



MAINTAINING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL STATEWIDE HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND PLAN

2026 Supplemental Operating Budget Decision Package

Agency: 3500 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Budget period: 2026 Supplemental Budget

Budget level: PL

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

At the direction of the 2023 Legislature, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has been facilitating a transition to a statewide online High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) platform for all school districts to use. The Legislature invested over \$4 million for this work, and more than 200 school districts are using the universal platform this year. OSPI requests funding to continue meeting this legislative requirement by providing uninterrupted service to the platform for current users and continuing to build toward statewide implementation for the remaining school districts.

FISCAL DETAIL

| Operating Expenditures | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Fund 001 | \$883,000 | \$2,421,000 | \$2,365,000 | \$2,365,000 |
| Total Expenditures | \$883,000 | \$2,421,000 | \$2,365,000 | \$2,365,000 |
| Biennial Totals | \$3,304,000 | | \$4,730,000 | |
| Staffing | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
| FTEs | 0.0 | 4.83 | 4.83 | 4.83 |
| Average Annual | 2.42 | | 4.83 | |
| Object of Expenditure | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
| Obj. A | \$0 | \$500,000 | \$500,000 | \$500,000 |
| Obj. B | \$0 | \$245,000 | \$244,000 | \$244,000 |
| Obj. C | \$875,500 | \$1,411,000 | \$1,411,000 | \$1,411,000 |
| Obj. E | \$7,500 | \$177,000 | \$177,000 | \$177,000 |
| Obj. G | \$0 | \$33,000 | \$33,000 | \$33,000 |
| Obj. J | \$0 | \$55,000 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Revenue | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | FY 2028 | FY 2029 |
| Fund 0 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Total Revenue | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| Biennial Totals | \$0.00 | | \$0.00 | |

PACKAGE DESCRIPTION

Washington has a long history of making strategic investments in students' pathways to postsecondary success. Targeted, individualized, and comprehensive supports for students transitioning from K–12 education into adulthood requires a multi-year approach that balances state-level consistency with the agility needed to meet individual school district and student needs. The Legislature recognizes Washington's HSBP as both a high school graduation requirement and a critical component of our education system. It is designed to help students explore their career interests and plan their high school coursework and activities so they graduate prepared to take the next step in their learning journey, whether that is higher education, the workforce, the military, or another option. School districts' HSBP implementation has been inconsistent, resulting in inequitable experiences and results for students, staff, and families across the state.

In 2023, the Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 5243, which directs OSPI to "facilitate the transition to a universal online HSBP platform that will ensure consistent and equitable access to the needed information and support to guide students' educational experiences and ensure preparation for their postsecondary plans." The first phase of this statewide transition was for OSPI to solicit bids and select a vendor for the statewide platform by June 1, 2024. Following vendor selection, the Legislature directed OSPI to develop an implementation plan, which OSPI published and submitted to the Legislature in early 2025.

The costs and plan elements detailed below represent OSPI's best plan and cost estimates to keep this mandated transition on track, informed by ongoing conversation with the selected vendor and the current implementation plan that ensures all districts adhere to the legislative timeline and make the transition to the universal platform by the 2026–27 school year.

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

The Legislature invested over \$4 million to complete the vendor selection, implementation preparation, and year one of two for district transition to the statewide HSBP platform. OSPI submitted a decision package for the 2025–27 biennial Operating Budget to continue the work as outlined and required by state law; however, the Legislature did not appropriate sufficient funding to facilitate the completion of OSPI's efforts to support all districts' transition to the new platform.

Thus, OSPI seeks funding to maintain momentum and realize the Legislature's intent to ensure statewide access within two years. Over 200 school districts are using SchoolLinks this year. Providing uninterrupted service to current users and reaching full statewide implementation depends on direct state investment in the 2026 Supplemental Operating Budget.

To maximize the state's previous investments and implement the legislative mandate to ensure all Washington students have access to the benefits of a high-quality, consistent, and accessible

HSBP, OSPI needs to be fully funded to secure platform access for all users, which from here forward is understood to include district and building staff, students and their families, and educational partners who help guide students' postsecondary planning and provide other supports, especially to historically excluded and marginalized populations. OSPI also must provide all districts and other HSBP platform users with the professional training and technical assistance needed to ensure successful adoption of the statewide tool.

To give lawmakers and the Governor due time to consider the updated timeline and costs of implementation of SB 5243, and to ensure the last cohort of transitioning districts also experience a fully supported rollout that is timely, smooth, and uninterrupted by gaps in funding, OSPI believes it is essential to submit this request reflecting the current scope of known costs for implementation.

What is your proposal?

OSPI requests funding to meet the legislative directive of full HSBP platform implementation by the 2026–27 school year. For the purposes of this proposal, costs connected to full statewide implementation have been organized into: State Administration and Implementation Support; Universal Online HSBP Statewide Platform Access; and Statewide Professional Learning.

State Administration and Implementation Support

Training, guidance, resources, instructional materials, monthly implementation updates, and technical assistance for all users of the statewide HSBP platform is essential to smooth and successful implementation and requires state agency administrative staffing.

Universal Online HSBP Statewide Platform Access

The online platform will have license fees for continued access.

Statewide Professional Learning

To execute a transition of this size with fidelity, professional learning is necessary. Key roles within the education system will receive professional development and learning around optimized use of the platform in service of all users.

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

Please describe in detail how this proposal is likely to benefit communities and populations who have historically been excluded by governmental decisions. Include both demographic and geographic information about communities.

This proposal is directly connected to providing equitable access to educational opportunities through the use of a universal career and college exploration and preparation tool for all Washington students. This universal tool ensures direct and equitable support for the postsecondary exploration and preparation needs of our most vulnerable students, particularly students of color, American Indian/Alaska Native students, and highly mobile students including students who are migratory, students in foster care, and students experiencing homelessness. These student groups face unique systemic barriers to completing their K–12 education and graduating ready for their next step. The universal HSBP can mitigate barriers that perpetuate larger systemic inequities that persist along racial and socioeconomic lines.

Describe how your agency engaged with communities and populations, particularly those who have been historically excluded and marginalized by governmental decisions?

OSPI followed the directive from the Legislature by engaging multiple communities and partners to seek input to inform the selection and transition to the universal platform. Examples of engagement to date include working with the nine regional educational service districts (ESDs) to facilitate listening sessions with all users across the state. Staff sought feedback from all users on what career and college exploration and preparation supports they most wanted to see included in the HSBP platform and process. OSPI also facilitated a statewide survey of all users to gather input on platform functionality and support needs. This engagement has informed the transition plan to fully implement the universal platform.

What input did your agency receive and how was it incorporated into your proposal?

See above.

Explain why and how these equity impacts will be addressed, i.e., consider communities or populations excluded or disproportionately impacted by the proposal.

See above.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

State Administration and Implementation Support

To ensure uninterrupted access to current users and support remaining school districts with platform adoption, OSPI requests funding for agency staff for state-level program administration and guidance, as well as technical support from OSPI's communication and data teams. Lead HSBP staff will coordinate across divisions to oversee implementation and direct continuous review, enhancement, and updates to the process and platform. They will provide technical assistance to school districts and educational partners as requested, and develop and update implementation guidance, data alignment and usage resources, instructional materials, and family engagement toolkits. The data lead will manage data exchanges with the vendor, maintain data sharing agreements and collect and analyze data to inform OSPI's implementation supports and future policy and funding requests connected to HSBP platform improvement.

Universal Online HSBP Statewide Platform Access

OSPI requests funding to maintain access for the 200 school districts who are already using the platform and transition the remaining districts during the 2026–27 school year, meeting the Legislature's mandated two-year implementation timeline. This purchase ensures provision of platform licenses for all users.

Statewide Professional Learning

OSPI requests funding for implementation communication and professional development. Co-delivered in collaboration with the vendor, OSPI will provide training to complete the transition to the universal platform for the Fall 2026 Launch Cohort districts and elevate the focus on best practice and optimization of platform use with specialized strategies based on the user audience. For example, school administrators will learn about using platform data to inform

course offerings and scheduling, school counselors will focus on using platform data to build and connect individual students with academic and career-oriented opportunities, and families will learn how to use the HSBP platform to support their students' career and/or college aspirations and exploration.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

OSPI has no alternative but to plan implementation according to the provisions within SB 5243, inclusive of all required elements, and to estimate the most accurate costs possible based on remaining implementation support needs and vendor feedback. The provisions and requirements outlined in the bill, and included as cost drivers in this request, have been carefully and thoughtfully detailed for lawmakers to encapsulate the full scope of work needed to support successful rollout and full statewide adoption of Washington's chosen universal HSBP platform.

What resources does the agency already have that are dedicated to this purpose?

OSPI received \$114,000 in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 in support of High School and Beyond Plans.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CALCULATIONS

Expansion, reduction, elimination or alteration of a current program or service:

In the 2023–25 omnibus Operating Budget (section 501(4)(y)), OSPI received funding to support Senate Bill 5243 for the HSBP tool. The Legislature provided \$72,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$4,663,000 in fiscal year 2025.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

OSPI is requesting \$883,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2026 and \$1,411,000 annually thereafter for comprehensive platform licenses for all users and year-round technical support.

The estimated annual cost to provide virtual staff training is \$144,000 beginning in FY 2027. This provides access to the equivalent of 400 hours of training and technical assistance office hours.

Workforce assumptions:

0.5 FTE Director: To provide oversight and approval for HSBP implementation and be a liaison with OSPI's Executive Sponsor and Executive Steering Committee. The cost of this FTE is \$120,000 in FY27 and \$114,000 annually thereafter.

2.43 FTE Program Supervisors: These positions will provide the following:

- The High School and Beyond Planning lead will provide technical assistance, co-develop professional learning, support data analysis and reporting, develop instructional materials, ensure regular communication with all district points of contact, provide contract management, and act as a liaison with the platform vendor, the ReadyWA HSBP coalition, and the Workforce Board. The cost of this position is \$175,000 in FY 2027 and \$164,000 annually thereafter.
- The Secondary School Counseling lead will provide technical assistance, communication,

and professional learning for high school counselors and career specialists. It will support the development of related instructional materials, guidance, and resources and act as a liaison with the Washington Council for High School and College Relations, State Board of Education, and Washington Student Achievement Council. The cost of this FTE is \$105,000 in FY 2027 and \$98,000 annually thereafter.

- The Comprehensive School Counseling lead will provide technical assistance, communication, and professional learning for middle school counselors. It will support the development of related instructional materials, guidance, and resources and act as a liaison with the Washington School Counselor Association. The cost of this FTE is \$58,000 in FY 2027 and \$54,000 annually thereafter.
- The Dual Credit lead will provide technical assistance, communication, and professional learning related to dual credit within the HSBP process. It will support development of instructional materials, guidance, and resources and act as a liaison with higher education partners. The cost of this FTE is \$88,000 in FY 2027 and \$82,000 annually thereafter.

0.15 FTE Administrative Program Specialist 2: To provide support for contract development and management with the vendor. The cost of this FTE is \$26,000 in FY 2027 and \$24,000 annually thereafter.

0.5 FTE Administrative Assistant 3: To provide administrative and clerical support for HSBP implementation to include webinar support, registration, and clock hours for professional learning, email inbox processing, publication and video editing and posting, webpage management, budget tracking, travel arrangements, and other support tasks. The cost of this FTE is \$59,000 in FY 2027 and \$53,000 annually thereafter.

1.0 FTE Data Analyst Lead: To lead data-related activities and serve as the primary point of contact for data coordination. Responsibilities include documenting data needs, managing data exchanges with the vendor, maintaining data-sharing agreements, and ensuring compliance with privacy and security requirements. The analyst will conduct analyses, develop visualizations and reports on HSBP and postsecondary enrollment data, respond to data requests, and coordinate across teams to align agency data priorities. The cost of this position is \$201,000 in FY 2027 and \$189,000 annually thereafter.

0.25 FTE Communications Consultant 4: To provide ongoing communication assistance, including support for facilitating; monitoring and updating the existing HSBP Communication Plan to support district implementation; creation of videos and publications to elevate best practices; and maintain draft communication toolkits, templates, and translated resources provided to districts in partnership with the HSBP Program Supervisor. The cost of this FTE is \$34,000 in FY 2027 and \$32,000 annually thereafter.

Historical funding:

Fiscal Year 2026

- FTE = 1.0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$114,000, reflective of the 6% reduction
- Near General Fund = \$114,000, reflective of the 6% reduction
- Other Funds = \$0

Fiscal Year 2027

- FTE = 1.0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$114,000, reflective of the 6% reduction
- Near General Fund = \$114,000, reflective of the 6% reduction
- Other Funds = \$0

STRATEGIC AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Strategic framework:

This proposal helps drive all four of Superintendent Reykdal's Strategic Goals, which are: Strategic Goal #1, to ensure all students have equitable access to strong foundations; Strategic Goal #2, providing every student with rigorous, learner-centered academic options in their community; Strategic Goal #3, ensuring that Washington educators are highly skilled and prepared to instruct and guide K–12 students; and Strategic Goal #4, ensuring OSPI provides timely, consistent, and accurate customer service.

Striving for a consistent HSBP platform experience for all Washington students leads to better and more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students preparing for postsecondary success. A high-quality HSBP platform and a professional K–12 workforce that is trained to support and maximize student and family use of the platform helps Washington provide its students with a world-class education, which is among the Governor's Results Washington goals.

Performance outcomes:

This investment will fund full implementation of the statewide transition to a universal HSBP platform as directed by and outlined in SB 5243. Funding will support a consistent statewide rollout of the HSBP platform and successful adoption by districts and schools across the state.

OTHER COLLATERAL CONNECTIONS

Intergovernmental:

None

Stakeholder impacts:

OSPI anticipates continued support from school districts and institutions of higher education, along with other statewide agencies and organizations that support school districts, educators, families, and students.

Legal or administrative mandates:

This request funds OSPI responsibilities outlined in 2023 SB 5243: *Concerning high school and beyond planning*. As described above, the bill requires OSPI to plan and manage the K–12 system's transition to a universal online HSBP platform, from vendor selection through rollout and adoption, by the 2026–27 school year. This request provides current best estimates on the remaining implementation costs so that they can be considered for inclusion in the Governor's budget proposal.

Changes from current law:

None

State workforce impacts:

None

State facilities impacts:

None

Puget Sound recovery:

N/A

Governor's salmon strategy:

N/A

OTHER SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Information technology (IT):

N/A