

Expanding Career Connected Learning

Budget Language

\$919,000 of the workforce education investment account—state appropriation is provided solely for expanding career connected learning as provided in RCW 28C.30.020.

Proviso Purpose

The purpose of these funds is to support the expansion of career connected learning (CCL) opportunities within the K–12 system as both a means to expand opportunities for students to meet graduation requirements and as a critical foundation for the cross-sector efforts to build career exploration and preparation opportunities through the Career Connect Washington (CCW) initiative. The CCW statewide collaborative asks educators and employers to collaboratively build an apprenticeship, workforce and college preparation system that emphasizes real-world experience aimed at helping students land jobs in STEM and other high-paying fields.

Services Provided

This funding supported 2.65 FTE in dedicated staffing across OSPIs Graduation and Pathway Preparation, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Operations departments to support the expansion of CCL efforts through program leadership, administration and oversight, grant and contract support and data management. There were months with vacancies across two of these departments, contributing to the inability to fully expend all available funds.

Staff managed OSPIs consolidated service agreement (CSA) with the nine Educational Service Districts (ESD) to provide support for their Career Connected Learning Coordinators (CCLCs). Through the CSA partnership, OSPI staff furthered CCLCs efforts to work with districts to develop new CTE programs, CTE Graduation Pathways, Core Plus programs, Work-Based and Work-Site Learning (WBL/WSL) and other CCL opportunities, and to support the provision of quality high school and beyond planning as a framework to empower students' career development. Staff responsibilities also included meeting the agency representation and annual reporting requirements of the CCW Cross Agency Work Group (CAWG) to support increasing CCL opportunities as defined in Chapter 28C.30 RCW.

OSPIs CTE team primarily provided support to districts' CTE Directors, administrators and educators to ensure the provision of rigorous CTE programs in high demand fields and aligned student leadership organizations, CTE equivalency courses, WBL and WSL, Core Plus programs and CTE Graduation Pathways. Staff efforts included the creation of new, and expansion of existing, career exploration, career preparation, and paid worksite learning opportunities for K–12 students that incorporate opportunities to earn college credit and industry recognized credentials. Additional funds covered staff travel to support administrative responsibilities, travel costs to support the participation of CCLCs at in-person convenings, and professional



development sponsorship and registration fees for staff to attend statewide CTE-related conference Student-Centered Bootcamp sponsored by the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB), Tribal Training, Outdoor Education training, Dare to Lead® professional training, and a Student Centered Learning Collaborative sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). OSPI's support for CCL through CTE and the CCW initiative is provided in partnership with K–12 educators and administrators, government, labor, business and industry, and community-based partners as identified within the CCW framework and other statutory requirements and expectations.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

There were no grants associated with this proviso.

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	295
Number of Schools:	Unknown
Number of Students:	Unknown
Number of Educators:	Unknown
Other:	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$463,000	\$430,916
2024	\$456,000	\$236,444
2023	\$426,000	\$347,157
2022	\$426,000	\$244,216

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	295
2024	295
2023	295
2022	295

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

OSPI's CCL Program Supervisor participated in the review of applications for Apprenticeships Building America grant funding, Regional Network Request for Proposals, Sector Lead Request for Proposals, and Program Builder grant funding focused on increasing Career Launch and other career-connected learning programs. Recommendations to streamline the application processes for Career Launch Endorsement (CLE) and Program Builder grants were also implemented to improve the process for school districts and partners. The new process is more equitable, shorter, multi-phased and allows two years to complete the application process.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

The work accomplished through this funding benefited districts across Washington and countless schools, students, and educators statewide. Through existing cross-sector partnerships, OSPI staff contribute to and inform discussions related to system accountability, student support, program definition and data collection metrics to support the development of and access to CCL. CCLCs provide the foundation for student participation in high demand career pathways by aligning districts, colleges and employers to build CCL opportunities. OSPI staff's direct support of the ESDs CCLCs enhanced their success with supporting districts and CCW partners to develop more CTE Graduation Pathways, Core Plus programs, and WBL/WSL, and furthered their efforts to generate increases in Career Explore, Career Prep and Career Launch opportunities across the state. The provision of direct technical assistance, collaboration, and support to CTE Directors and teachers, school counselors, and administrators expanded student access to and benefit from high-quality, high-demand CTE programs and Graduation Pathways, dual credit courses, industry recognized credentials, Core Plus programs, CTE equivalency courses, and the new universal High School and Beyond Plan platform.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

OSPI has identified inherent barriers for districts related to the creation and expansion of CCL including the following:

- Districts in rural/remote areas struggle significantly with staff turnover (administrative leadership, teachers, school counseling staff). This instability is further impacted by a shortage of qualified educators, impacting a school's ability to maintain consistent CTE Graduation Pathways and add new, or expand existing CCL opportunities for students.
- Small districts' staff capacity is limited, and one person often supports multiple roles and priorities. Low staff capacity restricts districts ability to apply for state and federal grants.
- A low number of employers in a rural/remote region reduces the opportunity to liaison with employer partners and establish CCL opportunities. Inconsistent CTE programming options may reduce Career Launch programming options, which require high-quality paid work experience.

- Transportation is a challenge for students to engage in Skill Center programming or access paid work experience, particularly in remote or large geographic areas where there may be reduced options for students to access public transportation.

This body of work has been discontinued by the legislature. Future opportunities will depend on future legislative direction and resources dedicated to the work.

Future Opportunities

Funding for the nine ESD CCLC Coordinators and OSPIs Career Connected Learning Program Specialist was eliminated in the 2025-27 biennial operating budget, thus reducing capacity to provide direct regional support to districts to increase access to CCL options. If OSPI were to receive funding to support this body of work in future it will support district and school staff with technical aspects of expanding CCL options and how to integrate CCL opportunities into existing school-based structures.

Other Relevant Information

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2025 Fiscal Year.](#)

Program Contact Information

Name: Kim Reykdal

Title: Director, Graduation and Pathway Preparation

Phone: 360-870-8563

Email: kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us