

Truancy Reduction Supports

Budget Language

\$1,399,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$1,399,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are designated for school districts to support youth who are truant under chapter 28A.225 RCW or at risk of becoming truant, and for costs associated with filing or serving petitions under RCW 28A.225.030.

Proviso Purpose

This proviso supports school districts in implementing strategies to prevent and reduce absences, including truancy (unexcused absences) and chronic absence (excused and unexcused absences). Supports may include staffing for district systems (e.g., attendance teams, Community Engagement Boards); and services provided by OSPI and Educational Service Districts.

Services Provided

OSPI supported schools and districts by contracting directly with 3 Educational Service Districts (ESDs) and allocating the funds directly to districts. OSPI also retained a portion of these funds to cover administrative costs and staffing that provided the following state-wide supports to reduce truancy. The OSPI supports provided were:

- Guidance development (e.g., Community Engagement Board and Truancy process resources)
- Provide technical assistance to all schools and districts on addressing truancy and absences through phone calls, emails and regular office hours
- Professional development and peer learning (e.g., webinars, bi-monthly peer learning networks and office hours).

The contracts to the ESDs supported regional Attendance Improvement Networks. The remainder of this funding is distributed to school districts via formula.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

Funding allocations for school districts were determined using 2023-24 CEDARS truancy data, specifically the number of students meeting truancy thresholds (7 unexcused absences in a month and 15 unexcused absences in a year). Districts qualified for funding based on the following criteria:

- Districts with more than 50 students that were truant received an allocation, those with fewer than 50 truant students did not.
- Districts that participated in the regional attendance improvement networks did not receive an allocation.



- Districts that historically filed truancy petitions—based on OSPI fiscal data and 2018-19 CEDARS submissions were eligible.
- For the 2024-25 school year, OSPI slightly reduced allocations from the prior year after accounting for administrative and network costs. This approach preserved support for districts already using funds for truancy related staffing and services.

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	126
Number of Schools:	25
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$1,399,000	\$1,324,339
2024	\$1,399,000	\$1,399,000
2023	\$1,399,000	\$1,399,000
2022	\$1,399,000	\$1,399,000

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	151
2024	153
2023	152
2022	152

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

Since its inception, the truancy reduction program has undergone several key shifts:

- COVID-19 (2019-2021): Truancy petition filings declined significantly due to statewide school closures and an emergency rule (Chapter 392-401A WAC) enacted by OSPI. In response, OSPI partnered with the Administrative Office of the Courts to adjust the funding model, ensuring districts, charter

schools, and tribal compact schools received consistent support despite reduced filings.

- Expanded Scope (2021-22): The Legislature began allocating truancy related funds directly to OSPI and broadened the program's focus to include youth at risk of becoming truant. This marked a strategic shift from reactive enforcement to proactive student support.
- Attendance Improvement Networks (2024-25): OSPI contracted with ESDs 101, 113, and 123 to launch regional Attendance Improvement Networks. These networks support schools in addressing chronic absenteeism through collaborative teams and Tier 1 attendance awareness strategies, aiming to foster environments that promote regular attendance and reduce reliance on truancy interventions.
- Statewide Capacity Building: OSPI added an Attendance & Truancy Program Specialist to provide technical assistance, facilitate peer learning, and disseminate tools such as the Community Engagement Board Modules.
- Funding Adjustments: Districts previously funded for petition filings but not participating in the Attendance Improvement Networks continued to receive support, though at reduced rates.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

The majority of districts have reported to OSPI that this funding supports staffing capacity to directly work with youth that are at risk of becoming truant or are truant.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

For many school districts, the funding received is insufficient to support meaningful changes—particularly those aimed at prevention and early intervention. Instead, districts are often constrained to reactive measures, addressing truancy only after it has occurred, rather than investing in proactive strategies that could reduce absenteeism. Without adequate resources, districts struggle to build infrastructure, staffing, and community partnerships necessary to shift from compliance-based approaches to student-centered, preventative models.

Future Opportunities

This body of work has been discontinued by the legislature. Beginning July 1, 2025, OSPI is no longer implementing this grant. If this work were to be continued, future work should consider the opportunity to reimagine and strengthen statewide attendance efforts. OSPI would recommend investment in Attendance Improvement Networks, which address chronic absenteeism. By focusing on all absences — excused and unexcused — these networks would empower schools to use attendance data to identify and implement targeted prevention strategies. This approach would benefit student groups disproportionately impacted by truancy, including students from

disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, students of color, and those with specific programmatic or demographic characteristics.

Other Relevant Information

OSPI provides a library of resources to address attendance, chronic absenteeism and truancy on the [Attendance webpages](#) and through the [Attendance Newsletter](#). The allocation amounts for each school district can be found in the [2024-25 Truancy Reimbursement](#).

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

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

Program Contact Information

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