

Washington State Judicial Branch

2023-25 Biennial Budget

Enhance Online Court Education

Agency: Administrative Office of the Courts

Decision Package Code/Title: T7 - Enhance Online Court Education

Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

The Administrative Office of the Courts requests 4.0 FTEs and \$1.3 million in ongoing state funding to enhance the availability of timely and effective education and training for Washington's court system personnel by growing the library of programs available in the new WACOURTS Education Portal. Justice requires judicial officers, clerks, court administrators, and court personnel to be educated on current case law and best practices in court operations. The most efficient means of providing consistent quality education and training for personnel across our diverse state is by expanding online programming through the WACOURTS Education Portal. This request will expand the library from approximately 20 to about 100 programs in the Portal along with dozens of recordings and job aids. (General Fund-State)

Fiscal Summary:

	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennial
Staffing						
FTEs	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001-1	\$658,400	\$639,200	\$1,297,600	\$639,200	\$639,200	\$1,278,400
Total Expenditures						
	\$658,400	\$639,200	\$1,297,600	\$639,200	\$639,200	\$1,278,400

Package Description:

This proposal dramatically increases the production of quality online education and improves how education is accessed, consumed, and applied across Washington's courts.

Court education, especially judicial education, was traditionally conducted in large, expensive, in-person events spanning multiple days. Over the years, budget for these events remained the same while event venues and travel costs rose dramatically. And, these events were often few and far between. For example, Judicial College is offered once a year. Judges who begin shortly after Judicial College need to wait a year to participate in requisite training.

Additionally, judicial officers often have busy schedules which may conflict with live in-person training schedules. And, training for court staff has been limited, usually only offered by their individual courts which increases the likelihood that courts may duplicate training efforts.

Finally, there was no centralized, one-stop-shop for online court educational materials (e.g., courses, session recordings, job aids, just-in-time-trainings, etc.) that was available to *all* court personnel, state-wide, 24/7. And, there was no way to track usage of such materials, which is important for some types of training and audiences.

In a questionnaire completed in late 2020 by approximately 200 judicial officers, administrators, and clerks, AOC discovered widespread openness for online learning with a smaller group that prefers in-person events ([Appendix A](#)).

There was a clear indication that live, in-person training is highly valued (40% ranking it very important, and 31% important). For online education/training, a clear majority expressed value (29% very important, and 46% important). The vast majority of open-ended comments valued online learning for reasons such as convenience, flexibility, accessibility, lower cost, learning effectiveness and efficiency, access to a wider array of speakers, and greater training opportunities.

These perspectives provide a rationale for rapidly increasing production of online judicial and court education as a way to deliver content that doesn't require the need for in-person education (e.g., educational content, social learning, networking, live discussions, etc.). There are also opportunities for hybrid education that takes advantage of the strengths of both online and in-person. For example, we have our first prerequisite online Judicial College course, Court Media Relations, that is fully online, self-paced, and on-demand.

The Current State

The image displays the Washington Courts Education Portal website and a video player. The website features a dark header with the 'WASHINGTON COURTS' logo and navigation links for 'COURT EDUCATION EVENTS' and 'CONTACT SUPPORT'. Below the header, a large banner reads 'Where your success is our focus'. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'THE FRONT PAGE' (with links to 'About the CEC', 'Terms & Definitions', and 'Court Media Relations'), 'COURSE CATALOGS' (with links to 'All Courses', 'New Courses', 'Judicial College', and 'Institute for New Court Employees'), and 'GUIDES & TUTORIALS' (with links to 'About this Education Portal', 'Finding & Taking Courses', 'Viewing Your Completion Record', and 'Adding Courses to Your Record'). At the bottom, there are four large buttons: 'Search' (Find courses, events, and other learning opportunities), 'My Courses' (Courses and events you are currently enrolled), 'Transcript' (View your completion records), and 'Self Report' (Log training you have completed elsewhere). To the right of the website screenshot is a video player showing a woman speaking. The video title is '2022 US Supreme Court Year in Review'. Above the video player is a 'Course Contents' section with a 'MENU' and a list of sequences: 'Escorting and Managing a Jury', 'Sequence 1: Selection of a Jury', 'Sequence 2-5: The Trial', 'Sequences 6-10: Preparing for Deliberations', and 'Sequences 11-12: Jury Deliberation & Verdict'. A progress tracking section indicates 'Not Started', 'In Progress', and 'Complete' status.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), with guidance from the Board for Judicial Administration's Court Education Committee (CEC), has spent the past year and a half designing, developing, and launching a new WACOURTS Education Portal, which includes a new Learning Management System (LMS), a custom self-registration site available to all State court system personnel, and several high quality on-demand eLearning courses covering a variety of topics catering to a wide range of audiences such as judicial officers, administrators, clerks, judicial assistants, line-staff and bailiffs, and many others. This is effectively a "one-stop-shop" for Washington state online court education; a place where courses can be located, delivered, completions tracked, and credits and certificates issued.

This new program was implemented by a small team of online education experts, with only one fully dedicated FTE. Prior to COVID there were many in-person educational programs supported by three Court Education Professionals. Due to COVID these educators had to pivot and provide online education (webinars) in order to effectively deliver the

education needed. With in-person returning, and the need to rapidly mature our online education, our single FTE is insufficient to meet the online education needs of judges and other court system personnel. The optimal number for FTEs to create a small team of online experts is four (4) in addition to our existing Distance Learning Program Coordinator. Each FTE will provide the needed skill set and resource to more rapidly develop new eLearning courses and ensure existing eLearning is up to date. This proposal focuses on resources to design, develop, and deliver eLearning courses and we need more capacity to:

- Increase our on-demand eLearning catalog to 100+ courses in the next 2-3 years.
- Move portions of older programs online, such as orientations, academies, and other “how to” trainings for court related skills.
- Develop potential new programs such as additional courses on trauma-informed practices, gender-based violence and other matters related to protection order proceedings (E2SHB 1320), use of new technologies for remote proceedings, online District and Municipal Court Administrators’ Academy, on-demand in-state Judicial College prerequisite courses, etc.
- Track third party courses in collaboration with national organizations such as the National Judicial College, National Association of State Judicial Educators, National Association of Court Managers, and National Center for State Courts.
- Support live “hybrid” (online/in-person) events such as the mandatory Judicial College program for new judicial officers.

We propose to expand AOC’s capacity to produce just-in-time learning to bring judges and other court system personnel much needed education and training. This involves translating what our subject matter experts know into effective eLearning courses, with the ability to update quickly or develop content as topics change. Online education production comprises three categories of effort: 1) online content design, 2) eLearning development, and 3) online delivery and system administration. AOC would add staff to perform the following roles.

1. Two Online Instructional Designers
Online content design: The tasks performed include gathering original source material (content) from subject matter experts (usually judicial officers and other court personnel), course recordings, instructor presentation materials, books/articles, etc., and translating into engaging eLearning content.
2. One Instructional Technologist
eLearning development: The tasks performed include taking content designs and building eLearning courses that include graphics, videos, audio, interactive stories, educational games, assessments, etc.
3. One Senior Integrator
System development: This role is critical to ensuring access to the WACOURTS Education Portal for our diverse court employees across the state. The tasks performed include system configuration, end-user authentication, connectivity with court systems, automated data processes, and developing custom record management tools.

Along with these new FTEs, we propose purchasing new SaaS software (subscriptions) for better and more efficient eLearning production, establishing a budget for contracting with notable third-party subject matter experts (SMEs), and budgeting for ongoing enhancements to improve the WACOURTS Education Portal.

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served:

Approximately 2,000 court personnel would eventually have access to the WACOURTS Education Portal on a regular basis. This estimate includes all State court personnel: e.g., Appellate, Superior, District, Municipal, Juvenile, etc., as well as AOC employees. Other ancillary groups can benefit too; for example probation officers, court house facilitators, pro tems, etc.

The Portal is organized via course catalogs. For example, Judicial College, Institute for New Court Employees, Annual Conference, Court Administrators, AOC Human Resources, etc. The structures are highly flexible and can be adapted as new groups are identified. The courses can also be categorized by course type. For example, on-demand eLearning, recorded webinar and webinar series, job aids and demos, etc. These methods of organization help target education to specific customer-groups.

Explain what alternatives were explored by the agency and why they were rejected as solutions:

We explored hosting eLearning courses and recorded webinars on Inside Courts, which is accessible via secure AOC login; however, Inside Courts is merely a series of Intranet web pages displaying lists of course links. Inside Courts is inaccessible to many court personnel because they do not have a secure AOC login (they don't use AOC systems); for example, pro tems (1320 training needed) and courthouse facilitators, etc. The Court Education Committee is dedicated to expanding access to education and training to much needed education and training to all court employees across the State. Also, Inside Courts is not a Learning Management System (LMS). Some advantages of having an LMS are the ability to:

1. Create audience groups which can be associated with a course or a group of courses
2. Enroll individuals and groups to course(s)
3. Send notifications to specific groups, and to setup notification triggers for automatic notifications (i.e., new course available, or pending deadlines, etc.)
4. Track course completions and run completion reports
5. Assign credits to courses
6. Create and manage certification courses
7. Self-report training received at third party venues
8. View and manage transcripts

These industry-standard functions are not available on Inside Courts and these functions are essential to providing a virtual educational environment where participants can manage their own learning experiences. This is especially true for courses that are required, have credits assigned, and courses that are self-reported.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

The WACOURTS Education Portal is up and running. We recently launched a pilot rollout for approximately 100 participants. We are currently working on a communication plan to invite more participants. The Portal currently hosts approximately 20 eLearning courses and webinars, and AOC is building courses as fast as possible given the limited staff working on this project. The LMS has one dedicated FTE and a handful of employees working part-time on eLearning as available; however, the number of courses in the LMS is a major factor when determining the value of the learning environment. We need to build many more courses faster. We would like to have over 100 eLearning courses and dozens of recorded webinars in the LMS over the next 2-3 years. But our current staffing is insufficient to reach these numbers. At our current staffing and resource levels, we can likely create 3 to 5 eLearning courses each year.

To make the WACOURTS Education Portal a true one-stop-shop for online education, we need to increase the production of courses, support for our LMS clients, and overall enhancement of the system and our processes. And, while we are trying to be as lean and efficient as possible, reaching our goals requires more FTEs and budget.

Is this an expansion or alteration of a current program or service?

This request builds on the new WACOURTS Education Portal, funded in 2022 ([Appendix C](#)), as the Courts' online education solution. Funding was also used to hire our Distance Learning Program Coordinator to configure the Portal, establish processes and tools, build eLearning courses, provide technical support, and general project management for rolling out the Portal and pay for attendees' licenses. As an existing program that has gone live, this budget decision package expands and matures this program and develops a team of skilled eLearning designers and administrators to

build a 24/7 system to continue to develop education and training for new judges, administrators, county clerks, rural courts, presiding judges and administrators, supervisors and other court personnel that was not possible due to limited education and training funds.

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:

Staffing Assumptions

Online Instructional Designer. Beginning July 1, 2023 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 2.0 FTE Court Educational Professional.

Instructional Technologist. Beginning July 1, 2023 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 1.0 FTE Court Educational Professional.

Senior System Integrator. Beginning July 1, 2023 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 1.0 FTE.

Other Non-Standard Costs

Contracts (Object C)

An important part of eLearning is to obtain “content,” which usually exists uniquely in an expert’s mind. Most of the time, our subject matter experts (SMEs) are judicial officers, administrators, etc. However, sometimes we can’t find a SME for a given topic. This cost is to hire notable SMEs that have unique understandings of topics we want to share with our judicial officers and court personnel. An example is Court Security. We have hired experts to deliver this training. However, agreeing to use their content in our eLearning courses requires an additional cost.

Ongoing beginning FY 2024: \$10,000 per fiscal year

Goods and Services (Object E)

When hosting eLearning in a learning management system (LMS), there is a need to provide links to knowledge articles, tools, resources, files, databases, etc. This often requires a hosting solution (cloud server storage). This cost is to pay for such a service for hosting files that are unique to our LMS.

Additionally, our Production computer (multimedia suite), which allows us to create engaging eLearning courses including narration, screen demonstrations, high quality graphics and videos, and educational games. The idea of having a production machine is that more than one person can share the software, meaning cost savings for a team.

Ongoing beginning FY 2024 for hosting service and subscriptions: \$5,000 per fiscal year

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Expenditures by Object	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>	<u>FY 2028</u>	<u>FY 2029</u>
A Salaries and Wages	360,200	360,200	360,200	360,200	360,200	360,200
B Employee Benefits	114,900	114,900	114,900	114,900	114,900	114,900
C Personal Service Contract	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
E Goods and Services	20,200	20,200	20,200	20,200	20,200	20,200
G Travel	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
J Capital Outlays	25,600	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
T Intra-Agency Reimbursements	117,500	117,500	117,500	117,500	117,500	117,500
Total Objects	658,400	639,200	639,200	639,200	639,200	639,200

Staffing

Job Class	Salary	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>	<u>FY 2028</u>	<u>FY 2029</u>
COURT EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL	82,900	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
SENIOR SYSTEM INTEGRATOR	111,500	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Total FTEs		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00

Explanation of standard costs by object:

Salary estimates are current biennium actual rates at Step L.

Benefits are the agency average of 31.89% of salaries.

Goods and Services are the agency average of \$3,800 per direct program FTE.

Travel is the agency average of \$2,500 per direct program FTE.

One-time IT Equipment is \$4,800 for the first fiscal year per direct program FTE. Ongoing Equipment is the agency average of \$1,600 per direct program FTE.

Agency Indirect is calculated at a rate of 24.73% of direct program salaries and benefits.

How does the package relate to the Judicial Branch principal policy objectives?

Fair and Effective Administration of Justice: The WACOURTS Education Portal provides an effective method of delivering just-in-time educational materials. A judicial officer who participated in the pilot rollout of the Portal (the Court Media Relations course) commented, “I wish there were more courses like this, especially on topics that I need right away.”

Accessibility: The WACOURTS Education Portal is accessible to all State court personnel. In the past, online offerings were only available to those with login access to AOC systems (behind AOC’s firewall), which not all have, and those offerings were only static lists of online modules. The Portal, on the other hand, is accessible to all court employees regardless of court level, position, or location.

Commitment to Effective Court Management: The WACOURTS Education Portal offers an effective method for improving the effectiveness of Court Management. By using our most notable experts in given topics as subject matter experts to help design eLearning courses, we are effectively sharing expertise across our courts. This is a great way to share and improve knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Sufficient Staffing and Support: One area of need is helping our court line staff to grow in their knowledge, skills and abilities. Most courts do not have the time, resources, or budget to put together their own training programs. The WACOURTS Education Portal as a shared educational service can offer standardized training to assist our staff in supporting our courts and community.

Are there impacts to other governmental entities?

The WACOURTS Education Portal is accessible by every court level and the court personnel within it. Due to lack of funding there were several groups within the judiciary that we were not able to provide education and training before, for instance probation officers or courthouse facilitators. The LMS will be available and courses created specific to the needs of a judicial officer or court employee. We are also offering education and training to pro tems regarding 1320 and Civil Protection Orders. We anticipate full support from judges and administrators if we can expand the education to encompass all court personnel.

Stakeholder response:

None

Are there legal or administrative mandates that require this package to be funded?

Now that the WACOURTS Education Portal is live, and due to declining in-person education and funding, the need for increased robust online education is paramount to fully realize the goals set out by the 2019 Court System Education Funding Task Force ([Appendix C](#)).

Does current law need to be changed to successfully implement this package?

No

Are there impacts to state facilities?

No

Are there other supporting materials that strengthen the case for this request?

- See the results of our 2020 Needs Assessment for perspectives of online education ([Appendix A](#)).
- View the Taskforce's Fact Sheet in support of increased Judicial Education ([Appendix B](#)).
- And, view the Talking Points that informed the Taskforce's Fact Sheet ([Appendix C](#)).

Are there information technology impacts?

None

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Appendix A – 2020 Needs Assessment

Introduction

This needs assessment was conducted to achieve three goals:

1. to determine the current and future (projected) educational needs, desires, and requirements of court education committees, educators, and participants;
2. to inform the operations and processes, tools and technologies, and roles and responsibilities of the AOC distance education program; and
3. to derive an informed list of features/functions and potential vendors of a future AOC learning management system.

These goals were analyzed from multiple perspectives:

1. Stakeholder Analysis: Determine the preferences and needs of court system participants in the context of in-person events and classes, online classes, and hybrid/blended (mix of in-person and online)
2. Current vs. Future Use Cases: Analyze current education programs and compare to potential future use cases involving distance education solutions
3. Data Security: Involve AOC security team in the evaluation of potential LMS vendors to ensure data security requirements are met
4. LMS Vendor Analysis: Based on a comparison of several industry leading LMS products, compare each product's features, functions, frameworks, and costs via vendor Q&A sessions and live product demos

NOTE: Only the Stakeholder Analysis is included in this Appendix.

These analysis results in the following outputs:

1. Envisioned future use cases that take advantage of distance education solutions
2. Distance education goals and recommendations
3. An informed LMS feature list which will be used in RFP evaluations
4. Several wide-ranging conclusions and recommendations

This needs assessment will be used to craft the LMS RFP documentation.

Stakeholder Analysis

To determine which LMS features the court system considered valuable and to determine online learning preferences which also inform a future LMS, a SurveyMonkey questionnaire was delivered to all court system listservs with four questions:

1. Rate the importance of the following education modalities and describe how you envision each could be used.
2. Rate the importance of each LMS feature to your training program(s).
3. Rate your participants' (group) technical proficiency (how well they may learn new online applications).
4. Rate and describe your participants' openness to learning in an online format.

Distribution included listservs for the following groups (just under 200 respondents):

- Supreme Court Justices
- Supreme Court Commissioner's Office
- Supreme Court Judicial Assistants
- Supreme Court Reporter of Decisions - Sam Thompson
- Supreme Court Clerk - Susan Carlson
- State Law Librarian - Rob Mead
- Administrator for the Courts - Dawn Marie Rubio
- Div 1, 2, and 3 Judges
- Div 1, 2, and 3 Commissioners
- Superior Court judges
- Superior Court commissioners
- Superior Court administrators
- County Clerks
- Juvenile Court Administrators
- District Court administrators
- District Court Judges
- Chief Legal Counsel/Court Services Director, Administrative Office of the Courts - Dirk Marler
- Court Education Professionals

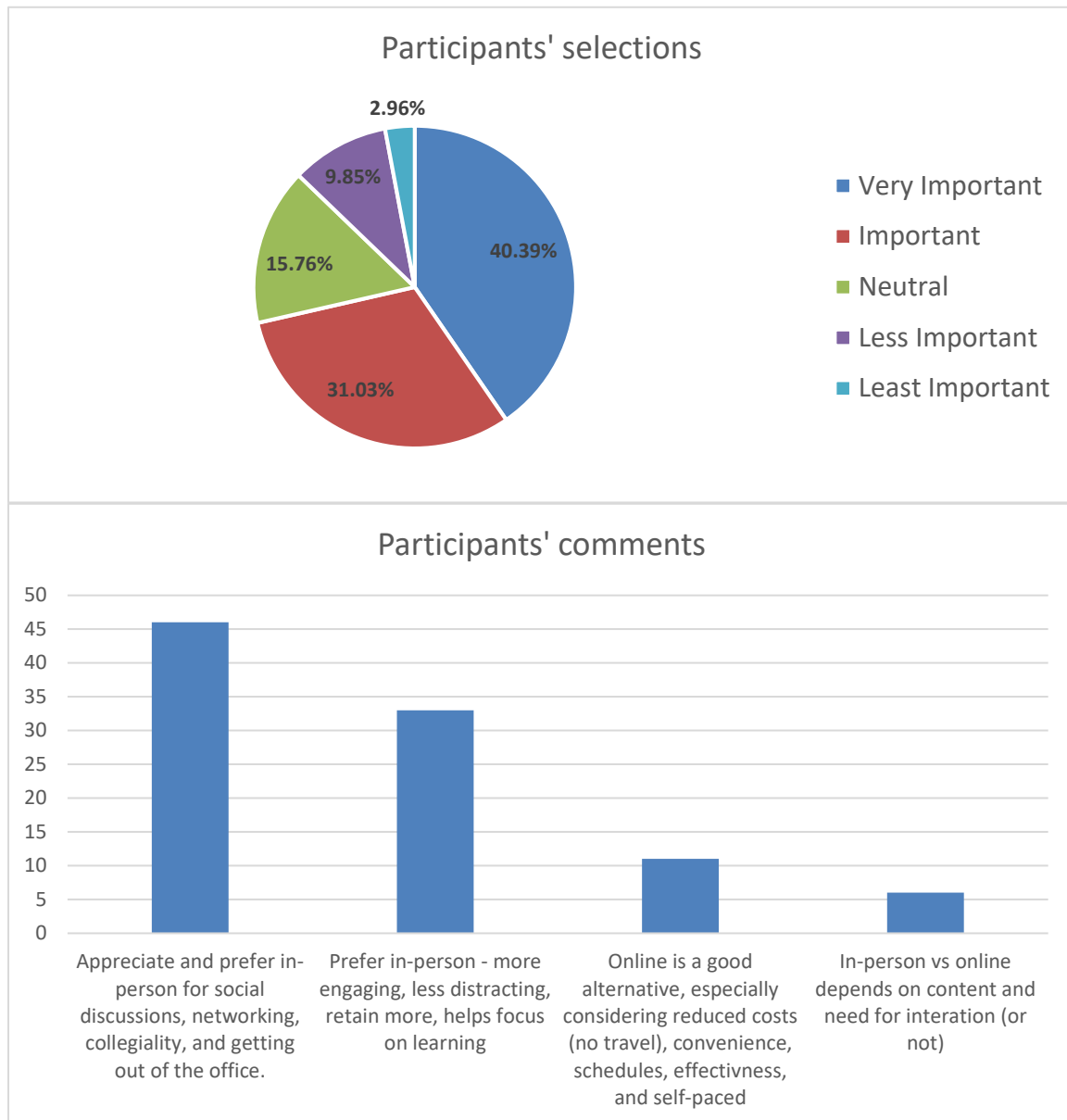
Summary of findings

1. There is widespread openness for online learning
2. There is a smaller group that prefers in-person events; two rationales given:
 - a. Prefer learning in-person
 - b. Prefer social aspects of meeting in-person (getting out of the office, meeting others, networking, etc.)
3. There is interest and potential value in "blended" learning (online and in-person) as a way to harness the strengths of each type of modality
4. The current LMS feature list is considered valuable – validated what we will be asking for in the RFP
5. Technical proficiency of respondents was mostly high to fair – indicates we only need to provide moderate tech support
6. Most respondents are open to a distance education program – validated that the majority of respondents support the distance education initiative

Detailed analysis. More detailed findings and analysis follows.

Q1: Rate the importance of the following education modalities and describe how you envision each could be used.

In-Person (live, in-person education in the form of classes, seminars, and events)

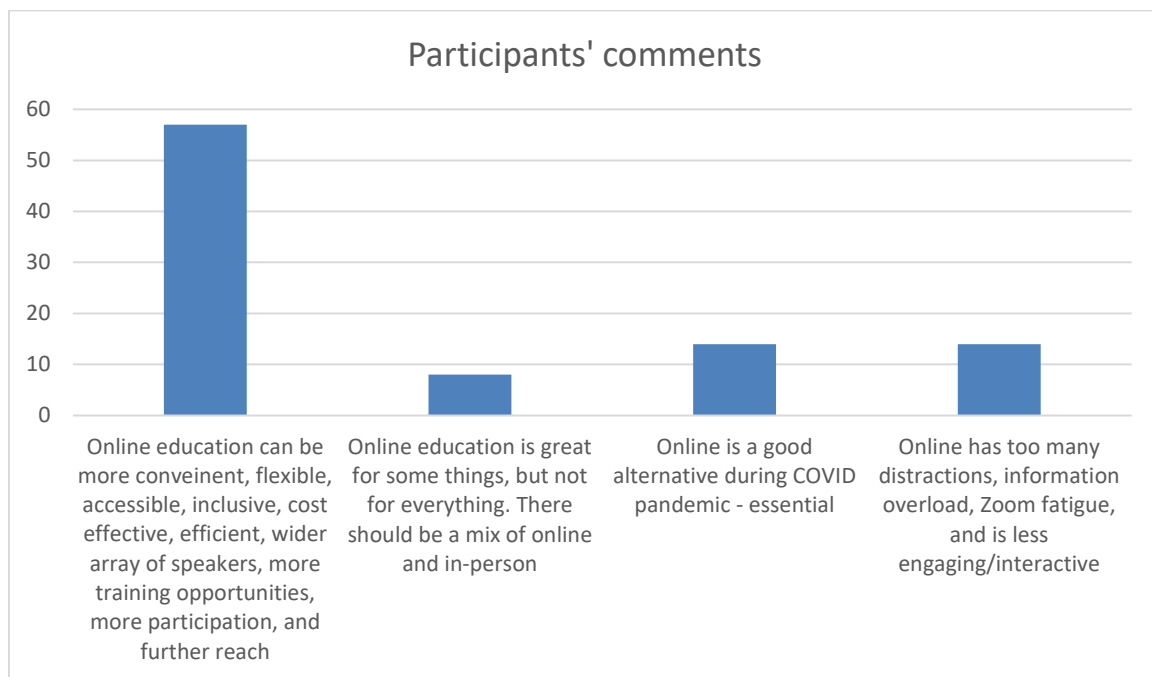
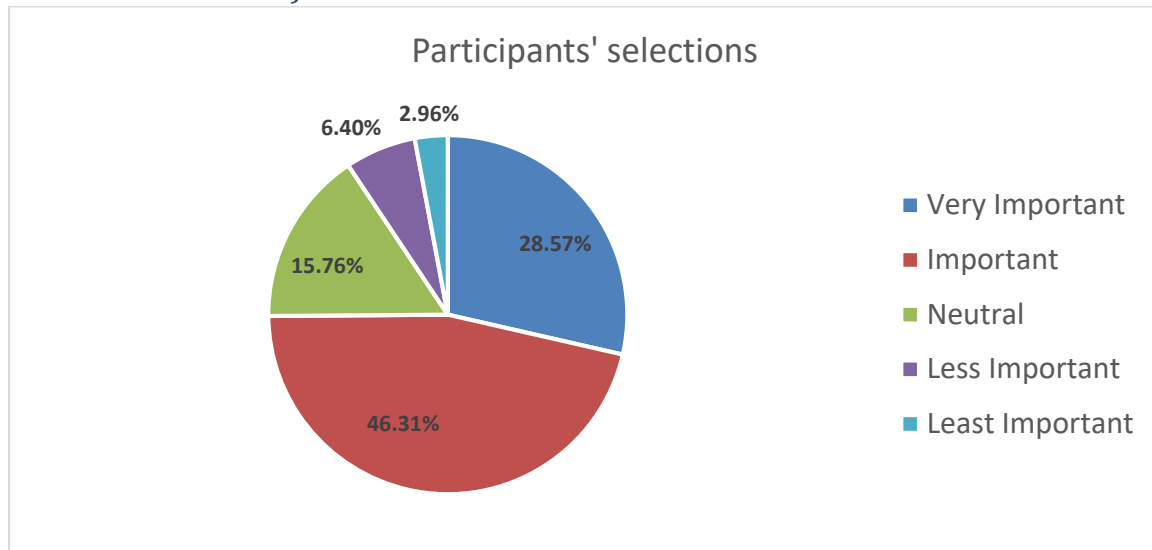


Analysis: For live, in-person education, there was a clear indication that it is highly valued (40% very important, and 31% important); however, there were two different value propositions given by participants. A smaller percentage indicated they prefer to learn in-person, while a much larger group indicated they valued in-person for non-learning reasons (e.g., social discussions, networking, collegiality, and getting out of the office). Select comments include:

- “Instant feedback is appreciated, and student interaction enhances learning and camaraderie.”
- “These types of training allow participants to meet other participants from other jurisdictions, network, and exchange ideas and approaches to similar problems.”
- “There's a loss of comradery where there is no in person education. Many look forward to conferences because of it.”

- “These allow for the all-important social networking, interaction, and spontaneous discussion that occurs when at location - whether during session, breaks, meals, etc.”

Online Education or Training (fully online learning: self-paced/stand-alone, instructor-led, and webinars)



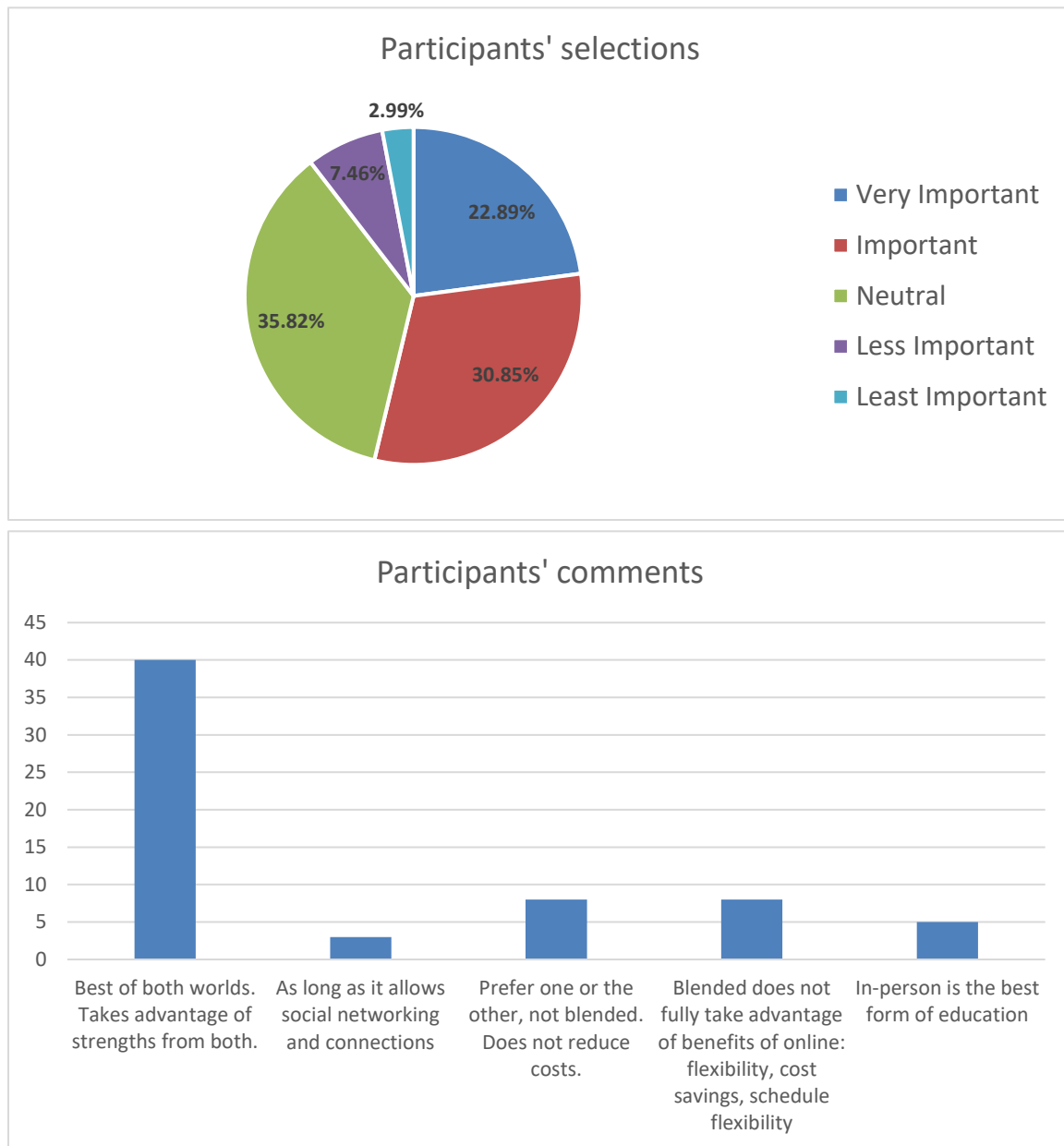
Analysis: For online education/training, a clear majority expressed value (29% very important, and 46% important). The vast majority of open-ended comments valued online learning for reasons such as convenience, flexibility, accessibility, lower cost, learning effectiveness and efficiency, access to a wider array of speakers, and greater training opportunities. A smaller number of participants were more skeptical citing reasons such as only being appropriate for some topics, Zoom fatigue, and less interactive. Select comments include:

- “Easier to fit into a judge's schedule than most in-person events, particularly those that do not have set class times.”
- “I think this is most important for court staff - having it online allows a broader reach.”

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- “Self-paced online training is very practical and convenient when juggling work schedules.”
- “Decreases the cost of attendance - both time and money.”
- “I am from San Juan County which is only accessible by ferry or plane. Getting to in-person training usually requires an additional day of traveling due to ferries.”

Blended Training (mix of in-person and online)

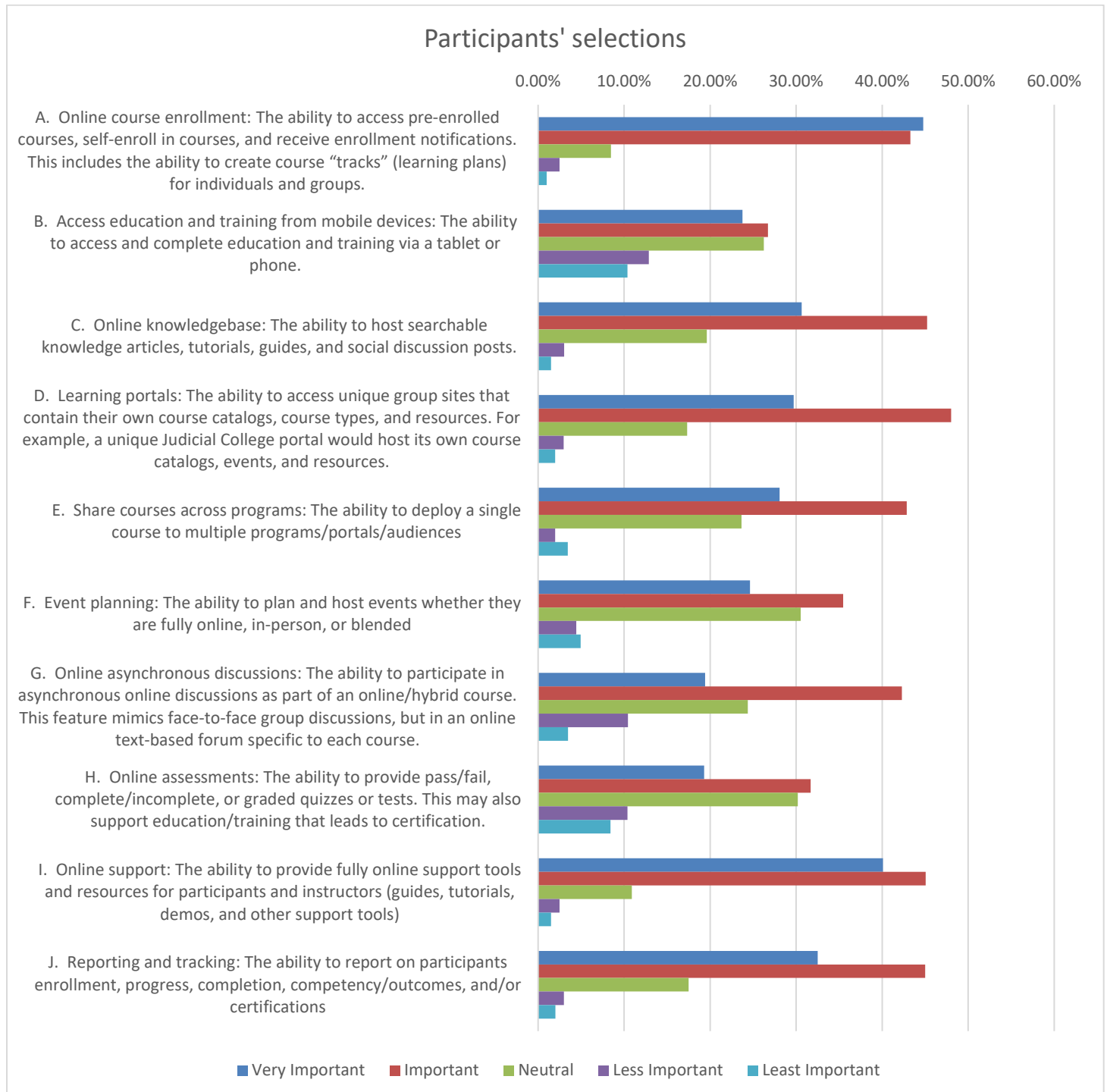


Analysis: For blended learning, a majority felt it was a good approach (23% very important, 31% important). Open-ended comments show a large preference for blended with participants indicating it takes advantages of the strengths of both in-person and online modalities; the “best of both worlds.” Select comments include:

- “Training should be available in-person and online for those that have conflicts.”
- “I like the flexibility of being able to choose something that works best with participant's schedule.”
- “This allows for the social networking so important when at an in-person training, and also makes it sometimes easier for staff to attend training when it is online.”

- “Makes the process more flexible and does save travel costs.”
- “Good for flexibility particularly remote courts or courts with few staff and difficulty attending in-person training away from office.”
- “Allows for the benefits of both.”

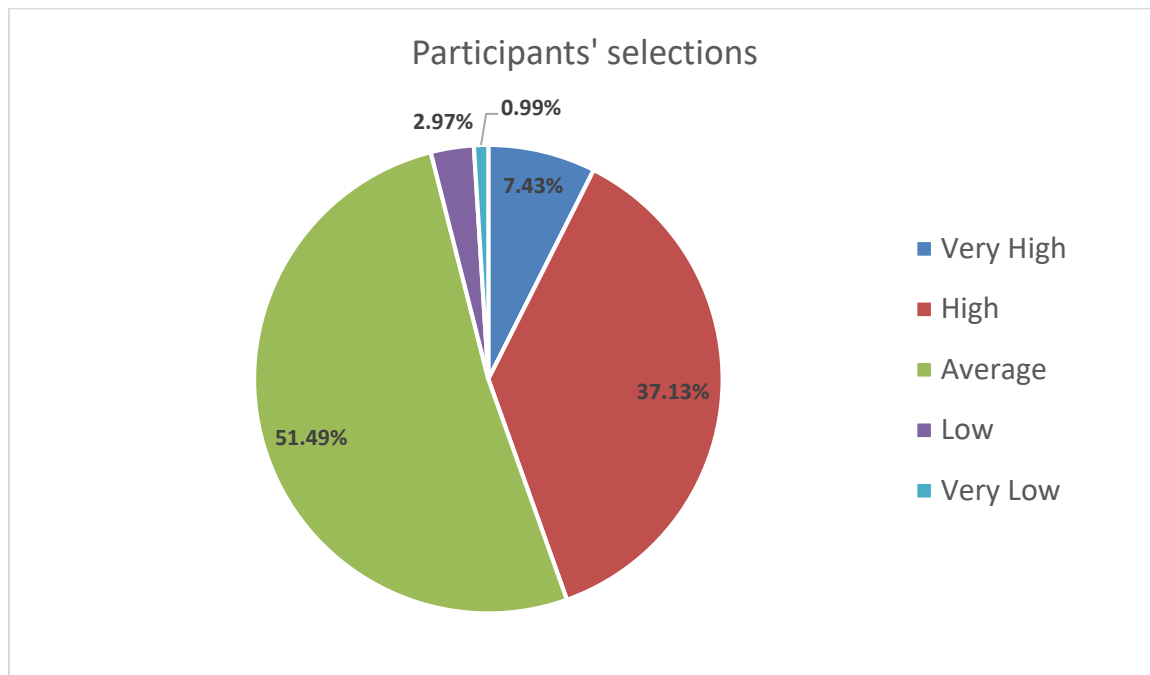
Q2: Rate the importance of each LMS feature to your training program(s).



Participants' comments: Bookmarking, quiz retakes, certifications, mobile, help and support, live video, chat feature, program evaluation, and ability to add third-party courses.

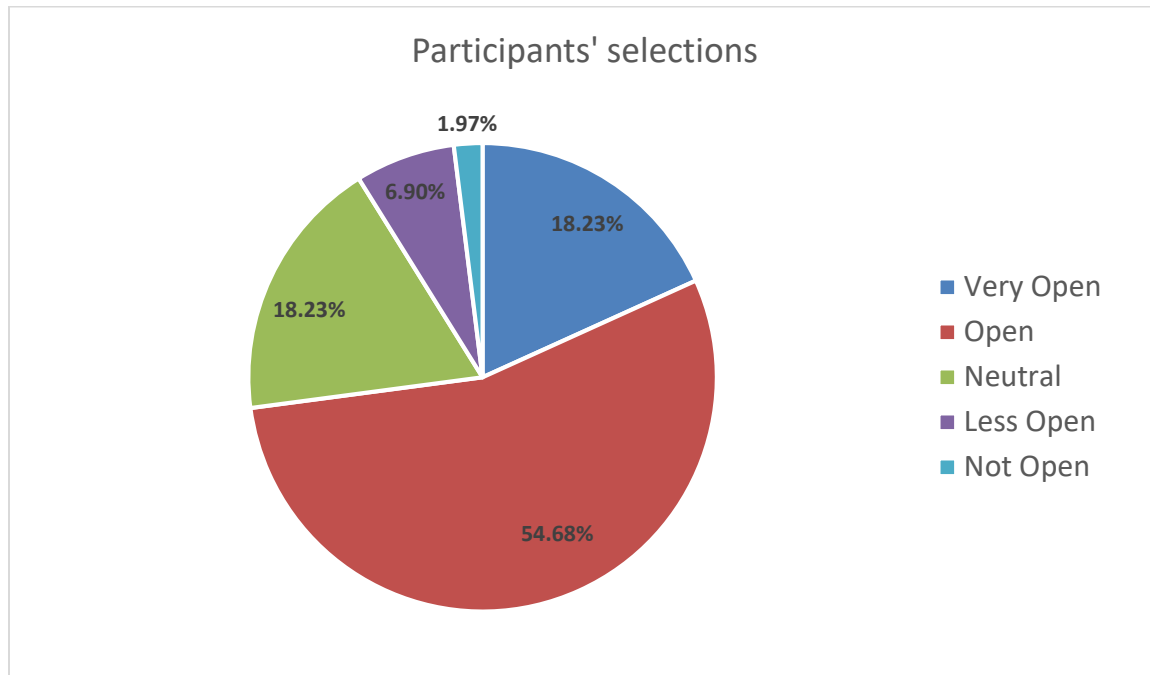
Analysis: The LMS feature list received positive support across the board. The lowest support features were access to training from mobile devices and asynchronous text-based discussions; however, both of those features received some positive mention in the open-ended comments. Overall, the comments validated the current LMS feature list.

Q3: Rate your participants' (group's) technical proficiency (how well they may learn new online applications).



Analysis: No open-ended comments were available for this question, but participants' selections showed that almost half of future LMS end-users felt they and/or their groups are technically proficient for new online applications (7% very high, 37% high). And, the majority (52%) were average at learning/embracing new technologies. This provides some confidence that on-boarding a new LMS will require only moderate amounts of end-user technical training and support.

Q4: Rate and describe your participants' openness to learning in an online format.



Participants' comments: Open ended comments included themes such as:

- Depends on age groups and/or cultural preferences (for type of learning)
- Depends, some value continuous learning and others do not
- Some have had positive past experiences with online education
- Some prefer current in-person training, especially for social networking reasons
- Some are more resistant to change than others

Analysis: The good news about these selections is that a large majority (18% very open, 55% open) are open to learning in an online format, with 18% being neutral. This shows that only a small percentage (7% less open, 2% not open) are less open to embracing online learning. Open-ended comments show that reasons for resistance may be age/culture related (age=amount of time spent in current in-person training modality), and that some are simply more resistant to change than others.

Appendix B – Fact Sheet

COURT TRAINING IS ESSENTIAL FOR NEW JUDGES AND COURT PERSONNEL

The Washington Judiciary is requesting \$1.4 million to ensure new judicial officers and court personnel have timely access to the training they need to effectively serve the public.

PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

Funding for court training has remained the same for more than a decade, despite increasing needs. Well-trained judicial officers and court personnel foster confidence in the judicial process.

INFORMED RESPONSES

Timely training is critical to informed and effective responses to increasing numbers of self-represented litigants and cases involving mental health, domestic violence, and drug addiction in our communities.

LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

In the last three years, the Legislature has passed more than 150 bills that impact the court system, including DUI laws, family law and parentage, guardianship, mental health, public records, and juvenile justice. Proper training is essential to making sure the intent of the legislature is carried out in the cases that come through the courts.

Justice is not administered by itself. It requires qualified and educated people.



THE FACTS



50 / 63%

Almost 50% of judicial officers and 63% of new administrators received no training during their first six months on the job.

150

In the last three years, the Legislature has passed more than 150 bills that impact the court system.

ONE THIRD

The “age wave” is here. Nearly one third of the district and municipal court bench will turn over by the end of 2018. Superior Court and Court of Appeals judges are not far behind.

Appendix C – Talking Points



BOARD FOR JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Court System Education Funding Task Force

Court System Education Funding Task Force 2019

Funding Request Talking Points

- 1) The Washington Judiciary is requesting \$1.4 million to ensure new judicial officers and court personnel get timely access to the training needed to effectively serve the public. Funding will ensure equal access for small and rural courts that struggle to afford sending judges and court staff to training opportunities.
- 2) Funds will be used to develop a statewide online education and training system which can provide immediate and sustainable training opportunities, and to expand critical in-person training for judicial officers and court staff who work in all regions of the state.
- 3) New judges are typically highly experienced legal professionals in specialty practice areas. Judges are required to be proficient in all areas of the law. They need knowledge and training to preside over continuous changes in law, policy, and technology.
- 4) A recent survey revealed that almost 50% of judicial officers and 63% of new administrators received no training during their first six months on the job.
- 5) Even when training is provided, there is often insufficient funding for court personnel to attend training. The lack of resources make it particularly difficult for small and rural court staff to access training opportunities. We will use the additional funding to develop and implement critical court personnel trainings and remove financial barriers to attending those trainings.
- 6) Well-trained judicial officers and court staff foster confidence in the judicial process. Better outcomes for the public means greater trust in state and local government. Research has shown that people tend to comply with court orders and the law if they perceive that court proceedings and the laws are fair.
- 7) In the last three years, the Legislature has passed more than 150 bills impacting the court system. Nearly every year, the Legislature makes changes to a wide array of substantive legal and policy areas such as DUI laws, family law and parentage, guardianship, mental health, public records, and juvenile justice. Timely training is essential to make sure that the intent of the legislature is carried out in the cases that come through the courts.
- 8) The “age wave” is here and is creating huge turnover on the bench and among court staff.

Nearly a third of the district and municipal court bench will be replaced by the end of 2018. Superior Court and Court of Appeals judges are retiring in similar numbers. We need additional dollars to train these new judges.

- 9) Timely training is critical to informed and effective responses to increasing numbers of self-represented litigants and mental health, domestic violence, and drug addiction cases swamping the courts.