

YOUTH, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

Community Partnerships for Reengagement Initiative

Partner Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

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Open Doors Youth Reengagement serves Washington state students aged 16 to 21 who have left the traditional education system. These students include many impacted by disparities in access to educational and economic opportunity and a disproportionate number who have experienced juvenile detention or incarceration. Open Doors is operated by Washington’s Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and works in more than half the state’s school districts through programs run either by the district itself or by a partner provider. Enrollment continues to grow, but there is a critical need for research on what evidence-based practices and policies help youth the furthest from justice to reengage with learning and pursue their goals.

The Community Partnerships for Reengagement Initiative (CPRI) is a collaboration between Education Northwest and Open Doors. CPRI’s purpose is to use data to promote learning across the Open Doors system, and beyond, about promising practices and program models that promote positive youth reengagement outcomes.

Learning from what works

The Open Doors system is complex, with different sites using a diversity of practices. To help school districts and partner organizations understand what works best for youth, CPRI conducted one of the first-ever statewide research projects on youth reengagement. This project was the most extensive longitudinal look to date at both student- and program-level data across a large reengagement effort.

Through this work, we identified many examples of what Open Doors programs are doing well—including potential lessons for the traditional K–12 education system. The activities we undertook included:

Co-designing a [theory of action](#) and success indicators to serve as the foundation for a systemwide continuous learning and improvement framework

Helping OSPI build their data capacity and developing resources that they use to train staff members of new Open Doors programs

Documenting promising youth reengagement program practices within and across six sites with evidence of positive outcomes for youth most impacted by inequity

Facilitating opportunities for providers to use data for continuous learning and improvement both at the program and state levels

Establishing a new dataset, definitions, and practices to support continued analysis of student data related to program models, provider type, and pathways

This collaborative research culminated in the October 2023 [Open Doors Summit](#). At this gathering, Open Doors partners National League of Cities and Achieving the Dream facilitated interactive sessions to identify opportunities to support programs across Washington.

Moving forward to support youth

OSPI is already using the products of CPRI research to orient and train new Open Doors programs on promising practices and to report to the Washington state legislature. OSPI and providers are also acting on some of the recommendations that emerged from the summit, including increasing providers' opportunities for peer learning and connection, building state and provider capacity to use data for continuous learning, and improving policies and guidelines [to expand access and equity](#).

OSPI is supporting program improvement by codifying and documenting effective practices, strategies, and features. The office is also identifying changes in policy, resource allocation, and improvements to supports that will enable the most effective Open Doors models to spread across Washington and sustain their work into the future.

Currently, Education Northwest is working with Open Doors to evaluate a two-year summer learning pilot funded by the state legislature. Building on insights and data from the CPRI research, the pilot is designed to promote innovative community partnerships and reduce barriers to learning during the summer, particularly for students who have experienced juvenile detention or incarceration. Findings will be available in spring 2025.