Public Education System (C369L25)

Budget Language

747,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2026 and $611,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2027 are provided solely for implementation of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1296 (public education system).

Proviso Purpose

The purpose of this proviso is to cover the fiscal costs of executing the bill's statutory requirements.

Services Provided

- Adopted rules for Willful Noncompliance, Chapter 392-187 WAC
- Adopted revisions to Chapter 392-190 WAC
- Developed the Willful Noncompliance Complaint Process
- Created Willful Noncompliance webpage
- Created Statement of Student Rights OSPI webpage
- Updated OSPI Model Student Handbook
- Published Bulletin 041-25: Expanded Nondiscrimination Protections in State Law, published August 21, 2025

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

N/A

Beneficiaries in the 2025-26 School Year

Number of School Districts: N/A

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
2026	$747,000	$286,089

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2026	N/A

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

The willful noncompliance complaint process went into effect July 2026. If there are any impactful changes that impact the program, it will be included in a future fiscal proviso report.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

While the public utilized the complaint form and process at a relatively high frequency for a new OSPI process, very few complaints met the statutory requirements to be investigated. Most complaints were appropriately dismissed after an initial review under WAC 392-187-020.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

OSPI sought to hire staff to carry out the new work required under ESHB 1296. However, hiring additional staff was difficult, as the economic conditions facing many job applicants created hesitancy to start working at OSPI. In OLA's experience, multiple qualified applicants chose to stay in their current positions, while fewer applications than anticipated were received. All of this resulted in a longer-than-anticipated hiring process. Staff for willful noncompliance work were brought on in April or May, very near the end of the fiscal year. Now, the work is fully staffed at a rate that will fully utilize the proviso funds for future years.

Also, the complaint process was not created until the end of the fiscal year (in alignment with the legislative deadline), so it was difficult to spend money on staffing for a process that did not exist yet. Now, Chapter 392-187 WAC has become effective, and staff are in place to implement these rules and complaint process.

Future Opportunities

OSPI hired two staff attorneys and a Legal Assistant in part of this new work. These staff began their OSPI employment around May 2026. In addition, the Deputy Chief Legal Officer took lead responsibility for implementing the proviso, and their salary was accordingly reallocated to the proviso. As such, the current proviso funding is fully allocated to these four positions for the current fiscal year, and future years.

There may be future staffing opportunities in response to the volume of new complaints.

Other Relevant Information

No.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2026 Fiscal Year.

Program Contact Information

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