



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# UPDATE: School Transportation Efficiency 2023

Authorizing Legislation: [RCW 28A.160.117](#)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, school districts receive an efficiency rating of their student transportation operations using previous school year data recorded in the transportation funding system, Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS). Regional Transportation Coordinators (RTCs) conduct efficiency reviews for those districts with an efficiency rating below 90%.

Seventy-eight school districts received an efficiency review in 2023. Efficiency ratings are unpredictable in nature and uncontrollable items can affect the ratings. It is important to note that the efficiency ratings have no direct impact on district allocations calculated by the STARS model and can promote behaviors or decisions that lead to higher efficiency ratings but less state allocation.

# INTRODUCTION

The Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS), the current student transportation funding system, was implemented in 2011. At that time, legislature requested an efficiency evaluation system of school district transportation operations. OSPI created an efficiency rating formula to encourage school districts to efficiently run their transportation operations using state resources. Regional Transportation Coordinators (RTCs) are required to conduct efficiency reviews for any districts whose efficiency rating is less than ninety percent.

## Review Process

The RTCs complete the efficiency evaluation through two different review processes. The first process is for districts who receive a rating below 90 percent and the prior year rating was above 90%. The second review process is for districts whose prior year and current year efficiency ratings are below 90%.

## 2022–23 School Year Results

The review process for the 2022–23 school year resulted in seventy-seven reviews out of 279 districts receiving efficiency ratings. Thirty-six districts received reviews due to efficiency ratings below 90% the current year and above 90% the prior year. The RTCs completed 41 reviews for districts with a current and prior year rating below 90%.

Efficiency reviews were not conducted during the 2020–21 and 2021–22 school years due to incomplete data caused by the pandemic. Therefore, the 2022–23 efficiency reviews were compared to the 2019–20 school year review information.

**Figure 1: 2023 District Efficiency Ratings Distribution**

Efficiency Rating	Number of Districts 2023	Number of Districts 2020
100%	183	180
90-99.9%	18*	28
80-89.9%	35	40
70-79.9%	24	21
60-69.9%	11	7
Less than 60%	8	4

**Source:** STARS, June 2023

\* Dissolved cooperative caused lack of review data for one district

## *Factors Impacting Efficiency*

The efficiency rating formula creates cohort groups and compares districts' data to generate an efficiency rating. District data changes from year to year which can change cohort groups and affect efficiency ratings. Geographic location, district reporting errors, one-time purchases, and district determined levels of school bus service can affect a district's efficiency rating.

# CONCLUSION

The efficiency ratings are determined using prior school year data. Districts receiving a rating below 90% receive an efficiency review. Reasons vary for a rating below 90 and can range from one-time purchases, reporting errors, geographic constraints, and a district's level of service. The RTC and the district will discuss any concerns found during the review. Efficiency ratings do not give a true sense of efficiency since the district cohorts can change from year to year but can be a starting point for reviewing potential concerns and expose how districts best utilize resources.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

Efficiency reviews by review type

**Figure 1: Current and Prior Year Rating Below 90%**

District	Efficiency Rating 2022–23	Efficiency Rating 2019–20
Almira	53.92%	76.58%
Anacortes	66.47%	77.54%
Battle Ground	77.31%	83.36%
Blaine	67.91%	67.60%
Camas	88.71%	73.14%
Carbonado	89.65%	89.77%
Castle Rock	86.03%	88.80%
Centerville	56.17%	72.31%
Central Kitsap	86.98%	78.26%
Chewelah	57.01%	70.08%
Chimacum	87.44%	64.34%
Deer Park	75.11%	86.81%
Easton	63.53%	84.80%
Eatonville	85.76%	63.99%
Ephrata	88.06%	82.88%
Grandview	83.29%	85.05%
Griffin	73.11%	83.08%
Index	85.32%	86.85%
Lake Chelan	84.48%	85.65%
Lakewood	83.35%	82.88%
McCleary	79.41%	82.04%
Medical Lake	76.32%	77.73%
Monroe	75.20%	74.88%
Mount Baker	69.72%	86.59%
North Kitsap	76.60%	80.52%
Northport	59.86%	58.46%
Oakesdale	39.33%	37.74%
Olympia	70.04%	86.32%
Peninsula	84.26%	89.87%
Port Angeles	76.62%	84.19%
Pullman	83.42%	74.91%
Puyallup	78.82%	85.22%
Raymond	68.80%	78.83%
Renton	80.00%	75.99%

District	Efficiency Rating 2022–23	Efficiency Rating 2019–20
Riverside	87.03%	68.72%
Sequim	72.08%	68.43%
South Kitsap	68.65%	73.71%
Steptoe	54.68%	75.94%
Sultan	78.77%	78.59%
Sumner	89.23%	88.78%
Tekoa	59.69%	61.22%

Source: STARS, June 2023

Figure 2: Current Below 90%, Prior Above 90%

District	Efficiency Rating 2022–23	Efficiency Rating 2019–20
Bainbridge Island	72.05%	100.00%
Brinnon	84.09%	94.09%
Centralia	85.61%	92.19%
Colton	82.72%	97.38%
Dieringer	80.87%	100.00%
Ferndale	89.92%	94.44%
Great Northern	68.38%	100.00%
Green Mountain	48.70%	100.00%
Hood Canal	70.78%	100.00%
Lynden	89.49%	100.00%
Mead	83.61%	100.00%
Methow Valley	88.38%	100.00%
Montesano	78.65%	100.00%
Naches Valley	84.25%	98.17%
Napavine	76.54%	100.00%
Nine Mile Falls	83.05%	92.22%
North Beach	83.96%	100.00%
North Thurston	88.02%	100.00%
Oak Harbor	78.62%	92.72%
Ocosta	86.02%	100.00%
Orcas Island	87.26%	100.00%
Orient	64.22%	100.00%
Orting	87.76%	100.00%
Pateros	75.34%	90.74%
Port Townsend	62.43%	100.00%
Rosalia	61.47%	100.00%
Skamania	73.22%	98.53%

District	Efficiency Rating 2022–23	Efficiency Rating 2019–20
South Bend	89.04%	90.88%
South Whidbey	79.87%	100.00%
Southside	86.97%	100.00%
Star	72.22%	100.00%
Tacoma	82.26%	100.00%
Touchet	68.18%	100.00%
Trout Lake	74.18%	100.00%
Vashon Island	79.41%	100.00%
Washtucna	75.33%	100.00%

**Source:** STARS, June 2023



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