Preparing Washington's Future Workforce with Microsoft IT Academy
Community Partner: Microsoft

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Describe the specific need within the K–12 system

The Microsoft IT Academy provides Washington students with a unique opportunity to gain industry certification while enrolled in public middle schools or high schools. Residing in the home to some of the leading technology companies in the world, Washington students have unique access to high-paying jobs in their own communities provided they are given access to the pathways and skills that lead to career opportunities in technology.

How a state investment in community partnership meets this need

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) requests $3,007,000 for the Microsoft IT Academy to expand the reach of its services, building a stronger bridge between Washington students and high-paying Washington jobs. Funding will provide access to curriculum and certification exams for in-demand technology skills for all public middle and high schools statewide. Examples include:

- Industry certification exams for in-demand technology skills for use in all public middle and high schools statewide. These certifications include subjects such as artificial intelligence (AI), data science, cloud, cybersecurity, business productivity, and coding in Python or JavaScript using the Coding in Minecraft computer science program.
- Curriculum for all public middle and high schools in the state to support the delivery of the industry certification credentials.
- Comprehensive educator support including professional development, educator materials, support desk, and engagement at events.
- Ongoing monthly reporting to OSPI leadership including an annual State Impact Report.

Describe existing or previous state investment in this work

The Microsoft IT Academy received $3,004,000 in funding in the 2023–25 biennial Operating Budget, Senate Bill 5950, Sec. 522(3)(q), and $3,000,000 in funding in the 2021–23 biennial Operating Budget.

SUPPORTING DATA AND EVIDENCE OF POSITIVE IMPACT

The Microsoft IT Academy provides Washington students and their educators with a unique opportunity to gain industry certification while enrolled in a public middle school or high school. To date, the program has provided more than 625,000 industry recognized certification exams and credentials to students and educators across the state. These certifications present significant opportunities for the individuals obtaining them. There are roughly 19,000 computing

jobs open in Washington state, with an average salary of $112,623 in the computing profession. The IT Academy program provides globally recognized technology education, skills, and certifications for educator professional development and content students need to succeed in today's workplace. In addition to high female enrollment rates, 29% of program enrollees identify as Hispanic/Latino, significantly higher than the 6.3% employment rate of individuals identifying as Hispanic/Latino in the U.S. technology sector as reported by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CALCULATIONS

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

The Washington State Legislature has historically provided funding to support a statewide information technology academy program that provides curriculum and certification opportunities to all Washington state middle and high schools students at no cost to participants. In the 2023–25 biennial budget, the program received $3,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and $3,004,000 in fiscal year 2025. This proposal would continue the work in the 2025–27 biennium and beyond.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

This request is for $3,007,000 per fiscal year during the 2025–27 biennium and beyond to continue the skills and information technology academy learning and certification program that provides the following benefits and supports to schools in Washington state.

Curriculum
- Microsoft Digital Literacy curriculum
- Microsoft E-Learning curriculum
- E-reference materials
- Microsoft Official Academic Course (MOAC) series
- Microsoft Official Courseware (MOC)

Professional Development
- Teaching with Technology Curriculum
- Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) program
- Teacher Starter Kits
- Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)

Certification Test Center Site License for Each School
- Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam vouchers for teachers and students
- Complimentary MOS, Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA) and Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE) exam vouchers for faculty and staff professional development
- Discounted Microsoft Certified Professional Exams Partnership

Resources

- IT Academy Membership Plaque
- Marketing materials to help promote the IT Academy and recruit students
- Use of Microsoft IT Academy logo
- Availability of Certificate of Completion certificates
- Teacher Training on IT Academy Tools and Benefits
- How-to Guides

Supports

- Comprehensive educator support including professional development, educator materials, support desk, and engagement at events
- Ongoing monthly reporting to OSPI leadership including annual State Impact Report

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