

Overview

With the mission to improve public safety by positively changing lives, the Department recognizes the transformative power of education in a correctional setting. To support our college partners in ensuring high-quality educational program delivery, as well as improving reentry efforts, the Department is implementing an Off-State Network Project, to include a secure-internet system for education in prison facilities statewide. As a part of this initiative, internet access is also being provided to all state Reentry Centers.

The Off-State Network project (OSN) received funding in FY23 and FY24 to continue the development and implementation of secured-internet access statewide.

OSN Design & Security

The Office of Cyber Security established security policies in compliance with Executive Order 24-03 and SSB5433:

- The OSN is physically separate from the State of Washington networks and all components are easily identified as being part of the OSN.
- A Content Review Committee and process for approval for “whitelisted” websites has been created. The Content Review Committee includes DOC Cybersecurity, DOC Education Administrator, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Policy Associate, Reentry Division representative, Washington State Library librarian, and DOC Prisons Division representative.

Implementation & Migration

In June 2024, the DOC IT team completed the implementation and testing phases at all 11 prison facilities and 11 Reentry Centers. The Department continues to collaborate with the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and college partners to expand classroom use and user accounts, approve “whitelisted” websites, and connections to applications.

Colleges are currently in the process of migrating their Open Prison Education Platform to the OSN and transitioning student laptops to the OSN network. College faculty and staff are also implementing secured internet use into classroom curricula, including incorporating digital research databases for student use.

The Washington Corrections Center for Women and Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women as the first two facilities to be operating education programming fully on the OSN.

Key features on the OSN include:

- An adult basic education application “Boardworks.”
- A corrections-specific version of the JSTOR library database.
- Online GED® testing services at five of the 11 facilities.



OSN Expansion & Maintenance

The Department and State Board continue to explore ways to include dedicated funding to support staff FTEs to migrate, manage, and maintain the OSN to increase access and efficacy at each facility, as well as update the OSN to include wi-fi capability in the classrooms and living units at each facility to enable students more access and availability to progress in their educational degree pathways.