RCW 2.56.230 Family and juvenile court improvement grant program —Application process—Program standards. (1) A superior court may apply for grants from the family and juvenile court improvement grant program by submitting a local improvement plan with the administrator for the courts. To be eligible for grant funds, a superior court's local improvement plan must meet the criteria developed by the administrator for the courts and approved by the board for judicial administration. The criteria must be consistent with the principles adopted for unified family courts. At a minimum, the criteria must require that the court's local improvement plan meet the following requirements:

(a) Commit to a chief judge assignment to the family and juvenile court for a minimum of two years;

(b) Implementation of the principle of one judicial team hearing all of the proceedings in a case involving one family, especially in dependency cases;

(c) Require court commissioners and judges assigned to family and juvenile court to receive a minimum of thirty hours specialized training in topics related to family and juvenile matters within six months of assuming duties in family and juvenile court. Where possible, courts should utilize local, statewide, and national training forums. A judicial officer's recorded educational history may be applied toward the thirty-hour requirement. The topics for training must include:

(i) Parentage;

(ii) Adoption;

(iii) Domestic relations;

(iv) Dependency and termination of parental rights;

(v) Child development;

(vi) The impact of child abuse and neglect;

(vii) Domestic violence;

(viii) Substance abuse;

(ix) Mental health;

(x) Juvenile status offenses;

(xi) Juvenile offenders;

(xii) Self-representation issues;

(xiii) Cultural competency;

(xiv) Roles of family and juvenile court judges and commissioners; and

(d) As part of the application for grant funds, submit a spending proposal detailing how the superior court would use the grant funds.

(2) Courts receiving grant money must use the funds to improve and support family and juvenile court operations based on standards developed by the administrator for the courts and approved by the board for judicial administration. The standards may allow courts to use the funds to:

(a) Pay for family and juvenile court training of commissioners and judges or pay for pro tem commissioners and judges to assist the court while the commissioners and judges receive training;

(b) Increase judicial and nonjudicial staff, including administrative staff to improve case coordination and referrals in family and juvenile cases, guardian ad litem volunteers or court-appointed special advocates, security, and other staff;

(c) Improve the court facility to better meet the needs of children and families;

(d) Improve referral and treatment options for court participants, including enhancing court facilitator programs and family treatment court and increasing the availability of alternative dispute resolution;

(e) Enhance existing family and children support services funded by the courts and expand access to social service programs for families and children ordered by the court; and

(f) Improve or support family and juvenile court operations in any other way deemed appropriate by the administrator for the courts.

(3) The administrator for the courts shall allocate available grant moneys based upon the needs of the court as expressed in their local improvement plan.

(4) Money received by the superior court under this program must be used to supplement, not supplant, any other local, state, and federal funds for the court.

(5) Upon receipt of grant funds, the superior court shall submit to the administrator for the courts a spending plan detailing the use of funds. At the end of the fiscal year, the superior court shall submit to the administrator for the courts a financial report comparing the spending plan to actual expenditures. The administrator for the courts shall compile the financial reports and submit them to the appropriate committees of the legislature. [2008 c 279 § 2.]