
SENATE BILL 6298

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Frockt, Litzow, O'Ban, Fain, Mullet, Dammeier, Jayapal, Billig, Rivers, Pedersen, Rolfes, Darneille, McAuliffe, Hasegawa, Carlyle, Habib, Keiser, Conway, and Lias

Read first time 01/14/16. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to homeless student stability and opportunities;
2 amending RCW 28A.300.540; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300
3 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 43.185C RCW; adding a new
4 section to chapter 28A.320 RCW; creating new sections; and making
5 appropriations.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that schools are
8 places of academic as well as personal enrichment and that schools
9 provide safety, stability, support, and relationships necessary to
10 help students succeed. These resources are vitally necessary for tens
11 of thousands of students in Washington with no permanent home who
12 often struggle in school because they are worried about where their
13 families are staying night after night.

14 (2) The legislature also recognizes the population of homeless
15 students disproportionately includes students of color.

16 (3) The intent of the legislature is to start a competitive grant
17 system for high-need school districts and to supplement federal
18 McKinney-Vento Act dollars to ensure homeless students continue
19 attending the same schools, maintain housing stability, and improve
20 academic achievement.

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

3 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
4 create a competitive grant process to evaluate and award state-funded
5 three-year grants to school districts to increase identification of
6 homeless students and the capacity of the districts to provide
7 support, which may include education liaisons, for homeless
8 students. The process must complement any similar federal grant
9 program or programs in order to minimize agency overhead and
10 administrative costs for the superintendent of public instruction and
11 school districts. School districts may access both federal and state
12 funding to identify and support homeless students.

13 (2) Award criteria for the state grants must be based on the
14 demonstrated need of the school district and may consider the number
15 or overall percentage, or both, of homeless children and youths
16 enrolled in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools in the
17 school district, and the ability of the local school district to meet
18 these needs. Award criteria for these must also be based on the
19 quality of the applications submitted. Preference must be given to
20 districts that demonstrate a commitment to serving the needs of
21 unaccompanied youth.

22 (3) Districts receiving grants must measure during the academic
23 year how often each student physically moves, what services families
24 or unaccompanied youth could access, and whether or not a family or
25 unaccompanied youth received stable housing by the end of the school
26 year.

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

31 (5) School districts may not use funds allocated under this
32 section to supplant existing federal, state, or local resources for
33 homeless student supports, which may include education liaisons.

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

36 (1) The department, in consultation with the office of the
37 superintendent of public instruction, shall administer a grant
38 program that links homeless students and their families with stable
39 housing located in the homeless student's school district. The goal

1 of the program is to provide educational stability for homeless
2 students by promoting housing stability.

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

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

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

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

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

29 (c) Emergency shelter; and

30 (d) Housing stability case management.

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

38 (6)(a) Grantee school districts must compile information and
39 report to the legislature the findings of the grantee, the housing

1 stability of the homeless families, the academic performance of the
2 grantee population, and any related policy recommendations.

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

6 (7) In order to ensure that school districts are meeting the
7 requirements of an approved program for homeless students, the office
8 of the superintendent of public instruction shall monitor the
9 programs at least once every two years. Monitoring shall begin during
10 the 2016-17 school year.

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

21 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.300.540 and 2015 c 69 s 28 are each amended to
22 read as follows:

23 (1) For the purposes of this section, "unaccompanied homeless
24 student" means a student who is not in the physical custody of a
25 parent or guardian and is homeless as defined in RCW 43.330.702(2).

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

37 (3)(a) By January 10, 2015, and every odd-numbered year
38 thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction

1 shall report to the governor and the legislature the following data
2 for homeless students:

3 (i) The number of identified homeless students enrolled in public
4 schools;

5 (ii) The number of identified unaccompanied homeless students
6 enrolled in public schools, which number shall be included for each
7 district and the state under "student demographics" on the Washington
8 state report card web site;

9 (iii) The number of identified homeless students of color;

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

14 (~~(iv)~~) (v) The academic performance and educational outcomes of
15 homeless students and unaccompanied homeless students, including but
16 not limited to the following performance and educational 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 (3) must include
27 state and district-level information and must be disaggregated by at
28 least the following subgroups of students: White, Black, Hispanic,
29 American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian
30 Native, low income, transitional bilingual, migrant, special
31 education, and gender.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 Each school district that has identified more than ten
8 unaccompanied youth must establish a building point of contact in
9 each middle school and high school. These points of contact must be
10 appointed by the principal of the designated school and are
11 responsible for identifying homeless and unaccompanied youth and
12 connecting them with the school district's homeless student liaison.
13 The school district homeless student liaison is responsible for
14 training building points of contact.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act may be known and cited as the
16 homeless student stability and opportunity gap act.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The sum of two million dollars, or as
18 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
19 ending June 30, 2017, from the general fund to the office of the
20 superintendent of public instruction for the purposes of section 2 of
21 this act.

22 (2) The sum of two million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
23 necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018,
24 from the general fund to the office of the superintendent of public
25 instruction for the purposes of section 2 of this act.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If specific funding for the purposes of
27 section 3 of this act, referencing section 3 of this act by bill or
28 chapter number and section number, is not provided by June 30, 2016,
29 in the omnibus appropriations act, section 3 of this act is null and
30 void.

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