Old Capitol Building
PO Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

ospi.k12.wa.us

Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

February 24, 2026

(X) Action Required
Due date: April 2026
( ) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 003-26 PATHWAY PREPARATION AND TITLE PROGRAMS

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
Private School Administrators
Federal Grant Managers

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Private School Participation in Federal Programs

CONTACT: Sheila Gerrish, LAP Program Supervisor and ESEA Equitable Services Ombuds
360-725-6026, sheila.gerrish@k12.wa.us

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

Since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, school districts have been required to provide equitable services to private school students, teachers, and in some cases, other education personnel, and parents under several federal programs. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) issues this bulletin to provide guidance for private school participation in ESEA federal programs.

To participate in any federal program, a private school must notify OSPI and the local school district of their intent to participate each year via the Private Participation in Federal Programs application in the Educational Data System (EDS) located on the bottom of the OSPI main webpage. Additionally, it is equally important for each private school to notify OSPI of their intent to not participate in any federal programs.

Find descriptions of available federal programs in Attachment A and instructions to log into EDS in Attachment B; also on the private school webpage under the "Program Basics" drop-down menu. The Private Participation in Federal Programs application in EDS will be due in April 2026. An announcement will be made once the application is open, that will include the specific due date.

Private School Responsibilities

For a private school to qualify for and then participate in the federal program equitable services, a private school must:

- Be a non-profit, elementary, or secondary school approved annually by the Washington State Board of Education.
- Have notified the school district and OSPI of its intent to participate in federal program equitable services by completing and submitting Private Participation in Federal Programs application in EDS by the due date.

If a private school does **NOT intend** to participate, we request completion of the application to indicate non-participation.

NOTE: If a private school does not complete the Private Participation in Federal Programs application by the due date, its students, teachers, and other education personnel may not be eligible to participate in equitable services for the 2026–27 school year.

See detailed instructions and responsibilities for private schools on OSPI's private school webpage under the "Private School Requirements" drop-down menu.

School District Responsibilities

School districts must make initial contact with all private schools located **within district boundaries** either before or once the Private Participation in Federal Programs application opens in EDS. This contact should include:

- Notifying the private schools of the opening and closing dates of the Private Participation in Federal Programs application in EDS.
- Providing details about the specific federal programs available for participation (see Attachment A for detailed federal program descriptions).
- If needed, offering to assist in completing the application.

NOTE: Districts must document their attempts to contact private schools under the "Contract Log" tab in the application. This initial contact expectation is **not required** for private schools located **outside** the district's boundaries.

Out-of-District Private Schools

The Title I, Part A program requires school districts to provide equitable services to **eligible** students who attend participating private schools located **outside the school district boundaries**.

School districts must identify if their students attend private schools located outside district boundaries. If the students generate funding for Title I Part A equitable services, the school district would also be responsible to provide services to eligible students. For more information,

see the Out-of-District Private School Guidance on the private school webpage. See detailed instructions and responsibilities for school districts on OSPI's private school webpage.

Resources

Find additional resources and guidance on OSPI's private school webpage.

Equitable Services Webinar

A recording of a webinar on private school participation in federal programs will be available soon. Please contact Sheila Gerrish (Sheila.gerrish@k12.wa.us) for a link to the recording. This webinar focused on requirements and responsibilities of private schools and school districts.

Office Hours Opportunity

The 2025–26 EGMS Office Hours provide opportunities for districts and private schools to ask questions and receive assistance regarding the Private Participation in Federal Programs Application, or any other equitable services questions. No registration is needed.

- Tuesday EGMS Office Hour: 11 am–noon | Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/j/88033044818
- Thursday EGMS Office Hour: 1–2 pm | Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/j/82230019925

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Sheila Gerrish, LAP Program Supervisor and ESEA Equitable Services Ombuds, at 360-664-3631 or email sheila.gerrish@k12.wa.us. The OSPI Telecommunication Relay Services number is 711 or 1-800-833-6384.

This bulletin is also available on the Bulletins page of the OSPI website.

Susan Lathrop
Chief Education Officer

Rebecca Wallace
Assistant Superintendent
Pathway Preparation and Title Programs

Jason Miller
Executive Director
Federal and State Supplemental Programs

CR:sg

Attachment A: Federal Programs Required to Provide Equitable Services
Attachment B: Education Data System (EDS) Log-in Instructions

OSPI provides equal access to all programs and services without discrimination based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Questions and complaints of alleged discrimination should be directed to the Equity and Civil Rights Director at 360-725-6162/Telecommunication Relay Services: 711 or 1-800-833-6384; or P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200; or equity@k12.wa.us.