



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

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DATE: 15 November 2024

TO: Pat Sullivan, Director
Gaius Horton, Budget Assistant to the Governor

FROM: Scott McCallum, Superintendent
Phillip McCreary, Director of Business, Finance and Human Resources

SUBJECT: Response: Budget reductions for fiscal year 2025 and 2025-27 biennium

Washington State School for the Blind approached this budget reduction exercise through the lens of maintaining our core programs and services with the least amount of impact on students, individuals and families we serve. Our core focus is providing services for blind and low vision students.

Proposed budget reduction options and savings

- Under-expenditures, premium adjustments and efficiencies
 - *WSSB operates on a lean budget, therefore we typically do not have underspend in our General Fund allocation. Considerations for General Fund items noted below.*
- Mainly Near General Fund accounts (General Fund-State, Education Legacy Trust, Opportunity Pathways, and Workforce Education Investment), but consider all accounts for savings.
 - *Options for General Fund savings are explained in the next section.*
- Use of other funds in lieu of General Fund-State whenever possible.
 - *\$800,000 - WSSB could consider committing \$400K for each fiscal year of the FY25-27 biennium thus reducing our general fund appropriation. Impact: This reduces reserves used to cover programs and services until reimbursement is received. This action would be relatively easy to implement at the start of the biennium.*
 - *Committing this amount would minimize the impact to core services and programs.*
- Program eliminations, reductions, and delays especially for those programs or services that do not meet the agency's core mission.
 - *WSSB's current programs are core to the agency's core mission. Currently, we do not have any programs or services that are pending. Any programs or services that are reduced or eliminated will directly impact the blind and low vision*

students and individual we serve thus negatively impacting our core programs and services.

Notes:

The funds in 19B serve several purposes. One of the largest is to cover the expenses of the statewide outreach programs. Funds for these services are recouped through contracted services via school districts but not at a rate of 100%. The funds in 19B offset the difference as the state general fund allocation only covers 3.0 FTE. The Northwest Center of Assistive Technology Training (CATT-NW) is funded by 19B and reimbursed via pass-through grant reimbursement. It is essential that we maintain a healthy balance to support the expenditures of these and other programs that are not funded through our state general fund allocation.

At this time, we are not proposing any major cost saving measures or reductions for FY25 as we are nearing the mid-point of the school year. Although, the savings would be minimal, we will focus on the following for the current fiscal year:

- Limit overtime to backfill needs only
- Delay/Suspend management merit increases
- Hold position classification adjustments except those driven by classification review (represented positions).
- Hold any non-student focused vacancies

Other reductions that would directly and indirectly impact core services but yield minimal savings:

- Reducing professional development and travel
 - Reductions in this area could impact required continuing education and keeping up to date with changes in the field of blind and low vision learners.
 - The negative impact in this area would outweigh any savings that would be recognized.

We will continue to look for savings in all areas. We are happy to review and discuss these items with you to provide clarity and additional context.