

Truancy Reduction

Budget Language

\$178,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$178,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for implementation of chapter 291, Laws of 2017 (truancy reduction efforts).

Proviso Purpose

This funding is provided solely for the implementation of chapter 291, Laws of 2017, the compulsory attendance laws.

Services Provided

This proviso solely funds OSPI staff to develop guidance, disseminate best practices, communicate to schools and districts, provide professional development, provide technical assistance, inform data reporting requirements and interpretation, convene peer learning opportunities, and collaborate across agency and cross system partners to improve our state’s approach to attendance and truancy.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

N/A

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts: 295

Number of Schools: N/A

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	\$178,000	\$177,047
2024	\$178,000	\$177,922



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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	295
2024	295

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

- OSPI released updated guidance in August 2024 to address misconceptions around student withdrawal after 20 days of absence, aiming to reduce missed educational opportunities.
- The Truancy & Attendance Learning and Knowledge Series (T.A.L.K.S) offers statewide virtual professional development and peer learning on attendance topics
- OSPI also hosts Office Hours, providing a space for school and district staff to ask questions about attendance laws and best practices.
- Eight Community Engagement Board modules were released in June 2025, including templates, video, and guidance aligned with [RCW 28A.225.025](#). Community Engagement Boards are a preferred intervention when prior efforts to reduce unexcused absences have been unsuccessful.
- OSPI launched a workgroup to re-envision truancy starting in 2022, to explore equitable, systemic improvements to truancy practices, prioritizing student and family voice to share recommendations with GATE (Graduation A Team Effort) Partnership Advisory Committee.

Chronic absenteeism rose significantly following the COVID-19 pandemic. While rates are gradually declining, they remain well above pre-pandemic rates. This increase has highlighted the need for increased Tier 1 (all students) attendance awareness and supports. Limited staffing and resources, hinder schools and district's ability to provide Tier 3 (Individualized) interventions.

Schools are adopting data-informed tiered strategies to identify students needing support and strengthen attendance systems. Districts are reporting revising withdrawal practices and working to reengage students previously withdrawn for non-attendance.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

Truancy compliance remains a frequent topic of inquiry through technical assistance requests, peer learning sessions, and discussions. Stakeholders seek clarification on why some file truancy petitions while others do not follow the steps outlined in Washington's compulsory attendance law (Chapter 28A.225 RCW). This inconsistency has raised concerns about data reporting of truancy actions and understanding of legal requirements.

Districts and schools are in need of accessible attendance data from Student Information System data vendors to develop common reports.

Future Opportunities

OSPI will continue to promote state-wide attendance awareness with a priority on tier 1 attendance strategies for all students, aiming to reduce both excused and unexcused absences. The focus remains on shifting away from punitive approaches toward barrier removal, proactive engagement, and supportive interventions that foster engagement and consistent attendance.

Enhancing access to attendance data is critical for increasing awareness and implementing effective interventions. Improved data systems will allow schools and districts to monitor trends, identify student groups in need, and tailor supports more effectively.

OSPI is committed to participation in a statewide campaign aligned with the National Attendance Works initiative to reduce chronic absenteeism by 50% by the year 2029. This effort will include convening districts and schools through virtual platforms to share commitments, best practices, and collaborative strategies to improve attendance outcomes.

Other Relevant Information

None.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

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

Program Contact Information

Name: Vicki Wood
Title: Attendance & Truancy Program Supervisor
Phone: 360-688-8176
Email: vicki.wood@k12.wa.us