

LASER Program

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 Washington state leadership and assistance for science education reform (LASER) regional partnership activities, including instructional material purchases, teacher and principal professional development, and school and community engagement events. The office may require the recipient of these funds to report the impacts of the recipient's efforts in alignment with the measures of the Washington school improvement framework.

Proviso Purpose

Washington State LASER (Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform) is a state science education network that supports K-12 science leaders in building skills, removing barriers, and creating opportunities to improve science/STEM education. Organized into nine regional Alliances aligned with Washington's Educational Service Districts, LASER provides leadership, technical assistance, and strategic planning support to districts, schools, and educators across six framework areas: operations, STEM pathways, community and administrator engagement, assessment, curriculum, and instructional materials. Guided by the Smithsonian Science Education Center's LASER model, its vision is for all students to deepen their understanding of scientific ideas through authentic practices, becoming informed, thriving global citizens prepared for STEM careers.

Services Provided

Washington State LASER established a new Leadership Team, including OSPI, Alliance Directors, an Advisory representative, and the Institute for Systems Biology, to guide K-12 science education reform across nine regional Alliances. LASER supports schools, districts, and educators through leadership professional learning, statewide workshops, semi-annual convenings, and equity-focused collaborative spaces for Alliance Directors. Key resources developed include the LASER website, Playbook, Summary of Alliance projects, and a historical compilation from 1996 - 2025. The Leadership Team and Advisory group meet regularly to plan and coordinate services, while Alliances design local work plans aligned with LASER's commitments, ensuring all Washington districts and schools can participate in professional learning, technical assistance, and grant-supported activities.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

Each Alliance sets goals and develops work plans that are responsive to local needs and aligned with LASER's commitments to OSPI. All Washington districts and schools are eligible to participate in regional LASER activities.



Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	117
Number of Schools:	220
Number of Students:	18,700
Number of Educators:	371
Number of Administrators:	102

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$500,000	\$487,103
2024	\$500,000	\$492,825
2023	\$500,000	\$500,000
2022	\$500,000	\$500,000
2021	\$500,000	\$500,000

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	220
2024	165
2023	165
2022	173
2021	306

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

During 2024–25, Washington State LASER supported science leadership and learning across all systems levels, engaging educators from rural schools to district leaders statewide. LASER Alliances focused on culturally responsive pedagogy, high-quality instructional materials, curriculum-embedded professional learning, engagement, and equity. Key initiatives included leadership collaboratives, PLCs, elementary liaison networks, STEM career pathways and mentoring, and workshops contextualizing science instruction for Washington students. A statewide culminating event brought together all nine Alliances, providing tools and strategies immediately applied in districts, while LASER funding reduced barriers and increased access to equitable STEM experiences.

This body of work has been discontinued by the legislature. Beginning July 1, 2025, OSPI is no longer implementing this grant/program/partnership/contract.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

In 2024–25, Washington State LASER supported science leadership and learning across all system levels, engaging educators from rural schools to district leaders statewide. LASER Alliances focused on culturally responsive pedagogy, high-quality instructional materials, curriculum-embedded professional learning, engagement, and equity. Initiatives included leadership collaboratives, PLCs, elementary liaison networks, STEM career pathways and mentoring, and workshops contextualizing science instruction for Washington students. A statewide culminating event brought together all nine Alliances, providing tools immediately applied in districts, while LASER funding reduced barriers and increased access to equitable STEM experiences statewide.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

In Fall 2024, a new LASER Leadership Team was formed then met semi-monthly through June to carry out the LASER proviso scope of work. This new structure is outlined in the LASER Summary. In Spring 2025, the funding proviso was not continued into the 25/26- 26/27 biennial budget. Funding for LASER has ended. The LASER Leadership Team populated the website with synthesis documents, to provide guidance moving forward.

Future Opportunities

In Spring 2025, LASER funding was not included in the 2025–27 biennium budget. Future funding would allow this impactful network to reconvene and continue supporting districts, leaders, and educators in delivering high-quality, equitable science instruction. It would enable rebuilding the statewide network, sustaining standards and programs, convening an expanded advisory committee including small and rural schools, advancing student pathways and teacher leadership, guiding adoption and implementation of instructional materials, supporting CTE science instruction, and expanding access for district leaders and students statewide to strengthen STEM learning and opportunities.

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.](#)

Program Contact Information

Name: Denise Davis

Title: Director of Elementary Ed. Content

Phone: 360-819-6843

Email: denise.davis@k12.wa.us