



## Washington State

# One Platform, Equal Opportunity: Modernizing Postsecondary Readiness for Every Washington Student

**CATEGORY:** Cross-Boundary Collaboration

**PROJECT TIMELINE:** 2021-2027

**Submitted by:**

Rebecca Wallace, Assistant Superintendent  
Pathway Preparation and Title Programs  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

[Rebecca.Wallace@k12.wa.us](mailto:Rebecca.Wallace@k12.wa.us)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 500,000 Washington students previously relied on a fragmented mix of more than 10 different High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) systems that varied widely in quality, functionality, and access. A student's ability to explore careers, prepare for college, or plan for life after high school often depended on where they lived or the resources available in their district.

To address these inequities, the Washington State Legislature directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to implement a universal statewide [High School and Beyond Plan](#) platform for all students in grades 7-12.

In partnership with school districts, Tribal compact schools, educators, counselors, students, families, agency partners, and technology providers, OSPI launched the Statewide High School and Beyond Plan Platform powered by SchoolLinks.

As of the 2025-26 school year:

- Approximately 200 districts and Tribal compact schools have implemented the platform.
- More than 230,000 students are actively using the system during school year 25-26.
- More than 10 fragmented local systems are being replaced through one statewide framework.

The platform creates one connected, student-centered experience that supports career exploration, graduation planning, postsecondary readiness, financial aid planning, internships, and career-connected learning.

The initiative demonstrates how statewide collaboration, equity-centered design, and digital modernization can improve student outcomes while strengthening alignment between K-12 education, workforce development, and post-secondary systems.

---

## IDEA

### **What problem or opportunity does the project address?**

Washington's High School and Beyond Plan requirement was historically implemented through locally selected systems and district-developed processes. This created inconsistent student experiences statewide.

Before implementation:

- More than 10 different HSBP systems were used statewide.
- Access to planning tools varied significantly by district.
- Some students relied on paper-based or limited planning processes.
- Students transferring districts frequently lost continuity in their plans.
- Post-secondary planning often depended on local funding and staffing capacity.
- Statewide reporting and visibility into student readiness were limited.

These inconsistencies created inequitable access to college and career readiness resources and prevented Washington from delivering a consistent statewide planning experience.

## Why does it matter?

The High School and Beyond Plan helps students explore careers, prepare for post-secondary education, align coursework to goals, and plan for life after high school. When planning tools and resources vary by district, opportunity gaps widen.

The statewide HSBP platform ensures all students have access to:

- Consistent career and college planning tools
- Postsecondary and workforce exploration resources
- Personalized graduation and pathway planning
- Real-time progress tracking
- Internship and career-connected learning opportunities

**Access to opportunity should not depend on a student's ZIP code.**

By treating postsecondary readiness as a statewide service rather than a district-by-district responsibility, Washington created a more equitable and connected education system.

## What makes it different?

The Statewide High School and Beyond Plan Platform replaced disconnected district systems with one unified statewide framework that:

- Follows students throughout grades 7-12.
- Creates continuity across districts and schools.
- Aligns coursework, graduation pathways, and career goals.
- Connects students to workforce and post-secondary opportunities.
- Improves statewide visibility into student engagement and progress.

The project was built through extensive cross-boundary collaboration involving:

- OSPI leadership and program teams
- District administrators, counselors, and educators
- Tribal compact schools
- Technical and data teams
- Postsecondary and workforce partners
- Students and families
- Vendor and implementation partners

Districts and educators helped shape requirements, pilot functionality, guide implementation planning, and provide ongoing feedback throughout deployment.

## What makes it universal?

The project provides a scalable framework for:

- Digital transformation
- Education system modernization

- Equity-centered IT solutions

Washington's project addresses national challenges including:

- Fragmented student systems
- Inequity in access
- Lack of system-level coordination

The model is scalable, repeatable, and adaptable for other states seeking a more equitable statewide student planning system.

---

# IMPLEMENTATION

## What was the roadmap?

### Phase 1: Statewide Vision and Planning

- Legislative direction established statewide implementation goals.
- OSPI developed policy, governance, and system requirements.

### Phase 2: Procurement and Solution Selection

- SchoolLinks selected through a competitive procurement process.

### Phase 3: Pilot and Readiness

- Statewide readiness assessment and gap analysis completed.
- Early adopter districts participated in pilot implementation.
- Training and technical assistance launched statewide.

### Phase 4: Statewide Scale

- Approximately 200 districts and Tribal compact schools will be onboarded by June 2026.
- Phased launches supported through coordinated implementation planning.

### Phase 5: Full Statewide Adoption

- Remaining districts, Tribal compact schools, and state-funded schools scheduled for onboarding by June 2027.

## Who was involved?

The implementation team reflects a true cross-boundary collaboration spanning state, local, and community partners:

- OSPI leadership and cross-functional program, policy, and technical teams.
- District administrators, counselors, and educators who co-developed requirements and informed implementation through ongoing engagement.
- IT and data teams across state and local levels supporting integration, data use, and sustainability.
- Agency partners aligning policy, data sharing, and student support services.
- Vendor partners enabling scalable, user-centered technology solutions.

- Students and families contributed lived experience and usability feedback to ensure accessibility and relevance.
- Statewide volunteers and advisory groups providing diverse perspectives and continuous input.

Collaboration extended beyond participation to shared ownership, establishing feedback loops, pilot opportunities, and co-design practices that ensured the solution is grounded in the day-to-day needs of schools and responsive to the experiences of students and families.

An executive steering committee, led by the project sponsor and key OSPI leaders, oversees project requirements, governance, and success criteria.

### How did you do it?

Implementation focused on scalability, usability, equity, and long-term sustainability.

The project team:

- Built a student-centered platform aligned with state graduation requirements.
- Established statewide governance and implementation structures.
- Used hybrid project management and agile development.
- Conducted statewide readiness assessments and gap analyses.
- Delivered statewide training and technical assistance.
- Incorporated feedback from students, educators, districts, and advisory groups.
- Developed change management and communications strategies.

The implementation model emphasized partnership and shared ownership rather than top-down deployment.

---

## IMPACT

### What did the project make better?

By creating a common statewide career and college exploration platform, Washington is reducing district-to-district inconsistency, improving access to planning tools and guidance, and giving families, educators, and state partners a shared way to support students. The project strengthens alignment, expands access to instructional and advising resources, and replaces fragmented local systems with one connected experience. By treating postsecondary readiness as a statewide service, Washington is reducing opportunity gaps tied to geography and helping more students build clear pathways to education, training, and careers after high school.

### How do you know?

The project is already demonstrating measurable statewide impact.

#### Statewide Scale and Adoption

- Approximately 200 districts and Tribal compact schools onboarded during the 2025-26 school year

- More than 230,000 students are actively using the system during the 25-26 school year. It is expected that student engagement will rise to more than 500,000 students during the 26-27 school year for full statewide adoption.
- More than 10 fragmented local HSBP systems are being replaced with one statewide solution.

### Strong Student and Staff Engagement

Several implementation districts reported nearly 100% student and staff participation rates throughout the 2025-26 school year.

The platform increased engagement by giving students one place to:

- Explore careers
- Identify internships and job shadows
- Track graduation progress
- Build personalized postsecondary plans
- Connect coursework to career interests

*“My biggest take away from it is it helps open my eyes to what's really out there for me. It helps a lot more than you think to have at least somewhat of a plan of what you want to do, where you want to go. And on top of that, to actually know that the things I love to do can be something I do in the future is amazing.” – WA Student*

### Improved Advising and Operational Visibility

The statewide platform improved real-time visibility into student progress, course interest, and advising needs.

District leaders report stronger forecasting and resource planning capabilities because administrators can now view real-time student planning data within one connected system.

### Improved Equity and Continuity

The project significantly reduced inequities caused by fragmented district systems.

Previously, student access to career and college planning tools depended heavily on district resources and locally selected platforms. Students transferring districts often lost continuity in their plans and advising records.

The statewide platform now provides a consistent student experience regardless of district size, geography, or local funding capacity.

This is especially important for:

- Rural districts
- Smaller school systems
- Mobile student populations
- Students with historically limited access to postsecondary planning resources

*“We have one career and college counselor for the district, so that's a lot of students for her to try and personalize information for and get the information they need. Having a platform available to push that information out based on students interests and things they have selected really helps them connect with opportunities.” -WA Teacher*

### Reduced Local Burden and Duplication

The Legislature appropriated statewide funding for platform licensing, reducing financial barriers for districts and allowing schools to focus resources on advising, implementation, and student support rather than maintaining separate local systems.

The shared statewide framework also:

- Reduced duplication across districts
- Improved statewide reporting consistency

- Increased scalability for future enhancements and integrations

## Long-Term Public Value

The platform establishes a long-term statewide foundation for:

- Improved workforce readiness
- Stronger education-to-career alignment
- Expanded career-connected learning
- Better statewide planning insights
- More equitable access to postsecondary opportunities

*“The efficiency is such at the administrative level that it allows us to understand real-time data, where students are currently sitting in classes and what classes they're most interested in. So forecasting is immediately connected to resource allocation.” -WA Principal*

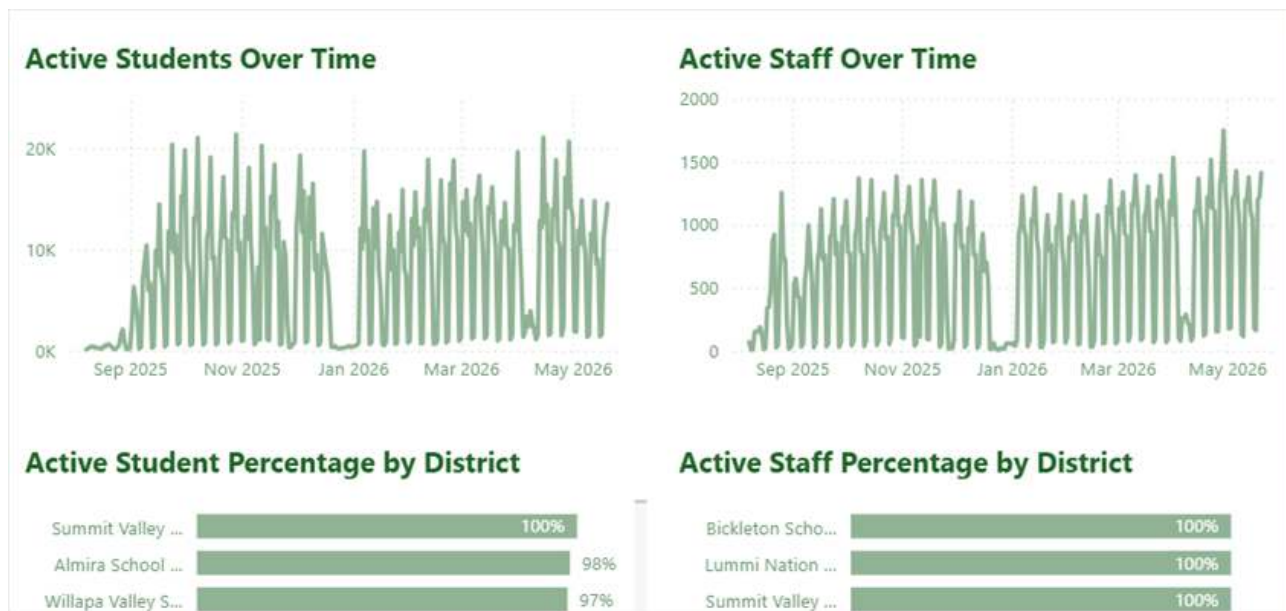


Figure: Washington districts with nearly 100% staff and student participation engagement rates throughout the implementation period of September 2025 to May 2026.

## What now?

OSPI will complete statewide implementation by onboarding the remaining districts, ESDs, Tribal compact schools, and state-funded schools during the 2026-27 school year, meeting the Legislature’s two-year implementation timeline.

Future enhancements include:

- Expanded data integration, analytics, and reporting
- Integration of Alternative Learning Experiences
- Financial aid and course planning tools
- Workforce and postsecondary system integration
- Ongoing platform enhancements and continuous improvement

With more than 200 districts and schools participating statewide, continued investment in licensing, staffing, training, system improvements, and statewide data access will support long-term sustainability and growth.