

E2SHB 1153 (Language Access in Schools)

Statutory and/or Budget Language

\$3,348,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$3,348,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for implementation of chapter 107, Laws of 2022 (language access in schools).

Purpose

Language Access in Schools proviso funding is intended to support Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) in providing meaningful, equitable language access to students and their families who have language access barriers. Language access support to LEAs includes:

- Awarding non-competitive grants to a small number of LEAs to hire a language access coordinator.
- Providing technical assistance to all LEAs to develop, implement, and evaluate a language access program.
- Developing and maintaining training modules for interpreters in educational settings outside the classroom.
- Developing of a language access toolkit.

Description of Services Provided

Language access proviso funds were directed to LEAs in the following ways:

- 25 Full-time (FTE) Staff: provided so LEAs can have a language access coordinator to be a point of contact, provide training, and ensure compliance with RCW 28A.183.040.
- Linguist Education Online (LEO): this contractor developed interpreter training modules for interpreters for educational settings outside the classroom per RCW 28A.183.030.
- TransACT: this contractor provided all LEAs in Washington state with access to state and federal forms translated in Washington's top 10 languages through a one-year subscription to TransACT ParentNotices.
- LinguistLink: this contractor provided nine LEAs with access to LinguistLink and FamiliesLink to pilot a new tool designed to enhance and monitor family engagement per RCW 28A.183.050.

Proviso funding was also utilized by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) staff for these activities:

- Statewide policy and program coordination among LEAs.
- Language access technical assistance and grant management services to LEAs.



- Provision of language access guidance and support for language access liaisons and coordinators.
- Data collection and analysis required for local and statewide reporting and program improvement purposes.
- Development and implementation of resources for the language access toolkit.

Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

Language Access Coordinator Grant: as a formula grant, applications were approved if the LEA met the eligibility requirements and agreed to hire a full-time Language Access Coordinator.

Districts must have met at least one of the following LEA Language Access Coordinator eligibility requirements per RCW 28A.183.040:

- Have at least 50 percent English Learner enrollment.
- Greater than 75 languages used by students or families.

Language Access Liaisons: Per RCW 28A.183.040, LEAs must designate a Language Access Liaison to facilitate LEA compliance with state and federal laws related to family engagement. These LEAs met the following criteria and received services and technical assistance from OSPI staff.

Districts must have met *both* of the following criteria for identification of an LEA Language Access liaison per RCW 28A.183.040:

- Have between 10–50 percent multilingual learner enrollment.
- Less than 75 languages used by students or families.

Interpreter Modules: LEAs access the Interpreter Modules through Canvas, a learning management system. The modules are available statewide with no cost to LEAs.

TransACT ParentNotices: LEAs access translated state and federal forms through the ParentNotices platform with no cost to LEAs.

LinguistLink: Priority was given to LEAs who were interested in participating in the pilot program to document family engagement and were selected based on the following criteria:

- District language access engagement (Language Access Coordinator or Language Access Liaison)
- Geographic location
- Student demographics composition

Beneficiaries in the 2023–24 School Year

Number of School Districts	41
Number of Schools	N/A

Number of Students	N/A
Number of Educators	22
Other	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

N/A

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$3,348,000	\$3,126,588
2023	\$367,000	\$4,352

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

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	63
2023	0

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

Language access in schools was established by HB 1153 (2022) and codified in RCW 28A.183 to require LEAs to implement a language access plan and program for culturally responsive, systemic family engagement developed through meaningful stakeholder involvement. As part of this legislation, LEAs were required to have a Language Access Liaison to facilitate district compliance with state and federal laws related to family engagement.

Language Access Coordinator. Beginning with the 2023–24 school year, authorizing legislation (RCW 183.040) required LEAs with at least 50 percent multilingual learner enrollment or greater than 75 languages used by students or families to have either a full-time Language Access Coordinator or annually report to OSPI the total number of hours school district staff spent performing the language access coordinator duties. The Language Access Coordinator Grant was done to promote equity and accessibility for LEAs as they worked towards meeting the new language access coordinator and program requirements. Of the 25 eligible districts, 22 grant recipients received awards of \$116,000. Two districts declined the grant offer, and one district did not respond.

Language Access Data Collection. Beginning with the 2023–24 school year, authorizing legislation (RCW 28A.183.050) required LEAs to offer participants in each interpreted meeting an opportunity to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the interpretation and the provision of language access services. School districts must annually collect language access and language access service information.

Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

The majority of LEAs used their language access funding to support increases in staffing. By increasing staff capacity, and providing tangible support, LEAs reported improved:

- Identification of parents needing language services.
- Access to language services in schools and districts.
- Training delivery for school district staff and interpreters.
- Ability to monitor and provide language access services.
- Ability to help students and families obtain language access services.

While LEAs appreciated the opportunity to utilize grant funding for a Language Access Coordinator and took advantage of creating systems to engage more families, the limited number of grants created challenges for districts who did not meet the criteria. Local education agencies that had a Language Access Liaison relied on current staffing to facilitate district compliance with state and federal laws.

Major Challenges Faced by the Program

The inception of the Language Access Coordinator grant benefitted 22 LEAs addressing their initial development of a language access program for fiscal year 2023; however, unless this grant continues into the next biennium, implementation of the program will stagnate.

Although funding has been prioritized for LEAs with the greatest language service needs, under-resourced LEAs that support a Language Access Liaison continue to be underutilized due to staff capacity limitations and other barriers to effective systemic family engagement. Ultimately, students suffer when access to funding is dependent upon the LEA's capacity to meet formula grant requirements. For example, there were LEAs with a Language Access Liaison that narrowly missed the enrollment criteria for multilingual learners that would have welcomed funding to support the development and implementation of a language access program.

OSPI was understaffed, which affected the provision of language access technical assistance to LEAs. The scope of work, including technical assistance and the development of a language access toolkit, required specialized knowledge and research in an emerging field, thereby influencing the timeliness of support.

Future Opportunities

Over the past two years, OSPI has seen an expansion of language access opportunities because of this proviso. The agency has also seen growing statewide interest in language access support. The interest exceeds the capacity of the proviso.

Increasing the funding for additional LEAs to be served by this grant will result in meeting the needs of more than 22 districts in their efforts to increase support and services to families needing language assistance services.

Supporting additional LEAs will also mean additional OSPI staff who will help facilitate research for the language access toolkit, generate vetted content for schools, and increase capacity to provide technical assistance in a timely manner.

Other Relevant Information

N/A

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#)

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