



Restoring Funding for Career and Technical Student Organizations

2027-29 Biennium Operating Budget Decision Package

Agency: 350 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Budget period: 2027-29

Budget level: PL

RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are an integral part of Washington's K-12 system, and Washington's CTE programs are supported by Washington's eight state recognized Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). CTSOs have relied on state funding to offer programming and services to CTE students, funding that was eliminated in the most recent budget cycle. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests \$1.6 million in the 2027-29 biennium to restore funding to these organizations.

FISCAL DETAIL

Operating Expenditures	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Fund 001-1 (Program 05X)	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000
Total Expenditures	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000
Biennial Totals	\$1,600,000		\$1,600,000	
Staffing	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
FTEs	0	0	0	0
Average Annual	0		0	
Object of Expenditure	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Obj. N	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$800,000
Revenue	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Biennial Totals	\$0		\$0	

PACKAGE DESCRIPTION

CTE programs are an integral part of Washington's K-12 system. Governed under [RCW 28A.700](#), CTE offers planned programs of courses and learning experiences that begin with the exploration of career options, supports basic academic and life skills, and enables achievement of high academic standards, leadership, options for high demand, high skill, high-wage employment preparation, and advanced and continuing education.

The State's CTE framework is supported by Washington's eight state recognized CTSOs. Through leadership and employability development experience as an extension of the classroom experience, students engage in competitive events, community service, personal leadership development, and employer engagement. CTSOs help students develop career-ready and employability skills, explore high-demand career pathways, build leadership, communication, and teamwork competencies, connect classroom learning to real-world application, and increase engagement, graduation readiness, and postsecondary success.

More than 73,000 Washington students and teachers participated in CTSO programs in the 2025-26 school year, through local chapters in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

What is the problem, opportunity, or priority you are addressing with the request?

Since the 2021 fiscal year, Washington's eight CTSOs rely on an annual appropriation of \$100,000 each in the state operating budget, cited most recently in the 2024 supplemental operating budget as [Senate Bill 5950, Section 522\(2\)\(b\)](#). The Legislature signaled their commitment to CTSOs through [RCW 28A.300.380](#), which states that "[OSPI] shall maintain support for statewide coordination for career and technical student organizations." While this language is subject to available funds, lawmakers have understood the importance of CTE and the essential role played by CTSOs and chosen to fund OSPI's support of these programs at a level that has allowed the agency to award \$100,000 grants to each of the eight CTSOs. These grants funded CTSOs to provide required extended learning opportunities for students enrolled in CTE programs, deliver statewide resources for use by local affiliated programs, and ensure statewide supervision and coordination of student leadership activities offered through these organizations.

This proviso and the attached funding were cut in the 2025 biennial budget, [Senate Bill 5167](#). Removal of these dollars hinders the ability of CTSOs to provide a requisite element of CTE programming, which in turn threatens to destabilize the state's CTE infrastructure as a whole. The removal of CTSO grant funding has weakened a critical component of Washington's CTE system. CTSOs provide leadership development, service learning, advisor training, employer engagement, and workforce preparation opportunities that extend learning beyond the

classroom. Without dedicated funding, student participation costs increase, access becomes more limited, especially in rural and underserved communities, and statewide leadership and career development opportunities are reduced. These impacts diminish workforce readiness efforts and weaken the connections between education, industry, and the state's future workforce.

What is your proposal?

OSPI proposes that the Legislature return the \$800,000 awarded through grants to CTSOs to the state operating budget and designate the funding as an ongoing appropriation. A dedicated funding stream ensures equitable access to leadership development opportunities for students regardless of their geographic location or financial circumstances. Furthermore, funding this proposal will allow the state to not only benefit from future investments in CTE, but continue to realize its prior investments in the state's CTE offerings and the unique opportunities it provides to students, industry partners, and the state economy as a whole.

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

Please describe in detail how this proposal is likely to benefit communities and populations who have historically been excluded by governmental decisions. Include both demographic and geographic information about communities.

CTE programs offer opportunities to engage students who are seeking a non-college postsecondary pathway to industry-specific skills and high-wage jobs. Supporting a broader definition of postsecondary pathways and success benefits both participating students and industries, students whose educational interests and needs have been overshadowed and devalued by the longstanding narrative that college is the only postsecondary pathway that leads to economic security, even as this has been proven not to be the case. Each CTSO is governed by a Board of Directors made up of representatives and led by student elected board members.

Describe how your agency engaged with communities and populations, particularly those who have been historically excluded and marginalized by governmental decisions?

At the forefront of every program, policy, and decision, OSPI actively focuses on ensuring all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.

What input did your agency receive and how was it incorporated into your proposal?

At the forefront of every program, policy, and decision, OSPI actively focuses on ensuring all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.

Explain why and how these equity impacts will be addressed, i.e., consider communities or populations excluded or disproportionately impacted by the proposal.

At the forefront of every program, policy, and decision, OSPI actively focuses on ensuring all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.

What are you purchasing and how does it solve the problem?

The funding from this proposal will purchase eight grants of \$100,000 each to support eight CTSOs. Grant funds will be used to: expand student participation and access in CTE programs, provide leadership conferences, career development events, and advisor training, support underserved and rural student populations, and strengthen alignment between CTSO programming and the state's vision for CTE.

What alternatives did you explore and why was this option chosen?

For OSPI to provide the services currently offered by CTSOs, the Agency would have to recruit and retain numerous staff. This would be a far more expensive option for the State.

What resources does the agency already have that are dedicated to this purpose?

OSPI does not have other funding dedicated to supporting CTSOs.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CALCULATIONS

Expansion, reduction, elimination or alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal represents the restoration of a program. Section 522(2)(b) of ESSB 5187 provided annual appropriations of \$800,00 in fiscal years 2024 and 2025. This funding was eliminated in the 2025-27 biennium.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

Beginning in FY28, OSPI is requesting \$800,000 annually to provide grants, of \$100,000 each, to support eight CTSOs. Grants will expand student participation and access in CTE programs, provide leadership conferences, career development events, advisor training, support underserved and rural student populations, and strengthen alignment between CTSO programming and the state's vision for CTE.

Workforce assumptions:

There are no FTE being requested with this funding.

Historical funding:

Fiscal Year 2028

- FTE = 0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$0
- Near General Fund = \$0
- Other Funds = \$0

Fiscal Year 2029

- FTE = 0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$0
- Near General Fund = \$0
- Other Funds = \$0

STRATEGIC AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Strategic framework:

Governor Ferguson's Priorities

This request supports one of Governor Ferguson's strategic goals.

Goal 1 – Education

Strengthening K-12 education in the state of Washington, which includes plans to invest a higher percentage of the total budget in K-12 education to ensure a strong start for Washington's younger residents. This priority references the Washington State Constitution, which declares that "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, colors, caste, or sex."

OSPI Strategic Goals

This proposal directly supports three of [OSPI's four strategic goals](#), with primary alignment to the agency's commitment to "eliminating opportunity gaps and supporting students furthest from educational justice."

Goal 1: Equitable Access to Strong Foundations

CTE offers foundational skills to students pursuing a number of graduation and postsecondary pathways.

Goal 2: Rigorous Learner-Centered Options in Every Community

Support for CTSOs allows for more CTE options to be available to students in more communities across the state. CTE programs and CTE students are held to rigorous standards.

Goal 4: A Committed, Unified, and Customer-Focused OSPI

CTSOs exist as an intermediary and essential function of the state's CTE programming. Without CTSOs, OSPI will not be able to provide CTE programming at the levels of service expected by Washington students and their families.

Prior Legislative Commitments

2000 House Bill 2531, RCW 28A.300.380

This proposal supports the intent of [2000 HB 2531](#) and successive legislation establishing and reaffirming state support for CTSOs with the CTE system.

Performance outcomes:

Funding this proposal will result in continued stability across the state's CTE programs, and support expansion of additional CTE opportunities for additional students. This in turn strengthens the state's economy across numerous sectors by aligning educational programming with state workforce needs. The better supported the state's CTE program is, the easier it can adapt and flex to meet changing economic opportunities and challenges.

OTHER COLLATERAL CONNECTIONS

Intergovernmental:

None.

Stakeholder impacts:

This request is supported by the eight state and federally recognized CTSOs in Washington.

Legal or administrative mandates:

This funding is connected to state law through RCW 28A.300.380, which states:

(1) To the extent funds are available, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall maintain support for statewide coordination for career and technical student organizations by providing program staff support that is available to assist in meeting the needs of career and technical student organizations and their members and students. The superintendent may provide additional support to the organizations through contracting with independent coordinators.

(2) Career and technical student organizations eligible for technical assistance and other support services under this section are organizations recognized as career and technical student organizations by:

(a) The United States department of education; or

(b) The Superintendent of Public Instruction, if such recognition is recommended by the Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.

(3) Career and technical student organizations eligible for technical assistance and other support

services under this section include, but are not limited to: The national FFA organization, Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, SkillsUSA, Distributive Education Clubs of America, Future Business Leaders of America, and the Technology Student Association.

Changes from current law:

None.

State workforce impacts:

None.

State facilities impacts:

None.

Puget Sound recovery:

N/A

Governor's salmon strategy:

N/A

OTHER SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Information technology (IT):

None.