

Welcome Back!

Supporting Every Student for a Strong Start

As the new school year begins, the [OSPI Student Engagement and Support Division](#) is excited to partner with you all to ensure that every student returns to a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment. This is more than a fresh start, it is an opportunity to reaffirm our shared commitment to student well-being, equity, and success.

Across the state, students are walking into classrooms with a mix of emotions: excitement, anxiety, curiosity, and hope. The role you play in their experience cannot be overstated. Whether you are welcoming students at the front door, guiding them through academic and emotional challenges, or supporting their families behind the scenes, your efforts are the foundation of a thriving school community.

This year, our division continues to emphasize whole-child support, meeting not just the academic, but also the social, emotional, and physical needs of every student. Our updated resources and toolkits for trauma-informed practices, mental health support, and community-school partnerships are available now on [our website](#). We encourage schools to embed [SEL \(social-emotional learning\)](#) into daily routines and instruction, and to lean on our regional support teams when additional guidance is needed.

We also recognize the invaluable role that community members and partners play in [student success](#). Local community organizations and families are critical allies in creating wraparound support. Our programming this year will continue to support schools and districts build sustainable, high-impact partnerships that extend learning beyond the classroom walls.

One of our core focus areas this year is engaging students to ensure [regular attendance](#). Attendance is more than just a number, it can be a reflection of whether students feel safe, seen, and supported at school. We are asking schools to take a proactive, data-informed approach to identifying and supporting students at risk of disengagement. This includes early outreach, culturally responsive practices, and student-centered re-engagement efforts.

We know this work is not easy, and you are often navigating multiple demands at once. That's why we have expanded our professional learning offerings, as well as specialized resources on our [OSPI webpages](#) for school and community support staff. From online courses to virtual learning communities, we are here to support *you* as you support your students.

This school year holds enormous promise. Let's make it one where students not only learn but thrive, where they feel connected, capable, and cared for. We invite you to stay connected with our division through our [monthly newsletters](#). If you have a success story, challenge, or resource to share, [we'd love to hear from you](#).



Thank you for your leadership, compassion, and unwavering commitment to students. Here is to a strong start and an even stronger school year ahead!

With gratitude,

Anna Marie Dufault, Assistant Superintendent

OSPI Student Engagement and Support Division