

Equitable STEM Access

Budget Language

\$500,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$500,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to contract with a Washington-based nonprofit organization to promote equitable access in science, technology, engineering, and math education for historically underserved students and communities. The nonprofit shall provide a system of science educational programming specifically for migrant and bilingual students, including teacher professional development, culturally responsive classroom resources that are aligned with Washington state science and environmental and sustainability learning standards, and implementation support. At least 50 percent of the funding provided in this subsection must serve schools and school districts in eastern Washington. The nonprofit organization must have experience developing and implementing science and environmental science programming and resources for migrant and bilingual students.

Proviso Purpose

This funding supports efforts to make science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education accessible to historically underserved students in Washington State, especially migrant, bilingual, and Native students. The goal is to provide culturally relevant and standards-based education that recognizes students' diverse backgrounds.

Services Provided

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has partnered with EarthGen to offer educator supports and high-quality professional learning services, such as:

1. **Curricular Resources:** EarthGen provides educators with materials that celebrate students' cultures and encourage critical thinking through scientific exploration and community engagement.
2. **Collective Action:** EarthGen collaborates with educators and community partners to support student-led environmental projects, fostering a culture of sustainability in schools.
3. **Direct Professional Learning:** EarthGen trains educators to teach students about environmental issues using place-based and culturally responsive methods, ensuring lessons are relevant to local communities. The program's Advisory Committee, composed of long-term and new members, provided essential feedback on culturally responsive strategies. This collective input shaped EarthGen's curriculum design and professional development for educators across the state.



Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

At least 50% of services must be provided in central and eastern Washington.

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	75
Number of Schools:	137
Number of Students:	9,375
Number of Educators:	225

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$500,000	\$492,947
2024	\$500,000	\$394,503
2023	\$500,000	\$500,000
2022	\$500,000	\$497,073

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	225 Educators
2024	7 Educators
2023	172 Educators
2022	112 Educators

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

Staff turnover, including at the executive level, significantly impacted program implementation this year. Program retooling, retraining, and other efforts also reduced service numbers this year.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

EarthGen advanced its goals by refining culturally responsive curriculum, expanding professional learning, and deepening community partnerships. Six curriculum units were updated with input from multilingual specialists and Indigenous collaborators, including UCUT, to ensure cultural and regional accuracy. Professional development

reached 189 educators across 18 trainings, exceeding goals and increasing teacher confidence and engagement. Students demonstrated greater understanding of environmental systems and justice issues through hands-on projects. The Advisory Committee strengthened collaboration through subcommittees focused on curriculum, professional learning, and engagement, while family-focused events with ESD 123 successfully connected to multilingual and migrant communities. Highlights included a new Winter Institute and the first statewide BEE Showcase, both fostering collaboration and shared learning for future program growth.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

The project continues to face challenges related to staff capacity and consistency in curriculum implementation, with teachers adapting materials unevenly across grade levels and noting redundancy in training sessions. Reduced BEE funding has created uncertainty about the project's future, emphasizing the need to reimagine goals within limited resources. While curriculum development milestones were achieved, the large unit size remains daunting for educators. Current two-hour trainings have proven insufficient for building a cohesive professional learning community, highlighting the need for a structured cohort model to deepen engagement. Additional challenges include navigating culturally sensitive collaboration with Tribes, managing participant stipends effectively, and maintaining regular communication and participation within the Advisory Committee.

Future Opportunities

Funding for this proviso has ended.

Other Relevant Information

N/A

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

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

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