

Tribal Language Grants

Budget Language

- (i) \$1,425,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$4,725,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for dual language grants to grow capacity for high quality dual language learning. Grant funding may be used for new and existing dual language programs, heritage language programs for immigrant and refugee students, and indigenous language programs for native students. Of the amounts provided in this subsection, \$1,000,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 is provided solely for tribal language grants.
- (ii) Each grant recipient must convene an advisory board to guide the development and continuous improvement of its dual language program, including but not limited to: Determining which schools and languages will be prioritized; conducting outreach to the community; and addressing enrollment considerations and the hiring of staff. At least half the members of the board must be parents of English learner students or current or former English learner students. The other members of the board must represent teachers, students, school leaders, governing board members, youth, and community-based organizations that support English learners.

Proviso Purpose

This proviso funding is specifically designated to support and preserve Tribal languages by providing financial resources to school districts and Tribal education programs. The purpose is to expand access to Tribal language instruction for Native students in Washington State, helping to revitalize endangered Tribal languages while developing culturally responsive educational programs. The grants enable schools to hire qualified Tribal language educators, develop comprehensive K-12 curricula, implement language immersion models, and create sustainable programs that integrate Tribal languages and cultural knowledge into the educational experience.

Services Provided

OSPI provided grant funding that was passed through to 25 school districts, Tribal compact schools, and Tribal education departments across Washington State. These partner organizations used the funding to develop and train Tribal language educators and instructors, expand Tribal language courses across grade levels from kindergarten through 12th grade, implement language immersion programs and dual language models, create comprehensive curricula with cultural programming and community integration, establish afterschool language programs and family engagement activities, develop digital curriculum materials and domain-based proficiency assessments, integrate Tribal languages into existing school programming across multiple schools within districts, provide



professional development for staff on Tribal language instruction, create pathways for Seal of Biliteracy achievement in Tribal languages, and support dual credit opportunities and high school certification programs.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

To receive Tribal language grant funding, applicants were required to have Tribal approval for the language program from the relevant federally recognized Tribe, demonstrate a partnership or formal relationship with a Tribe whose language would be taught, present a plan for either developing new Tribal language educators or expanding existing language programs, serve students across defined grade levels such as K-12, show commitment to sustaining and growing the language program beyond the grant period, address how the program would serve Native students and the broader school community, and demonstrate capacity to implement the proposed programming including hiring qualified instructors and curriculum development.

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	25
Number of Schools:	Approximately 75
Number of Students:	Data not collected for FY25
Number of Educators:	53 educators
Other (Tribal Nations and Languages):	16 Tribal Nations, 10 Tribal Languages

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$1,000,000	\$940,000

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	25 school districts/Tribal education entities, 53 educators, 16 Tribal Nations, 10 Tribal languages

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

No significant programmatic changes were made during the 2024-25 fiscal year. The program continued to support Tribal language revitalization efforts across 25 school districts and Tribal education entities as intended.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

In FY25, the program expanded funding to \$940,000 supporting 25 grant recipients, representing an 11% funding increase from the prior year. Three new grant recipients were added, including Paschal Sherman Indian School, Port Angeles School District, and Reardan-Edwall School District, while several existing recipients received increased funding to expand programming capacity. The program continued to serve 16 Tribal Nations and support instruction in 10 Tribal languages across Washington State. Through this grant support, two grantees awarded a total of 8 Seals of Biliteracy in the Ichishkiin (Yakama) and Lushootseed Tribal languages, demonstrating measurable student achievement in Tribal language proficiency.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

Grantees reported significant technical difficulties with the inaugural year of the Education Grant Management System (EGMS), including challenges with user roles, application navigation, and management of primary points of contact. These technical barriers created additional administrative burden for Tribal Nations, State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools, and school districts accessing grant funding.

Future Opportunities

Future opportunities to strengthen Tribal language revitalization efforts should prioritize robust Tribal consultation that honors language and cultural sovereignty. Enhanced data collection on student enrollment, language proficiency, attendance, and student wellness outcomes would provide valuable insights into the correlation between Tribal language and cultural implementation and student success. Additionally, addressing technical barriers in grant management systems would reduce administrative burden on Tribal Nations, STEC schools, and school districts, allowing greater focus on program implementation and student outcomes.

Other Relevant Information

The Tribal Language Grants support language and culture implementation in Washington's K-12 public schools and State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools through the First Peoples' Language, Culture & Oral Traditions (FPLCOT) course codes. These courses can only be taught by educators who hold a First Peoples' Language, Culture & Oral Traditions certificate. The certificate program, established as a pilot in 2003 and made permanent in 2007 under WAC

181-78A-700, provides state-level credentialing for tribally certified language and culture teachers in partnership with sovereign Tribes. The program honors Tribal sovereignty in the transmission of Tribal languages, Indigenous pedagogy, cultural knowledge, and traditions through government-to-government relationships between Washington State and sovereign Tribal governments. As of 2023-2025, the certificate program has grown to 229 certificates held by 126 unique educators representing 14 participating Tribal Nations and 23 distinct language and cultural endorsements, demonstrating 12% year-over-year growth. For more information about Tribal language grantees, program objectives, language regions, and FPLCOT certification and course codes, visit: <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/student-success/access-opportunity-education/native-education/tribal-languages>

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

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

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