

Failing Schools

1. **Purpose:**

Funding is provided to implement Chapter 159, Laws of 2013, related to transforming persistently failing schools. Two main activities are supported through this funding:

- Creation and operation of a differentiated system of school improvement activities, including accountability, supports, and recognition of schools in Washington.
- Operation of the Required Action District program.

2. **Description of services provided:**

- Grants to Tier III and Tier II schools to support School Improvement Plan development and implementation.
- Continuation of Required Action District grants to support school turn-around efforts in identified schools. (Note: The State Board of Education released schools/districts identified as Required Action Districts in July 2018, on the condition that OSPI continue to provide financial support to those schools for the 2018-19 school year.)
- Coaching for school and district administrators and classroom educators in Tier III schools by highly qualified contractors (called Continuous Improvement Partners) in one or more areas, including: English Language Arts, Math, or Science instruction; Multi-Tiered Systems of Support; Data Support; Alternative or Reengagement Schools; Special Education; English Learners; Educational Leadership.
- Funding of education leaders in each Educational Service District to provide regional coordination and supports of school improvement activities, including data use to drive improvement activities.
- Professional learning and development programming across WSIF measure areas (ELA/Math proficiency and growth, attendance, dual credit, 9th grade on track, graduation) for all schools, with more intensive supports provided to Tier II and Tier III schools.
- Staffing to revise Required Action District program to align with improvement activities authorized under ESSA.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

Washington created an accountability system based on the metrics in the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF). Schools were identified for tiered levels of support:

- Tier III (or the most intensive levels of support) are comprehensive supports (bottom 5% of all schools as measured by the “all students” group) and comprehensive low-graduation (for high schools with less than a 67% 4-year graduation rate);
- Tier II include schools with three or more student groups with scores below the identification threshold for “all students”, and schools with the lowest measure on the English Learner progress measure;
- Tier 1 and foundational supports include schools not identified for Tier III or Tier II supports; and
- Schools/districts released from RAD designation in July 2018 continued to receive additional supports through the 2018-19 school year.

Beneficiaries in 2018-19 School Year:

of School Districts: 117
 # of Schools: 175

of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 4.23
 # of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 22

FY 19 Funding: State Appropriation: \$14.352 million
 Federal Appropriation: \$0
 Other fund sources: \$0
 TOTAL (FY19) \$14.352 million

4. Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding? If yes, explain.
 No

5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY19	\$14.352 million	\$11.887 million
FY18	\$9.352 million	\$7.374 million
FY17	\$9.352 million	\$8.471 million
FY16	\$7.235 million	\$6.260 million
FY15	\$6.7 million	\$6.165 million

6. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):
 None

7. Evaluations of program/major findings:

The school improvement activities funded under this proviso are set on a three-year cycle. Schools currently identified for Tier III and Tier II supports are beginning the second year of full funding and support (2019-20 school year). The focus on creating regional leadership

and coordination through the Educational Service Districts, in collaboration with OSPI's Office of System and School Improvement, is showing a great deal of promise as an efficient and effective way to connect improvement activities in the field to state policy and program leadership in Olympia. The WSIF will be updated, and schools identified in the spring of 2021 for the next three-year cycle of supports (which will begin in the 2021-22 school year).

8. **Major challenges faced by the program:**

School improvement efforts are resource intensive. OSPI would like to offer more impactful and sizable grants so that schools can afford to make the investments necessary for their school improvement plan implementation. An example would be on-going, imbedded professional learning and collaborative time for educators (classroom and administrative). Other resources include investments in data systems and data practices to drive improvement activities.

Other challenges are related to the deep systemic issues at play for many of our schools identified for improvement. These schools tend to have lower retention of classroom teachers and some administrative positions. It can be nearly impossible to hire qualified educators, especially in high-needs areas like special education. While these are common challenges, there is also a great deal of diversity in need among Tier II and Tier III schools. OSPI will continue to diversify the types of expertise and the experiences of leaders hired as Continuous Improvement Partners within existing resources.

9. **Future opportunities:**

As the school improvement model matures, OSPI will continue to look at the WSIF as a key way to identify schools and student groups for additional funding and policy support. With finite resources, the data available in the WSIF will help policy makers and OSPI staff alike make determinations for where and how to invest to close opportunity gaps for all students. The recent revision of the Required Action District rules is a good example of this. Schools that will drive Required Action District designation not only will be schools struggling to improve academic proficiency and growth (as described in statute), but also will be schools that serve a larger-than-state-average of students within specific student groups. The specific student groups are identified by using WSIF data to see where the most persistent opportunity gaps exist. In doing so, OSPI can ensure that our finite resources are being pointed towards the greatest need.

10. **Statutory and/or Budget language:**

Budget Proviso: The 2017 Washington State Legislature provided proviso language in its 2017-19 Operating Budget (SSB 5883, Sec. 513 (14) - \$14,352,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2019 are provided solely for implementation of chapter 159, Laws of 2013. By January 15, 2018, the superintendent of public instruction shall submit a plan to the fiscal committees of the legislature outlining the additional school accountability supports that will be implemented as a result of the increased appropriation provided in fiscal year 2019. Of the amount provided in this subsection, \$5,000,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2019 is provided solely for expenditure contingent upon legislative approval of the superintendent's plan for additional school

accountability supports, and the superintendent may not spend that amount until approval is received.

11. List of schools/districts receiving assistance: See OSPI [website](#).

12. Program Contact Information:

Tennille Jeffries-Simmons

Assistant Superintendent

Office of System and School Improvement

360-725-4960