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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Update: Equitable Access to Technology

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
Accelerate student access to learning devices and related goods and services	6
Technology Survey Insights	6
1:1 Device Replacement Cycles	6
Expand training programs and technical assistance on using technology to support student learning.....	8
Training Programs and Technical Assistance	8
Build the capacity of schools and districts to support digital navigation services for students and their families.....	9
Digital Navigation Services.....	9
Conclusion & Next Steps	10
Legal Notice	12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1365, codified in RCW 28A.650, to improve equitable access to educational technology by accelerating student access to learning devices, expanding technology training and technical assistance, and building school and district capacity to provide digital navigation services for students and families. This 2026 update describes Washington's progress toward those goals and identifies the sustainability challenges that remain as dedicated state grant funding has been reduced or discontinued.

District-reported data from OSPI's Annual Technology Survey shows that student device access is now widespread. Responding districts reported 1,087,715 devices, including 974,215 devices in 1:1 programs, resulting in 89.6% statewide 1:1 coverage. However, districts project replacing 860,761 devices by 2030, approximately 79% of the reported fleet. With dedicated state funding for 1:1 Device Grants now ended, districts must sustain and replace these devices through local resources and other available funding sources. Washington's next access challenge, therefore, is not initial device deployment, but sustaining device programs through predictable lifecycle funding, procurement support, and local technology staffing capacity.

Technology sustainability is tightly connected to emerging instructional and operational needs. Districts identify sustainable funding as their leading educational technology priority, and they also report strong demand for support with artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital citizenship, media literacy, and accessibility. Chrome OS devices make up 82% of average district fleets, adding additional considerations for replacement planning and long-term procurement strategy.

The Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) and the nine regional ESD Educational Technology (EdTech) Leads continue to serve as the state's primary infrastructure for educational technology-focused professional learning and technical assistance. During the 2025–26 school year, EdTech Leads logged 212 trainings, consultations, and support events, totaling more than 1,470 hours of planning and delivery and reaching more than 7,100 participants. Artificial intelligence was the dominant topic, followed by core EdTech best practices, media literacy and digital citizenship, and digital equity and inclusion. Statewide course evaluations remained high, averaging 3.87 out of 4.

Following the sunset of dedicated OSPI Digital Navigation Grant funding, digital navigation support has shifted from standalone grant-funded events toward lower-cost, embedded models. ESDs and partners are supporting students and families through lending libraries, adaptive technology loans, school library partnerships, and community access points. These approaches help sustain access and usability supports, especially for students and

families who need hands-on assistance with devices, connectivity, accessibility tools, and classroom technology.

Overall, Washington K-12 has made meaningful progress toward equitable technology access, but the next phase of work must focus on protecting and sustaining those gains. Continued collaboration among OSPI, AESD, ESD EdTech Leads, districts, libraries, community partners, and policymakers will be necessary to maintain device access, strengthen instructional and cybersecurity supports, and ensure that students and families can use technology effectively as a core part of learning.

Recommendations:

- **Sustain equitable technology access through coordinated funding and targeted support.** Establish predictable device lifecycle funding informed by statewide survey data, while prioritizing technical assistance, procurement support, and technology staffing capacity for small, rural, and under-resourced districts. Continue statewide data collection and reporting to monitor device access, replacement needs, local capacity, and progress over time.
- **Strengthen statewide and regional capacity for professional learning, technical assistance, and responsible technology adoption.** Provide sustainable support for OSPI Educational Technology staff, AESD, and the nine regional ESD EdTech Leads as coordinated statewide infrastructure. Scale effective professional learning in AI literacy, cybersecurity, digital citizenship, media literacy, and accessibility, and align procurement, privacy guidance, statewide K–12 security standards, and incident-readiness supports to help districts adopt technology safely and effectively.
- **Embed digital navigation and implementation support within existing education and community systems.** Build on lower-cost, sustainable approaches such as lending libraries, adaptive technology loans, school and public library partnerships, trusted community access points, in-district training, asynchronous learning, multi-week cohorts, and regional communities of practice. Use participant evaluations, ESD activity logs, and district feedback to identify effective delivery models, refine services, and expand supports that help students, families, and educators access and use technology successfully.

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1365 (codified in RCW 28A.650) to advance three objectives: (1) accelerate student access to learning devices and related goods and services, (2) expand training programs and technical assistance that support technology-enabled learning, and (3) build the capacity of schools and districts to provide digital navigation services for students and their families. Since that time, significant state, federal, and local investments have transformed educational technology access across Washington, helping districts establish and expand 1:1 device programs, strengthen technology support systems, and create new opportunities for digital inclusion.

The 2024 report documented substantial progress toward these goals, including widespread implementation of 1:1 device programs, increased professional learning opportunities, targeted grant investments, and the development of digital navigation services designed to help students and families effectively access and use technology. The report also identified emerging challenges, particularly the sustainability of device replacement cycles and the ongoing need for support in communities facing persistent digital access barriers. District survey data showed that a large percentage of devices purchased during the pandemic are now reaching end-of-life, while many districts continue to rely heavily on local funding sources to maintain technology programs.

Since the publication of the 2024 report, state funding dedicated to accelerating student access to learning devices and related services and funding specifically focused on building district and school capacity for digital navigation services has been reduced or discontinued. As a result, the state's efforts in these areas have shifted from direct grant-supported expansion to sustaining progress through local investments, partnerships, technical assistance, professional learning, and targeted support where resources remain available.

This 2026 report reflects that transition. While funding levels have changed, districts, ESDs, community partners, and OSPI, continue to work toward the broader vision established by HB 1365: ensuring that every student has equitable opportunities to access and benefit from educational technology. The report highlights current conditions, emerging needs, and statewide trends related to device access, technology sustainability, professional learning, accessibility, cybersecurity, digital citizenship, and digital inclusion. It also documents areas where progress has continued, areas where gains may be at risk without ongoing investment, and opportunities for future policy consideration.

Although the funding landscape has evolved, the fundamental challenge identified by HB 1365 remains unchanged: equitable access to technology is essential for participation in modern teaching and learning. As Washington's schools navigate technology replacement

cycles, rising cybersecurity demands, evolving instructional technologies including artificial intelligence, and increasing expectations for family engagement, continued collaboration among state agencies, ESDs, districts, educators, families, and community partners remains critical to supporting student success across the state.

Accelerate student access to learning devices and related goods and services

Technology Survey Insights

The 2026 Washington State Technology Survey provides a broad statewide view, with 271 districts responding (91.9% of 295 districts) and 263 complete responses. The results offer a strong directional picture of district technology conditions while still requiring caution because participation and question completion varied.

Student device access is extensive: districts reported 1,087,715 devices, including 974,215 in 1:1 programs, for statewide 1:1 coverage of 89.6%. However, districts plan to replace 860,761 devices by 2030 (approximately 79% of the reported fleet), indicating that sustaining current access will require significant investment. Chrome OS represents 82% of average district fleets, concentrating replacement and vendor-dependency considerations.

Funding is the central sustainability concern. The average device-replacement funding concern is 3.57 on a five-point scale, and 148 districts rated their concern high or very high. Districts identify sustainable funding as the leading technology priority and lack of funding for safe AI solutions as the top AI implementation challenge, connecting long-term device replacement and emerging technology adoption to the same underlying resource constraint.

Urban districts reported 886,146 devices compared with 201,397 in rural districts, reflecting differences in district scale; however, digital-navigation support rates are similar at 34.4% and 32.8%, respectively. The survey supports three immediate priorities: sustainable device lifecycle funding to address the planned replacement of 860,761 devices by 2030; strengthen cybersecurity through consistent baseline protections, secure technology procurement, and incident-response readiness; and expand technology staffing capacity through sustainable funding where local staffing is limited.

1:1 Device Replacement Cycles

Elementary

Elementary schools reported 434,284 devices assigned through 1:1 programs, out of 476,670 total elementary devices. This represents a 91.1% 1:1 coverage rate at the elementary level. Districts project a four-year replacement intensity equivalent to 84.4% of

the current elementary 1:1 inventory, representing 42.6% of statewide four-year replacement needs. Of these projected replacements, 41.8% of the current elementary 1:1 inventory are planned for 2026–28. The annual replacement need peaks in 2028–29, when 105,692 elementary devices are projected for replacement. Replacement projections may include devices outside 1:1 programs.

Insight	Results
Elementary 1:1 coverage	91.1%
Four-year replacement intensity	84.4%
Share of statewide replacements	42.6%
Peak year: 2028–29	105,692

Source: 2025–26 OSPI Educational Technology Survey

Middle School

Middle schools reported 87.5% 1:1 device coverage at the middle school level. Districts project a four-year replacement intensity equivalent to 98.6% of the current middle school 1:1 inventory, representing 26.3% of statewide four-year replacement needs. Of these projected replacements, 47.4% of the current middle school 1:1 inventory are planned for 2026–28. The annual replacement need peaks in 2028–29, when 63,238 middle school devices are projected for replacement. Replacement projections may include devices outside 1:1 programs.

Insight	Results
Middle school 1:1 coverage	87.5%
Four-year replacement intensity	98.6%
Share of statewide replacements	26.3%
Peak year: 2028–29	63,238

Source: 2025–26 OSPI Educational Technology Survey

High School

High schools reported 310,414 devices assigned through 1:1 programs, out of 348,862 total high school devices. This represents an 89.0% 1:1 coverage rate at the high school level. Districts project a four-year replacement intensity equivalent to 86.4% of the current high school 1:1 inventory, representing 31.1% of statewide four-year replacement needs. Of these projected replacements, 44.6% of the current high school 1:1 inventory are planned for 2026–28. The annual replacement need peaks in 2026–27, when 71,309 high school devices are projected for replacement. Replacement projections may include devices outside 1:1 programs.

Insight	Results
High school 1:1 coverage	89.0%
Four-year replacement intensity	86.4%
Share of statewide replacements	31.1%

Expand training programs and technical assistance on using technology to support student learning

Training Programs and Technical Assistance

District Professional Development Priorities Key Outcomes

- AI dominated support demand, appearing in 146 of 212 logged events (69%) and in most of the 52 statewide pdEnroller-evaluated courses, spanning foundational literacy, classroom-ready tools, and instructional-support applications. Districts that offered a tiered pathway, from basic AI literacy through classroom-ready tools to instructional-support use cases, saw the deepest and most sustained engagement, suggesting this progression is a model other regions can adopt as AI training needs continue to grow.
- Targeted, on-site support delivered directly inside small rural districts achieved outsized reach relative to the time invested, reaching the majority of a district's teaching staff in a single week. This compressed-timeline, in-district approach offers a replicable, low-cost model for extending training capacity into small and rural districts that lack dedicated technology staff.
- Media literacy and digital citizenship gained visible momentum through book-study and discussion-based formats exploring digital wellbeing, indicating that these lower-cost, cohort-based models can build sustained educator (and by extension family) engagement on digital wellbeing topics without requiring new grant funding.
- Multi-week, deep-engagement models emerged as an effective strategy for stretching limited training capacity, including a virtual academy paired with an in-person summit, and a differentiated multi-part series delivered separately by grade band. Both formats sustained deeper skill-building than a single one-time session and offer a template other regions could scale as dedicated training funding remains limited.
- Satisfaction remained high despite reduced funding: the 52 statewide-evaluated courses averaged 3.87 of 4 (97%) across written-objective clarity, instructor quality, and content-relevance measures, indicating that instructional quality has held steady even as training volume has become more dependent on regional capacity than dedicated state grant support.

Success Stories

The Educational Technology Leads have engaged in several successful collaborative initiatives, demonstrating the power of statewide partnerships, the EdTech group's ability to respond flexibly to stated needs, and the importance of offering multiple modalities (in person, on line, etc) to support educators. Some examples include:

- **Professional Learning and Sustained Technology Partnership:** Professional learning was provided through multiple formats to expand access across districts and educator roles. This included differentiated foundational training, year-long tech-team collaboration, back-to-school professional learning, paraeducator-specific sessions, and follow-up coaching on classroom-ready use. These sustained opportunities supported educators in building practical understandings, applications to daily practice, and accessing ongoing support regardless of role, location, or district size.
- **AI, Data Science, and Content Integration:** Regional professional learning supported educators in applying emerging technologies across instruction, standards, and student-support systems. This included an AI-Powered MTSS cohort, with participants reporting that session objectives were fully met; collaboration between Regional EdTech Leads and Content Coordinators in ELA, Math, and Science to provide professional learning on data science, revised standards, and emerging technologies. Regional Content Coordinators collaborated statewide to share expertise, resources, and practical strategies that educators could apply across content areas and grade levels.
- **Statewide Asynchronous and Cybersecurity Learning:** Statewide professional learning expanded access to both foundational AI and cybersecurity education. Multiple cohorts participated in an asynchronous AI basics course, creating a scalable foundation for AI learning across geographic areas, including a virtual cybersecurity academy and in-person summit built sustained cybersecurity capacity for educators. Together, these offerings provided flexible, ongoing learning opportunities beyond one-time professional development.
- **Media Literacy, Digital Citizenship, and Wellbeing:** Professional learning opportunities supported educators statewide in exploring media literacy, digital citizenship, technology use, and student wellbeing. Through book studies, facilitated discussions, and cohort-based learning, participants reflected on current practices and identified practical strategies and resources to support healthy, responsible technology use for students, educators, families, and school communities.

Build the capacity of schools and districts to support digital navigation services for students and their families

Digital Navigation Services

Overview

Following the sunset of dedicated OSPI Digital Navigation Grant funding, ESD EdTech Leads have shifted from grant-administered family navigation events toward embedding digital navigation support directly into their core technology assistance work, including lending libraries, adaptive technology loans, and school library partnerships. These services reach students and families who need direct, hands-on support accessing and using classroom technology. Available regional data centers on these embedded supports rather than standalone family-facing events.

Key Outcomes

- Lending libraries that loan devices and curriculum kits directly to summer school and out-of-school programs extend technology access to students and families beyond the standard school-year device fleet, offering a low-cost, replicable model for closing access gaps during periods outside the regular school calendar.
- Targeted adaptive technology loans, paired with best-practice training for the adult using the equipment, allow districts to meet individual student accessibility needs without a large capital purchase. This scalable approach could support students with disabilities statewide.
- Partnerships with school and public librarians extend digital navigation support through library systems, a natural and already-trusted access point for students and families without technology support at home. This model could be studied and replicated across other regions as a lower-cost alternative to standalone family navigation events.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

Washington has made substantial progress toward the goals established in HB 1365 and RCW 28A.650. District-reported data shows that student device access is now widespread, with nearly 90% statewide 1:1 coverage. However, the same data also shows that maintaining this progress will require sustained attention: districts project replacing 860,761 devices by 2030, with replacement pressure concentrated across elementary, middle, and high school programs over the next several years. Without a sustainable approach to device lifecycle funding, the state risks losing ground on the access gains made since 2021.

- **Develop a sustainable device lifecycle funding strategy:** Use the 2026

Technology Survey findings to inform policy and budget conversations about long-term replacement needs, including the projected replacement of nearly four out of five reported devices by 2030.

- **Target support where local capacity is limited:** Continue prioritizing technical assistance for small, rural, and under-resourced districts that may lack dedicated technology staffing, procurement capacity, or local funding to sustain device programs and emerging technology needs.
- **Sustain the ESD EdTech Lead network as statewide infrastructure:** Preserve and strengthen the regional model that delivered 212 trainings, consultations, and support events in 2024–26, reaching more than 7,100 participants despite reduced dedicated state grant funding.
- **Scale high-demand professional learning:** Expand practical, tiered training models in AI literacy, cybersecurity, digital citizenship, media literacy, and accessibility, using multi-week cohorts, in-district training, and regional communities of practice to stretch limited resources.
- **Embed digital navigation in existing systems:** Build on lower-cost models such as lending libraries, adaptive technology loans, school library partnerships, and trusted community access points to support students and families after the sunset of dedicated Digital Navigation Grant funding.
- **Strengthen cybersecurity and responsible technology adoption:** Align procurement, professional learning, privacy guidance, and incident-readiness supports so districts can safely adopt new educational technologies, including AI tools, while protecting student data and maintaining public trust.
- **Continue statewide data collection and reporting:** Use future technology surveys, ESD activity logs, course evaluations, and district feedback to monitor access, replacement needs, training demand, and digital navigation capacity over time.

The next phase of this work is less about launching new one-time initiatives and more about protecting statewide access through sustainable device funding, scaling what works, and aligning limited resources to the areas of greatest need. Continued collaboration among OSPI, AESD, ESD EdTech Leads, districts, libraries, community partners, and policymakers will be essential to ensuring that every student can access, use, and benefit from technology as a core part of learning.

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