service Agency
Number of Schools	Awards not tracked at the school level.
Number of Students	5,981 High Need Individual applications funded (6,127 requested)
Number of Educators	N/A
Other	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.



State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$481,000	\$332,474
2023	\$481,000	\$479,485
2022	\$481,000	\$255,151
2021	\$481,000	\$234,897
2020	\$481,000	\$207,350

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	145 LEAs, 5,981 students
2023	139 LEAs, 4,832 students
2022	132 LEAs, 3,862 students
2021	118 LEAs, 3,152 students
2020	130 LEAs, 4,087 students

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

In previous years, a sample of IEPs were selected for a compliance review. This review was removed for the 2023-24 application and future years. Additionally, an application platform was launched for the 2023-24 application. OSPI staff added twice weekly office hours to assist applicants and expanded training opportunities.

Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

LEA applicants continue to request that the process be streamlined and to receive more feedback when applications are not funded. Additionally, LEAs request that barriers to applying be removed. The major barriers identified are the high threshold for individual student applications, the amount of work required to submit a Safety Net application, and the timing of the Safety Net reimbursement.

Major Challenges Faced by the Program

Safety Net award determinations are to be distributed to LEAs in August of each year. To provide LEAs ample opportunity to apply, there is one initial round for high need individual students with an opportunity for updates and one application round for community impact. Thus, the bulk of the application review work falls in a compressed timeframe of three or four months, rather than spread over the calendar year. This makes it difficult for LEAs who do not receive the funding until August.

The increase in applications each year continues to prove difficult for OSPI staff to manage. The timelines for review do not change and when approximately 1,000 student applications are added each year, meeting deadlines is challenging.

Future Opportunities

Program staff continue to examine ways to lessen the burden of applying for Safety Net funds.

A new application platform was developed in the Education Grants Management System (EGMS). While this platform has the opportunity to streamline and make the process easier, the newness of the system has caused difficulties for both LEA and OSPI staff. OSPI staff continues to work with the developer of the platform to make the application easier to use.

Other Relevant Information

OSPI Special Education leadership and staff review feedback from the safety net surveys and other input from committee members and school and LEA partners to explore ways to improve application and approval processes.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#) A list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year will be posted to [the Safety Net website.](#)

Program Contact Information

Name	Amber O'Donnell
Title	Administrative Program Specialist 2
Phone	360-725-6075
Email	amber.odonnell@k12.wa.us