
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5324

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2019 Regular Session

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Zeiger, Darneille, Walsh, Kuderer, Palumbo, Das, Hasegawa, Hunt, Wellman, Cleveland, Pedersen, Keiser, Nguyen, McCoy, Van De Wege, Dhingra, and Saldaña)

READ FIRST TIME 02/28/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to support for students experiencing
2 homelessness; amending RCW 28A.300.542, 43.185C.340, and 28A.320.142;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.300.542 and 2016 c 157 s 2 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
8 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
9 instruction shall create a competitive grant process to evaluate and
10 award state-funded grants to school districts to increase
11 identification of (~~homeless~~) students experiencing homelessness and
12 the capacity of the districts to provide support(~~(, which may include~~
13 ~~education liaisons, for homeless students)~~) for students experiencing
14 homelessness. Funds may be used in a manner that is complementary to
15 federal McKinney-Vento funds and consistent with allowable uses as
16 determined by the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
17 The process must complement any similar federal grant program or
18 programs in order to minimize agency overhead and administrative
19 costs for the superintendent of public instruction and school
20 districts. School districts may access both federal and state funding

1 to identify and support (~~homeless~~) students experiencing
2 homelessness.

3 (2) Award criteria for the state grants must be based on the
4 demonstrated need of the school district and may consider the number
5 or overall percentage, or both, of homeless children and youths
6 enrolled in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools in the
7 school district, and the ability of the local school district to meet
8 these needs. Award criteria for these must also be based on the
9 quality of the applications submitted. (~~Preference~~) Selected
10 grantees must reflect geographic diversity across the state. Greater
11 weight must be given to districts that demonstrate a commitment to:

12 (a) Partnering with local housing and community-based
13 organizations with experience in serving the needs of students
14 experiencing homelessness or students of color;

15 (b) Serving the needs of unaccompanied youth; and

16 (c) Implementing evidence-informed strategies to address the
17 opportunity gap and other systemic inequities that negatively impact
18 students experiencing homelessness and students of color. Specific
19 strategies may include, but are not limited to:

20 (i) Enhancing the cultural responsiveness of current and future
21 staff;

22 (ii) Ensuring all staff, faculty, and school employees are
23 actively trained in trauma-informed care;

24 (iii) Providing inclusive programming by intentionally seeking
25 and utilizing input from the population being served;

26 (iv) Using a multidisciplinary approach when serving students
27 experiencing homelessness and their families;

28 (v) Intentionally seeking and utilizing input from the families
29 and students experiencing homelessness about how district policies,
30 services, and practices can be improved; and

31 (vi) Identifying data elements and systems needed to monitor
32 progress in eliminating disparities in academic outcomes for students
33 experiencing homelessness with their housed peers.

34 (3) At the end of each academic year, districts receiving grants
35 (~~must measure during the academic year how often each student~~
36 physically moves, what services families or unaccompanied youth could
37 access, and whether or not a family or unaccompanied youth received
38 stable housing by the end of the school year)) shall monitor and
39 report on the academic outcomes for students served by the grants.
40 The academic outcomes are those recommended by the office of the

1 superintendent of public instruction. The office of the
2 superintendent of public instruction shall review the reports
3 submitted by the districts and assist school districts in using these
4 data to identify gaps and needs, and develop sustainable strategies
5 to improve academic outcomes for students experiencing homelessness.

6 (4) ~~((Homeless))~~ Students experiencing homelessness are defined
7 as students without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime
8 residence ~~((as set forth))~~ in accordance with the definition of
9 homeless children and youths in the federal McKinney-Vento homeless
10 (education) assistance act ((P.L. 100-77; 101 Stat. 482)), 42
11 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 through 11435.

12 (5) School districts may not use funds allocated under this
13 section to supplant existing federal, state, or local resources for
14 ~~((homeless student))~~ supports for students experiencing homelessness,
15 which may include education liaisons.

16 (6) Grants awarded to districts under this section may be for two
17 years.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.185C.340 and 2016 c 157 s 3 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the
21 department ~~((, in consultation with the office of the superintendent~~
22 ~~of public instruction,))~~ shall administer a grant program that links
23 ~~((homeless))~~ students experiencing homelessness and their families
24 with stable housing located in the ~~((homeless))~~ student's school
25 district. The goals of the program ~~((is))~~ are to:

26 (a) Provide educational stability for ((homeless)) students
27 experiencing homelessness by promoting housing stability; and

28 (b) Encourage the development of collaborative strategies between
29 housing and education partners.

30 (2) To ensure that innovative strategies between housing and
31 education partners are developed and implemented, the department may
32 contract and consult with a designated vendor to provide technical
33 assistance and program evaluation, and assist with making grant
34 awards. If the department contracts with a vendor, the vendor must be
35 selected by the director and:

36 (a) Be a nonprofit vendor;

37 (b) Be located in Washington state; and

1 (c) Have a demonstrated record of working toward the housing and
2 educational stability of students and families experiencing
3 homelessness.

4 (3) In implementing the program, the department, or the
5 department in partnership with its designated vendor, shall consult
6 with the office of the superintendent of public instruction.

7 (4) The department, (~~working with the office of the~~
8 ~~superintendent of public instruction~~) or the designated vendor in
9 consultation with the department, shall develop a competitive grant
10 process to make grant awards (~~of no more than one hundred thousand~~
11 ~~dollars per school, not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars per~~
12 ~~school district,~~) to (~~school districts partnered with~~) eligible
13 organizations on implementation of the proposal. For the purposes of
14 this subsection, "eligible organization" means any local government,
15 local housing authority, regional support network established under
16 chapter 71.24 RCW, behavioral health organization, nonprofit
17 community or neighborhood-based organization, federally recognized
18 Indian tribe in the state of Washington, or regional or statewide
19 nonprofit housing assistance organization. Applications for the grant
20 program must include (~~contractual agreements~~) a memorandum of
21 understanding between the housing providers and school districts
22 defining the responsibilities and commitments of each party to
23 identify, house, and support (~~homeless~~) students experiencing
24 homelessness. The memorandum must include:

25 (a) How housing providers will partner with school districts to
26 address gaps and needs and develop sustainable strategies to help
27 students experiencing homelessness; and

28 (b) How data on students experiencing homelessness and their
29 families will be collected and shared in accordance with privacy
30 protections under applicable federal and state laws.

31 (~~(3) The grants awarded to school districts shall not exceed~~
32 ~~fifteen school districts per school year.~~) (5) In determining which
33 (~~partnerships~~) eligible organizations will receive grants,
34 (~~preference must~~) the department must ensure that selected grantees
35 reflect geographic diversity across the state. Greater weight shall
36 be given to (~~districts with a demonstrated commitment of partnership~~
37 ~~and history with~~) eligible organizations that demonstrate a
38 commitment to:

39 (a) Partnering with local schools or school districts; and

1 (b) Developing and implementing evidence-informed strategies to
2 address racial inequities. Specific strategies may include, but are
3 not limited to:

4 (i) Hiring direct service staff who reflect the racial, cultural,
5 and language demographics of the population being served;

6 (ii) Committing to inclusive programming by intentionally seeking
7 and utilizing input from the population being served;

8 (iii) Ensuring eligibility criteria does not unintentionally
9 screen out people of color and further racial inequity; and

10 (iv) Creating access points in locations frequented by parents,
11 guardians, and unaccompanied homeless youth of color.

12 ~~((4))~~ (6) Activities eligible for assistance under this grant
13 program include but are not limited to:

14 (a) Rental assistance, which includes utilities, security and
15 utility deposits, first and last month's rent, rental application
16 fees, moving expenses, and other eligible expenses to be determined
17 by the department;

18 (b) Transportation assistance, including gasoline assistance for
19 families with vehicles and bus passes;

20 (c) Emergency shelter; ~~(and)~~

21 (d) Housing stability case management; and

22 (e) Other collaborative housing strategies, including prevention
23 and strength-based safety and housing approaches.

24 ~~((5))~~ (7)(a) All beneficiaries of funds from the grant program
25 must be ~~((unaccompanied youth or))~~ from ~~((very low-income))~~
26 households~~((. For the purposes of this subsection, "very low-income~~
27 household" means an unaccompanied youth or family or unrelated
28 persons living together whose adjusted income is less than fifty
29 percent of the median family income, adjusted for household size, for
30 the county where the grant recipient is located)) that include at
31 least one student experiencing homelessness as defined as a child or
32 youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence in
33 accordance with the federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act,
34 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 through 11435.

35 (b) For the purposes of this section, "student experiencing
36 homelessness" includes unaccompanied homeless youth not in the
37 physical custody of a parent or guardian. "Unaccompanied homeless
38 youth" includes students up to the age of twenty-one, in alignment
39 with the qualifications for school admissions under RCW
40 28A.225.160(1).

1 ~~((6))~~ (8)(a) Grantee ~~((school districts))~~ organizations must
2 compile and report information to the department. The department
3 shall report to the legislature the findings of the grantee, the
4 housing stability of the homeless families, ~~((the academic~~
5 ~~performance of the grantee population,))~~ and any related policy
6 recommendations.

7 (b) Grantees must track and report on the following measures
8 including, but not limited to:

9 (i) Length of time enrolled in the grant program;

10 (ii) Housing destination at program exit;

11 (iii) Type of residence prior to enrollment in the grant program;

12 and

13 (iv) Number of times homeless in the past three years.

14 (c) Grantees must also include in their reports a narrative
15 description discussing its partnership with school districts as set
16 forth in the memorandum outlined in subsection (4) of this section.
17 Reports must also include the kinds of supports grantees are
18 providing students and families to support academic learning.

19 (d) Data on all program participants must be entered into and
20 tracked through the Washington homeless client management information
21 system as described in RCW 43.185C.180.

22 ~~((7))~~ (9) In order to ensure that ~~((school districts))~~ housing
23 providers are meeting the requirements of ~~((an approved))~~ the grant
24 program for ((homeless)) students experiencing homelessness, the
25 ((office of the superintendent of public instruction)) department, or
26 the department in partnership with its designee, shall monitor the
27 program((s)) at least once every two years. ((Monitoring shall begin
28 during the 2016-17 school year.

29 ~~((8))~~ (10) Any program review and monitoring under this section
30 may be conducted concurrently with other program reviews and
31 monitoring conducted by the department. In its review, the ~~((office~~
32 ~~of the superintendent of public instruction))~~ department, or the
33 department in partnership with its designee, shall monitor program
34 components that include ((but need not be limited to)) the process
35 used by the ((district)) eligible organization to identify and reach
36 out to ((homeless)) students experiencing homelessness, ((assessment
37 data)) and other indicators to determine how well the ((district))
38 eligible organization is meeting the ((academic)) housing needs of
39 ((homeless)) students((, district expenditures used to expand
40 opportunities for these students, and the academic progress of

1 ~~students under~~) experiencing homelessness. The department, or the
2 department in partnership with its designee, shall provide technical
3 assistance and support to housing providers to better implement the
4 program.

5 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.320.142 and 2016 c 157 s 5 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Each ((school district that has identified more than ten
8 unaccompanied youth)) K-12 public school in the state must establish
9 a building point of contact in each elementary school, middle school,
10 and high school. These points of contact must be appointed by the
11 principal of the designated school and are responsible for
12 identifying homeless and unaccompanied homeless youth and connecting
13 them with the school district's ((homeless student)) liaison for
14 students experiencing homelessness. The school district homeless
15 student liaison is responsible for training building points of
16 contact.

17 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
18 make available best practices for choosing and training building
19 points of contact to each school district.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** If specific funding for the purposes of
21 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not
22 provided by June 30, 2019, in the omnibus appropriations act, this
23 act is null and void.

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