

Career Launch Programs

Budget Language

\$960,000 of the workforce education investment account—state appropriation is provided solely for increasing the funding per full-time equivalent for career launch programs as described in RCW 28A.700.130. In the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium, for career launch enrollment exceeding the funding provided in this subsection, funding is provided in section 504 of this act.

Proviso Purpose

This proviso expands full-time equivalent (FTE) funding to 1.2 FTE maximum for students enrolled in Career Launch Endorsed (CLE) programs. It enables districts to extend the provision of instructional and work-based learning opportunities beyond the funded school day or standard school year.

Services Provided

Funding provided to school districts enables the extension of instructional or work-based opportunities, supporting additional time outside of the scheduled school day or into the summer. Registered apprenticeship, registered pre-apprenticeship, and programs endorsed through the Career Launch Endorsement Review (CLER) committee are eligible to apply for this funding. Students enrolled in programs that have been endorsed as Career Launch as defined within the Career Connect Washington (CCW) system have a 1.2 FTE maximum; this additional FTE was funded to support and expand access to Career Launch programming.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

All the following elements must be present for a program to qualify to be a Career Launch Endorsed (CLE) program:

- classroom learning aligned to industry and academic standards,
- supervised and paid work experience, and
- the opportunity to earn an industry-recognized credential beyond a high school diploma, or to culminate into forty-five college credits towards a two- or four- year postsecondary credential.

State registered apprenticeship programs also automatically qualify as a CLE program. Students enrolled in CLE programs have a 1.2 FTE maximum, enabling districts to extend the provision of instructional and work-based learning opportunities beyond the funded school day or school year.



Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	0
Number of Schools:	0
Number of Students:	0
Number of Educators:	0
Other:	n/a

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$480,000	\$0
2024	\$480,000	\$0
2023	\$480,000	\$0
2022	\$480,000	\$1,356
2021	\$480,000	\$0

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	0
2024	0
2023	0
2022	0
2021	1

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

The funding for expansion of students' full-time equivalent (FTE) to a 1.2 FTE maximum for enrollment in Career Launch Endorsed (CLE) programs was moved to the General Apportionment section of the budget and is no longer a separately funded proviso sourced from the WEIA account.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

Despite improvements with communication and technical assistance that have been implemented, OSPI has identified inherent barriers related to the establishment of K-12 CLE

programs, which consequently reduces districts' opportunities to access the dedicated funding for enhanced FTE outside of the regular school day.

OSPI has provided targeted professional development, and technical support for K–12 CLE programs to report their CLE enrollments and claim additional funding, if appropriate. For the 2024–25 school year, 526 students were reported as enrolled in K–12 CLE programming, with no districts accessing the 1.2 FTE funding opportunity.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

The 1.2 FTE language requires that students exceed their existing 1.0 FTE before accessing up to an additional .2 FTE. For example, students could be scheduled on a worksite as part of their paid work experience during the regular school day but not exceed their FTE limitations, or their CLE program is instructional and already funded under existing career and technical education enhancement.

OSPI has identified numerous systemic challenges related to the creation and expansion of K–12 CLE programs across Washington, which also impacted the ability of districts to access 1.2 FTE enrollment funding.

- Districts, particularly those 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 and career-connected learning opportunities for students.
- Staffing realities for small districts contribute to limited staff capacity, with staff often supporting multiple roles simultaneously. This further reduces the ability to put in the time to develop and maintain dual credit articulations or Industry Recognized Credentials.
- The lack of business and economic infrastructure in rural/remote regions reduces the opportunity to work with employer partners and establish career-connected learning opportunities. In 2024–25, several CLE programs reported zero enrollments as the employer partner had opted out of participation, and a new partner had yet to be identified.
- This additional CLE FTE funding can only be claimed if students engage in programming (paid work experience) in addition to a regular school day. For many employers, this means they can only engage students in their high quality, supervised, paid work experience for a few hours near the end of the regular business day.
- Having to engage in the paid work experience outside the regular school day means the student must have their own transportation. For students living within a large and remote geographic area, there may be little to no options for public transportation.

Future Opportunities

Future success for this body of work would likely necessitate addressing key needs, including

but not limited to:

- transportation access for students to participate in worksite learning,
- staff time to liaison with employers and develop work site learning opportunities,
- support to establish dual credit articulation agreements or submit for Industry Recognized Credentials approved for K-12 programming, and
- coordination of paid work site learning and instruction during the summer months.

Other Relevant Information

The majority of Washington's Career Launch programs are completed through the postsecondary education system or first year of paid employment with both parties jointly planning the program.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

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

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