PL-CW Education Modernization

2021-23 BIENNIAL BUDGET

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Operating Expenditures	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
FTE	2.6	3.4	3.4	3.4
Fund 001-1	$1,784,000	$1,497,000	$1,493,000	$1,493,000
Total Cost	**$1,784,000**	**$1,497,000**	**$1,493,000**	**$1,493,000**

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Department of Corrections (DOC) requests funding to fully implement the secure internet plan put forth by the Second Substitute Senate Bill 5433 (2SSB 5433) feasibility report. This plan includes: expand secure internet at ten more DOC prison facilities, providing additional laptops to enhance the educational opportunities available, and specialist staffing to address the needs of incarcerated individuals with learning disabilities.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The DOC provides reentry-focused education to incarcerated individuals through the partnership with the State Board of Technical & Community Colleges (SBCTC) and eight community colleges. As the world has become more digital the world inside our prisons has lagged behind. Each year colleges find it increasingly difficult to prepare students for jobs, careers and further education without the use of secure internet in classrooms and computer labs. Academic and workforce training publishers continue to phase out resources, software, tools and testing services that can be utilized in settings that do not have access to the internet for student use. In order to prepare people for release, Washington prisons need safe access to the same digital information and tools that students on college campuses use.

2SSB 5433 (Chapter 397, Laws of FY 2019) directed DOC to develop a plan for implementing secure internet connections for post-secondary education and training of incarcerated individuals. Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) was chosen as the site to run an internet pilot. Results from the pilot program have proven to be extremely positive. As indicated in the pilot, the experience for students helps to mirror the experience they would receive in the community on campus and prepares them for employment. Faculty who participated in the secured internet pilot reported that students were far more engaged in learning and program delivery became much more efficient through use of the internet. It's also notable in a separate study put on by Pew Research Center, 92% of teachers reported that internet has a major impact on their ability to access content, resources and materials, which corroborates the claims by participating faculty in the pilot. In addition to use of secured internet, correctional education programs could better serve students by fully implementing use of secured offline-laptops that have been piloted and rolled out to most facilities. In order

to meet the need and fully utilize these resources, funding is needed to expand the number of available laptops and hire full-time IT staff through the SBCTC contract to manage the off-line laptops and on-site support for secure-internet. SBCTC is currently using all available laptops and with expansion of secure internet, there will be a dire need to expand on the amount of laptops available to the program. These will offer students needed study time in the living units, the ability to complete assignments outside of the classroom and programs would be able to provide student resources more efficiently and economically.

SBCTC's efforts are focused on helping students, especially low-income, first-generation students and students of color, earn credentials to prepare them for entry into higher-paying, high-demand fields with value in the labor market. SBCTC also has a significant portion of Basic Skills students in class who have lingered with no progress. Students are required to be tested and dropped if no progress is observed within two quarters of instruction. Colleges believe it is primarily due to unassessed learning disabilities, which have become an increasing concern in recent years. There is a need to develop a process for identifying and assessing incarcerated individuals with learning disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, and cognitive impairments and provide accommodations for these individuals. Psycho-educational assessments are not currently performed through DOC Medical, nor are they a routine service provided by colleges. Due to frequent attrition of students, there is crucial need to advance education programs provided by DOC.

The DOC received one-time funding of approximately $1.2M in FY2021 that will cover most of the implementation costs. However this funding did not carry-forward into the 2021-23 biennium, therefore does not fund any supporting full-time equivalents (FTEs) to successfully implement this program, nor the appropriate support to maintain the program past FY2021.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

There are three financial impacts to the proposed solution seen as listed below:

1. 2.0 Psychology Associate FTEs to address the special education needs and assessments of individuals in the state (ongoing $244,000).
2. Establish secure internet in ten more DOC facilities. This will also require 1.0 IT Security FTE to address the maintenance aspect of the internet service (ongoing $639,000 for secure internet and $161,000 for the IT Security FTE).
3. Add 1,000 laptops to the program due to expansion, increasing challenge of education materials moving strictly to online platforms, and the need for a hybrid education model. This necessitates additional funding for the SBCTC contract to manage the assets (one-time $500,000 for additional laptops), ongoing $425,000 for SBCTC support to manage the assets and 25% replacement factor per year).

The DOC requests 2.0 Psychology Associates FTEs to address the additional educational support and tailoring of programming to individuals facing disability challenges. Providing these services poses notable

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geographical challenges. For the staff to adequately do their required tasks, there needs to be at least two staff, one for the west side of the state and one for the east side of the state. This will relieve the geographical challenges, but also allow for more personalized and tailored programs because each Psychology Associate will have a routine subset of the population they serve. This will allow for them to better assess and modify programs for the individuals they serve.

To align with current trends and produce a more effective and constructive learning model, DOC is requesting funding to maintain secure internet at all facilities. To do this, DOC would have to contract with a cloud-based service (CBS) identified as Amazon Web Services (AWS) in the pilot study. This expansion in secure internet would require 1.0 IT Security full-time equivalent (FTE) to oversee the connections, maintain whitelisted sites, and maintain the filtering of accessible sites as this network would be separately managed. This is crucial when offering internet to correctional facilities and the supervised individuals. This position will also oversee and manage access to internet and make daily modifications as thousands of new websites and links are broken and created every day. It will be responsible for maintaining and troubleshooting connectivity issues across all ten facilities.

Currently, incarcerated individuals use 900 laptops (owned and managed by SBCTC). This only serves a minor subset of the population DOC expects to educate with this expansion of post-secondary options. To fully accommodate the additional education options and hybrid education model that educational institutions are utilizing, DOC must acquire another 1,000 laptops. This is a conservative request as the 900 laptops currently serve under 1/3 of the population DOC intends to expand the educational programming to. These are essential to fully realize the benefits of online learning, not only for the remote abilities, but also the effectiveness, especially in today's educational climate.

Currently, SBCTC manages all of their assets with limited resources, managing an average of 600 laptops. DOC is requesting another 1,000 laptops and 25% replacement every year thereafter, which will necessitate additional resources for SBCTC to manage the increased assets. Based on the pilot feasibility report provided to the Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and Legislative staff, the requested increase in contract funding ($300,000 annually) to SBCTC will be used to facilitate the following:

- Creating and maintaining the Learning Management System (Canvas) for online classes and instruction
- Implementing and maintaining Adult Basic Education, GED and ESL software that would be deployed across all DOC facilities.
- Actively write code to make the off-line laptops operable with the version of Canvas that incarcerated individuals will be provided.
- Troubleshoot and credential these assets for the SBCTC educators and students.
- Train SBCTC staff on the myriad of programs available and provide assistance for the incarcerated individuals.

The proposed solution requests 2.3 FTE in FY2022 due to a 9-month phase in approach for staffing and 3.0 FTEs post FY2022, as seen in the tables below. Aside from salary and benefits, there are associated one-time costs and ongoing costs. The one-time costs are inclusive of workstations, chairs, and other equipment. Ongoing costs are inclusive of supplies and materials, IT software, subscriptions, VPN, Skype, etc. The table below outlines all associated expenses for the requested FTEs.

First year 9-month phase in staffing costs:

Job Class Title	Range	Step	FTE	Salary	Benefits	Ongoing Costs*	One-Time Costs**	Total
PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATE	60	L	1.5	$ 120,426	$ 59,281	$ 16,808	$ 7,565	$ 204,079
IT SECURITY - JOURNEY	05IT	L	0.8	$ 72,662	$ 27,172	$ 8,404	$ 3,782	$ 112,021
		Total	2.3	193,088	86,453	25,212	11,347	316,100

FY2023 staffing costs after fully implemented:

Job Class Title	Range	Step	FTE	Salary	Benefits	Ongoing Costs*	One-Time Costs**	Total
PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATE	60	L	2.0	$ 160,569	$ 67,574	$ 22,410	$ 2,531	$ 253,084
IT SECURITY - JOURNEY	05IT	L	1.0	$ 96,883	$ 32,175	$ 11,205	$ 1,265	$ 141,528
		Total	3.0	257,452	99,749	33,615	3,796	394,612

The DOC requests funding for the indirect costs of agency administration of 0.3 FTEs and $30,000 in FY2022 and 0.4 FTEs and $38,000 in FY2023, for the purpose of implementing this decision package. The approved agency indirect rate and associated cost of administration are calculated based on the salaries and benefits of staff conducting back office administrative functions, divided by all remaining salaries and benefits.

Annual costs:
Maintaining secure internet at all ten facilities is costed out as the following:

$6,000 Internet service per facility x 10 facilities (including three sites already established) = $60,000 per year

$47,208 Amazon AWS service x 10 facilities = $472,080 per year

$165.93 AWS thin client service per year x 540 connections at the ten facilities = $89,602 per year

$8.14 web security appliance hardware (WSA) x 1,500 students + $4,682 logging and audition appliance = $16,892 per year

The 1,000 incremental laptops are assumed to cost the following:

Assume $500 per laptop x 1,000 laptops = $500,000 one-time expense in FY2022.

$425,000 annual increase in SBCTC contract for resources to manage or support the additional usage by incarcerated individuals and 25% laptop replacement.

DOC assumes the FY2021 funding of $1.2M will cover all IT infrastructure adaptions, network refresh, and implementation costs at all feasible facilities, absent WCCW as it already has established secure internet.

The costs listed above require ongoing funding of $1,492,000.

See PL-CW_Education Modernization_Assumptions and Calculations for detailed information by object, program, and activity.

<div align="center">STRATEGIC AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES</div>

The request aligns with Results Washington; specifically:
- Goal 1: World-Class Education
  - Supporting an Effective K-12 System
  - Increasing Access to Living Wage Jobs
  - Increasing Retirement Security for Washingtonians
  - Increasing the Economic Security of Washingtonians
- Goal 2: Prosperous Economy
  - Increasing Access to Living Wage Jobs
  - Increasing Retirement Security for Washingtonians
  - Increasing the Economic Security of Washingtonians
  - Reducing Homelessness
- Goal 4: Healthy and Safe Communities
  - Preventing Substance Abuse and Improving Recovery
  - Taking Action to End the Opioid Crisis
  - Improving Behavioral Health
  - Supporting Successful Reentry
  - Reducing Homelessness

This request supports the following goals, objectives, and strategies as identified in DOC's 2019 – 23 Strategic Plan

Improve Lives
- Decrease the first-year rate of return to institutions from 12% to 10% by 2023
  - Increase the number of individuals who receive reentry transition services
  - Maximize use of available programs

- Utilize continuous case management principles
- Increase the number and utilization of formal agreements with community-based organizations and governmental agencies

This request also aligns with the **Governor's Executive Order 16-05** which directs the State to: "introduce secure internet-based reentry tools for individuals in adult and juvenile correctional facilities, such as ESD's job search system, library materials for education programs, housing information, college information, and similar resources."

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

No changes would be required to existing statutes, rules or contracts to carry out this work.

For more information regarding other important connections or impacts related to this proposal, please see the Stakeholder Impact Statement attachment.

IT ADDENDUM

Does this decision package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, services (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes ☒   No ☐

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