



Imagination Library of Washington Legislative Priority

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES THROUGH BOOKS FOR WASHINGTON'S EARLY LEARNERS

About Imagination Library of Washington

Imagination Library of Washington, the statewide partner of **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**, was established through bipartisan legislation in 2022 (HB 2068) with the goal to expand this highly impactful early literacy program to young children in all 39 counties in Washington. Reaching over 3 million children across the U.S. each month, the Imagination Library is the **largest and most widely celebrated early literacy initiative in the country**, mailing high quality books to children from birth to age five, at no cost to a family. Powered by United Ways of the Pacific Northwest and Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Imagination Library of Washington supports 45 local partners across all 39 counties, providing local programs 50% match funding and support, and mailing nearly 100,000 books each month to help close opportunity gaps and prepare our youngest generation for success upon entering kindergarten, and beyond.

2026 Legislative Priority \$2.75 Million for Year Two of 2025-2027 Biennium





To maintain the 50% state match for Imagination Library of Washington and provide books to over 100,000 early learners in our state.

Imagination Library of Washington was not funded through the legislature in 2025 – but it is **critical that this program is restored to the state budget** to protect the future of Washington's youngest children. The \$2.75 million ask for Year Two of the biennium represents the state's 50% match to sustain book delivery to tens of thousands of children across all 39 counties. This investment is strongly supported by OSPI, which has once again included it in their **legislative priority budget** and remains a strong, dedicated champion of the program.

Without the state investment, Imagination Library of Washington will be forced to dissolve and book delivery will shutter across the state, forcing many local program partners to shut down their Imagination Library programs. For just \$1.30 per enrolled child each month, the state can keep nearly 100,000 children reading—one of the most powerful and cost-effective investments in early literacy.

The **50% state match** is the nationally preferred funding model for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and is vital to its long-term success. This **proven public-private funding partnership** provides stability for local programs, drives scalable growth, and maximizes local impact. Early literacy is the single most powerful predictor of academic success. The Imagination Library isn't just a feel good program – it's a proven, cost-effective strategy that **directly impacts K-12 outcomes and long-term educational achievement.**

Why the Imagination Library Matters

Removes Barriers to Books	Transforms Early Literacy	Strengthens Families	Proven Impact
 <p>With universal access, the Imagination Library removes cost and availability as obstacles, ensuring that children in every community –rural, urban, or underserved –can build a home library.</p>	 <p>By inspiring a love of reading early, the Imagination Library helps children build the skills they need to learn and succeed.</p>	 <p>Shared reading time strengthens family bonds and helps parents become their child's first and best teacher.</p>	 <p>Research shows Imagination Library participants are more likely to enter school prepared, develop stronger language and social skills, and stay on track to graduate high school.</p>

Imagination Library Program Enhancement

Launch of fully Bilingual English / Spanish Book Collection in WA



A major program enhancement became available to Washington families who are currently enrolled or are seeking enrollment in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. In June 2025, a **fully bilingual English/Spanish book collection** was launched in our state, giving families the option to receive every monthly book in both English and Spanish. This new bilingual book option strengthens early literacy by ensuring more children can experience the powerful benefits of dual language reading and learning during their earliest years. As of October 2025 in Washington, nearly 3,800 children are receiving the fully bilingual English/Spanish books.

2025 ILWA Statewide Parent/Caregiver Survey Results

In June 2025, ILWA conducted their second **statewide survey**, resulting in 15,640 responses from Washington parents and caregivers who have children currently enrolled in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. The goal of conducting this survey is to **gather meaningful insights into program impact and outcomes**, helping to better understand how regular access to books is supporting early literacy development, school readiness, and family engagement.

91.3% of respondents believe this program is preparing their child/children for kindergarten

80.2% of respondents have seen an increased interest in books with their child/children

75.8% of respondents describe the quality and diversity of the books as excellent

What This Program Means to Washington Families

"My daughter loves the books from the Imagination Library more than any other books she's had. She is autistic and has a speech delay, so she couldn't tell me why she loves them more. It shows when she chooses only these books, and shows more of an interest in sitting with me to read. We couldn't be happier!" - Pierce County family

"This program is gold!! Beautiful, diverse books that both my kids look forward to! It's fun for them to get mail and be excited to read together. It's created good habits and even helped with both of their vocabularies. Thank you!" - Clark County family

