S-0664.1

SENATE BILL 5324

State of Washington   **66th Legislature**   **2019 Regular Session**

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 01/17/19. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

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

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
21 to identify and support homeless students.

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

(a) Partnering with local housing and community-based organizations;

(b) Serving the needs of unaccompanied youth; and

(c) Implementing strategies to address the opportunity gap and other systemic inequities that negatively impact homeless students and students of color. Specific strategies may include, but are not limited to:

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

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

(iii) Providing inclusive programming and using a multidisciplinary approach when serving students experiencing homelessness and their families;

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

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

(3) At the end of each academic year, districts receiving grants ((must measure during the academic year how often each student physically moves, what services families or unaccompanied youth could access, and whether or not a family or unaccompanied youth received stable housing by the end of the school year)) shall monitor and report on the academic outcomes for students served by the grants. The academic outcomes are those recommended by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall review the reports submitted by the districts and assist school districts in using these

1 data to identify gaps and needs, and develop sustainable strategies
2 to improve academic outcomes for students experiencing homelessness.

3 (4) Homeless students are defined as students without a fixed,
4 regular, and adequate nighttime residence as set forth in the federal
5 McKinney-Vento homeless ((education)) assistance act ((P.L. 100-77;
6 101 Stat. 482))), 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 through 11435.

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

10 (6) Grants awarded to districts under this section shall be for
11 two years.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.185C.340 and 2016 c 157 s 3 are each amended to
13 read as follows:
14 (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the
15 department((, in consultation with the office of the superintendent
16 of public instruction,)) shall administer a grant program that links
17 homeless students and their families with stable housing located in
18 the homeless student's school district. The goals of the program
19 ((is)) are to:
20 (a) Provide educational stability for homeless students by
21 promoting housing stability; and
22 (b) Encourage the development of collaborative strategies between
23 housing and education partners.
24 (2) To ensure that innovative strategies between housing and
25 education partners are developed and implemented, the department may
26 contract and consult with a designated vendor to provide technical
27 assistance and program evaluation, and assist with making grant
28 awards. If the department contracts with a vendor, the vendor must be
29 selected by the director and:
30 (a) Be a nonprofit vendor;
31 (b) Be located in Washington state; and
32 (c) Have a demonstrated record of working toward the housing and
33 educational stability of students and families experiencing
34 homelessness.
35 (3) In implementing the program, the department, or the
36 department in partnership with its designated vendor, shall consult
37 with the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
38 (4) The department, ((working with the office of the
39 superintendent of public instruction)) or the designated vendor in

consultation with the department, shall develop a competitive grant
process to make grant awards ((of no more than one hundred thousand
dollars per school, not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars per
school district,)) to ((school districts partnered with)) eligible
organizations on implementation of the proposal. For the purposes of
this subsection, "eligible organization" means any local government,
local housing authority, regional support network established under
chapter 71.24 RCW, behavioral health organization, nonprofit
community or neighborhood-based organization, federally recognized
Indian tribe in the state of Washington, or regional or statewide
nonprofit housing assistance organization. Applications for the grant
program must include ((contractual agreements)) a memorandum of
understanding between the housing providers and school districts
defining the responsibilities and commitments of each party to
identify, house, and support homeless students. The memorandum must
include:
    (a) How housing providers will partner with school districts to
address gaps and needs and develop sustainable strategies to help
students experiencing homelessness; and
    (b) How data on homeless students and their families will be
collected and shared in accordance with privacy protections under
applicable federal and state laws.
    ((<del>(3) The grants awarded to school districts shall not exceed
fifteen school districts per school year.</del>)) (5) In determining which
((partnerships)) eligible organizations will receive grants,
((preference must)) the department must ensure that selected grantees
reflect geographic diversity across the state. Greater weight shall
be given to ((districts with a demonstrated commitment of partnership
and history with)) eligible organizations that demonstrate a
commitment to:
    (a) Partnering with local schools or school districts; and
    (b) Developing and implementing strategies to address racial
inequities. Specific strategies may include, but are not limited to:
    (i) Hiring direct service staff who reflect the racial, cultural,
and language demographics of the population being served;
    (ii) Committing to inclusive programming by intentionally seeking
and utilizing input from the population being served;
    (iii) Ensuring eligibility criteria does not unintentionally
screen out people of color and further racial inequity; and

1   (iv) Creating access points in locations frequented by parents,
2 guardians, and unaccompanied homeless youth of color.
3   ((~~(4)~~)) (6) Activities eligible for assistance under this grant
4 program include but are not limited to:
5   (a) Rental assistance, which includes utilities, security and
6 utility deposits, first and last month's rent, rental application
7 fees, moving expenses, and other eligible expenses to be determined
8 by the department;
9   (b) Transportation assistance, including gasoline assistance for
10 families with vehicles and bus passes;
11   (c) Emergency shelter; ((and))
12   (d) Housing stability case management; and
13   (e) Other collaborative housing strategies, including prevention
14 and strength-based safety and housing approaches.
15   ((~~(5)~~)) (7)(a) All beneficiaries of funds from the grant program
16 must be ((unaccompanied youth or)) from ((very low-income))
17 households((~~. For the purposes of this subsection, "very low-income~~
18 ~~household" means an unaccompanied youth or family or unrelated~~
19 ~~persons living together whose adjusted income is less than fifty~~
20 ~~percent of the median family income, adjusted for household size, for~~
21 ~~the county where the grant recipient is located~~)) that include at
22 least one homeless student as defined as a child or youth without a
23 fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as set forth in the
24 federal McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431
25 through 11435.
26   (b) For the purposes of this section, "homeless student" includes
27 unaccompanied homeless youth not in the physical custody of a parent
28 or guardian. "Unaccompanied homeless youth" includes students up to
29 the age of twenty-one, in alignment with the qualifications for
30 school admissions under RCW 28A.225.160(1).
31   ((~~(6)~~)) (8)(a) Grantee ((school districts)) organizations must
32 compile and report information to the department. The department
33 shall report to the legislature the findings of the grantee, the
34 housing stability of the homeless families, ((the academic
35 performance of the grantee population,)) and any related policy
36 recommendations.
37   (b) Grantees must track and report on the following measures
38 including, but not limited to:
39   (i) Length of time enrolled in the grant program;
40   (ii) Housing destination at program exit;

1 (iii) Type of residence prior to enrollment in the grant program;
2 and
3 (iv) Number of times homeless in the past three years.
4 (c) Grantees must also include in their reports a narrative
5 description discussing its partnership with school districts as set
6 forth in the memorandum outlined in subsection (4) of this section.
7 Reports must also include the kinds of supports grantees are
8 providing students and families to support academic learning.
9 (d) Data on all program participants must be entered into and
10 tracked through the Washington homeless client management information
11 system as described in RCW 43.185C.180.
12 ((~~(7)~~)) (9) In order to ensure that ((~~school districts~~)) housing
13 providers are meeting the requirements of ((~~an approved~~)) the grant
14 program for homeless students, the ((~~office of the superintendent of~~
15 ~~public instruction~~)) department, or the department in partnership
16 with its designee, shall monitor the program((~~s~~)) at least once every
17 two years. ((~~Monitoring shall begin during the 2016-17 school year.~~
18 ~~(8)~~)) (10) Any program review and monitoring under this section
19 may be conducted concurrently with other program reviews and
20 monitoring conducted by the department. In its review, the ((~~office~~
21 ~~of the superintendent of public instruction~~)) department, or the
22 department in partnership with its designee, shall monitor program
23 components that include ((~~but need not be limited to~~)) the process
24 used by the ((~~district~~)) eligible organization to identify and reach
25 out to homeless students, ((~~assessment data~~)) and other indicators to
26 determine how well the ((~~district~~)) eligible organization is meeting
27 the ((~~academic~~)) housing needs of homeless students((~~, district~~
28 ~~expenditures used to expand opportunities for these students, and the~~
29 ~~academic progress of students under~~)). The department, or the
30 department in partnership with its designee, shall provide technical
31 assistance and support to housing providers to better implement the
32 program.

33   **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.320.142 and 2016 c 157 s 5 are each amended to
34 read as follows:
35   (1) Each ((~~school district that has identified more than ten~~
36 ~~unaccompanied youth~~)) K-12 public school in the state must establish
37 a building point of contact in each elementary school, middle school,
38 and high school. These points of contact must be appointed by the
39 principal of the designated school and are responsible for

1 identifying homeless and unaccompanied <u>homeless</u> youth and connecting
2 them with the school district's homeless student liaison. The school
3 district homeless student liaison is responsible for training
4 building points of contact.
5 <u>(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall</u>
6 <u>make available best practices for choosing and training building</u>
7 <u>points of contact to each school district.</u>

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