
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5065

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Liiias, McCoy, Jayapal, Keiser, Litzow, Pedersen, Darneille, McAuliffe, Hasegawa, Ranker, Billig, Kohl-Welles, and Fain)

1 AN ACT Relating to improving educational opportunities for
2 homeless students through increased state-funded in-school supports,
3 housing stability, and reporting; amending RCW 28A.300.540; adding a
4 new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; adding a new section to chapter
5 43.185C RCW; creating new sections; and making appropriations.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) It is the policy of the state of
8 Washington that all students have the opportunity to obtain a basic
9 education. The legislature finds that the number of homeless students
10 identified in the K-12 public school system has been increasing since
11 at least the 2005-06 school year. Homeless students face significant
12 barriers, such as housing instability and the stigma that prevents
13 students from identifying themselves as homeless. These barriers make
14 it difficult for homeless students to take full advantage of their
15 educational opportunities provided by the state of Washington.

16 (2) The legislature acknowledges that the federal McKinney-Vento
17 education for homeless children and youth program provides training,
18 technical assistance, and monitoring, as well as federal funding to
19 support school district programs that serve homeless students. The
20 legislature recognizes that Washington receives approximately nine

1 hundred fifty thousand dollars in funding each year from the United
2 States department of education in support of this program.

3 (3) The legislature intends to improve educational opportunities
4 for homeless children by creating a state-funded grant program to
5 complement the federal program and funding to continue to reduce
6 barriers to enrollment, retention, and graduation of homeless
7 students. It is also the intent of the legislature to encourage
8 collaboration between school districts and community housing agencies
9 to help homeless families with children enrolled in the public school
10 system access stable housing.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
14 create a competitive grant process to evaluate and award state-funded
15 three-year grants to school districts to increase identification of
16 homeless students and the capacity of the districts to provide
17 support, which may include education liaisons, for homeless
18 students. The process must complement any similar federal grant
19 program or programs in order to minimize agency overhead and
20 administrative costs for the superintendent of public instruction and
21 school districts. School districts may access both federal and state
22 funding to identify and support homeless students.

23 (2) Award criteria for the state grants shall be based on the
24 demonstrated need of the school district and may consider the number
25 or overall percentage, or both, of homeless children and youths
26 enrolled in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools in the
27 school district, and the ability of the local school district to meet
28 these needs. Award criteria these also be based on the quality of the
29 applications submitted.

30 (3) Homeless students are defined as students without a fixed,
31 regular, and adequate nighttime residence as set forth in the federal
32 McKinney-Vento homeless education assistance act (P.L. 100-77; 101
33 Stat. 482).

34 (4) School districts may not use funds allocated under this
35 section to supplant existing federal, state, or local resources for
36 homeless student supports, which may include education liaisons.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.185C
38 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) The department, in consultation with the office of the
2 superintendent of public instruction, shall administer a grant
3 program that links homeless students and their families with stable
4 housing located in the homeless student's school district. The goal
5 of the program is to provide educational stability for homeless
6 students by promoting housing stability.

7 (2) The department, working with the office of the superintendent
8 of public instruction, shall develop a competitive grant process to
9 make grant awards of up to five hundred thousand dollars to school
10 districts partnered with eligible organizations on implementation of
11 the proposal. For the purposes of this subsection, "eligible
12 organization" means any local government, local housing authority,
13 regional support network established under chapter 71.24 RCW,
14 nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organization, federally
15 recognized Indian tribe in the state of Washington, or regional or
16 statewide nonprofit housing assistance organization. Applications for
17 the grant program must include contractual agreements between the
18 housing providers and school districts defining the responsibilities
19 and commitments of each party to identify, house, and support
20 homeless students.

21 (3) The grant program is limited to fifteen schools per school
22 year. In determining which school districts will receive grants,
23 preference must be given to districts with a demonstrated commitment
24 of partnership and history with eligible organizations.

25 (4) Activities eligible for assistance under this grant program
26 include but are not limited to:

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

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

33 (c) Emergency shelter; and

34 (d) Housing stability case management.

35 (5) All beneficiaries of funds from the grant program must be
36 from very low-income households. For the purposes of this subsection,
37 "very low-income household" means a family or unrelated persons
38 living together whose adjusted income is less than fifty percent of
39 the median family income, adjusted for household size, for the county
40 where the grant recipient is located.

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

5 (b) Data on all program participants must be entered into and
6 tracked through the Washington homeless client management information
7 system as described in RCW 43.185C.180.

8 (7) In order to ensure that school districts are meeting the
9 requirements of an approved program for homeless students, the office
10 of the superintendent of public instruction shall monitor the
11 programs at least once every two years. Monitoring shall begin during
12 the 2015-16 school year.

13 (8) Any program review and monitoring under this section may be
14 conducted concurrently with other program reviews and monitoring
15 conducted by the department. In its review, the office of the
16 superintendent of public instruction shall monitor program components
17 that include but need not be limited to the process used by the
18 district to identify and reach out to homeless students, assessment
19 data and other indicators to determine how well the district is
20 meeting the academic needs of homeless students, district
21 expenditures used to expand opportunities for these students, and the
22 academic progress of students under the program.

23 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.300.540 and 2014 c 212 s 2 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) For the purposes of this section, "unaccompanied homeless
26 student" means a student who is not in the physical custody of a
27 parent or guardian and is homeless as defined in section 2(3) of this
28 act.

29 (2) By December 31, 2010, the office of the superintendent of
30 public instruction shall establish a uniform process designed to
31 track the additional expenditures for transporting homeless students,
32 including expenditures required under the McKinney Vento act,
33 reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the no child left behind act,
34 P.L. 107-110, in January 2002. Once established, the superintendent
35 shall adopt the necessary administrative rules to direct each school
36 district to adopt and use the uniform process and track these
37 expenditures. The superintendent shall post on the superintendent's
38 web site total expenditures related to the transportation of homeless
39 students.

1 (~~(2)~~) (3)(a) By January 10, 2015, and every odd-numbered year
2 thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction
3 shall report to the governor and the legislature the following data
4 for homeless students:

5 (i) The number of identified homeless students enrolled in public
6 schools;

7 (ii) The number of identified unaccompanied homeless students
8 enrolled in public schools;

9 (iii) The number of students participating in the learning
10 assistance program under chapter 28A.165 RCW, the highly capable
11 program under chapter 28A.185 RCW, and the running start program
12 under chapter 28A.600 RCW; and

13 (~~(iii)~~) (iv) The academic performance and educational outcomes
14 of homeless students and unaccompanied homeless students, including
15 but not limited to the following performance and educational
16 outcomes:

17 (A) Student scores on the statewide administered academic
18 assessments;

19 (B) English language proficiency;

20 (C) Dropout rates;

21 (D) Four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate;

22 (E) Five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate;

23 (F) Absenteeism rates;

24 (G) Truancy rates, if available; and

25 (H) Suspension and expulsion data.

26 (b) The data reported under this subsection (~~(2)~~) (3) must
27 include state and district-level information and must be
28 disaggregated by at least the following subgroups of students: White,
29 Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific
30 Islander/Hawaiian Native, low income, transitional bilingual,
31 migrant, special education, and gender.

32 (~~(3)~~) (4) By July 1, 2014, the office of the superintendent of
33 public instruction in collaboration with experts from community
34 organizations on homelessness and homeless education policy, shall
35 develop or acquire a short video that provides information on how to
36 identify signs that indicate a student may be homeless, how to
37 provide services and support to homeless students, and why this
38 identification and support is critical to student success. The video
39 must be posted on the superintendent of public instruction's web
40 site.

1 (~~(4)~~) (5) By July 1, 2014, the office of the superintendent of
2 public instruction shall adopt and distribute to each school
3 district, best practices for choosing and training school district-
4 designated homeless student liaisons.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The sum of one million dollars, or as
6 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
7 ending June 30, 2016, from the general fund to the office of the
8 superintendent of public instruction for the purposes of section 2 of
9 this act.

10 (2) The sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
11 necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017,
12 from the general fund to the office of the superintendent of public
13 instruction for the purposes of section 2 of this act.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If specific funding for the purposes of
15 section 3 of this act, referencing section 3 of this act by bill or
16 chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2015,
17 in the omnibus appropriations act, section 3 of this act is null and
18 void.

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