

Broadband Internet Accessibility and Digital Inclusion Issues

ITED Committee Presentation

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
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Vision

All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

Mission

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

Values

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



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Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



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Internet Accessibility and Digital Inclusion Issues

- Access to broadband connectivity
- Devices for at home learning
- Support for students, parents, and others who are assisting students in remote learning
 - Technical support
 - Multiple family members online at the same time
 - Getting connected and staying connected to remote learning



Connectivity

May 2020

81% of students had reliable broadband internet connectivity

Start of 2020-21 school year:

80-89% of students have adequate technology and connectivity to learn remotely.

Sources: Spring Survey (May 17 through May 23) and Home Digital Access Data Collection (August 2020)
Estimates assume that reporting districts are representative of all districts.



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Student Technology

As of August 2020:

- ~**97%** of students had a device adequate for online learning.
- ~**3%** of students (estimated 30,000 statewide) did not have a learning device available.
- An additional **10%** of students (estimated 115,000 statewide) were thought to be sharing a learning device.

Source: Home Digital Access Data Collection (August 2020)

*Percentages based on student enrollment counts for the 2020–2021, as reported by districts in the Home Digital Access Data Collection. Statewide estimate assumes that reporting districts are representative of all districts.



Student Technology

April 2020

~**48%** of students (estimated 545,000 students statewide) had a district-issued device to use at home.

August 2020

~**74%** of students (estimated 820,000 students statewide) had a district-owned device for use at home.

Sources: Spring Survey (April 2020) Home Digital Access Data Collection (August 2020)

*Percentages based on April 1 CEDARS enrollment data, and student enrollment counts for the 2020–2021, as reported by districts in the Home Digital Access Data Collection. Statewide estimate assumes that reporting districts are representative of all districts.



K–12 Internet Access Program

Agreements with Internet Service Providers

- \$8.8 million in CARES Act funding to provide internet access to students whose families are low-income and who are not currently connected to internet
- Funding available through the end of 2020–21 school year
- Comcast, Presidio, and Zply responded successfully to RFQ to provide 2 free months of 25MB/3MB broadband service followed by \$10/month (plus taxes & fees) to eligible families, without regard to unpaid bills or other economic qualifications



K–12 Internet Access Program

District Reimbursements

- Partial reimbursement to school districts, tribal schools, and charter schools who entered into their own agreements with internet service providers.
- Districts may use these funds to cover costs incurred on or after September 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.
- \$10 of the recurring monthly costs (plus taxes and fees, up to \$15 total) is eligible for reimbursement.
- One-time costs (e.g., purchase of hotspots) are not eligible for reimbursement, nor can funding be provided for families who were already receiving broadband internet access prior to August 2020.





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