

Building Bridges with Warm Hand-Offs

October 8th, 10:00am-11:30am

Melissa Rilette Burnce, OSPI

Laura Coghlan, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

Joel Anderson, Washington Student Achievement Council



Agenda

- Introduction
- Review
- Programs
- Connect
- Legislation



Vision

All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

Mission

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equity-based policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

Values

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



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Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



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Tribal Land Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial and who still inhabit the area today, the Steh-Chass Band of Indigenous people of the Squaxin Island Tribe.





Who is Here Today?

McKinney-Vento Review

Melissa Rilette Burnce (she/her)

McKinney-Vento Training Supervisor, Homeless Education
Office of System and School Improvement (OSSI)
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

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What is the McKinney-Vento Act?

Federal law protecting the educational rights of children and youths experiencing homelessness.

- Legislation initially passed in 1987.
- Most recently reauthorization in 2015 with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) <https://www.ed.gov/ESSA>
- Ensures immediate enrollment and equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth.
- Provides specific protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness regarding identification, enrollment, provision of services and opportunity to meet the same challenging academic standards to which all students are held.



Who is Homeless?

- Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, public spaces, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory living in circumstances described above



Role of a McKinney-Vento Liaison

- Ensure homeless children and youths are identified.
- Ensure homeless children and youths are enrolled.
- Ensure homeless families, children, and youths have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible.
- Inform the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths of the educational and related opportunities.
- Ensure homeless families, children, and youth receive referrals.
- Ensure public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in school buildings and other locations.
- Ensure enrollment disputes are mediated according to 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).
- Ensure the parent or guardian, and any unaccompanied homeless youth, are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin.
- Ensure unaccompanied homeless youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards established for other students.
- Ensure school personnel receive professional development and other support.



WA Student Achievement Council (WSAC)

Joel Anderson (he, him, his)

Assistant Director of External Affairs

Legislative Liaison | [WEIAOB](#)

Washington Student Achievement Council

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WA Student Achievement Council (WSAC): Mission

Our Mission:

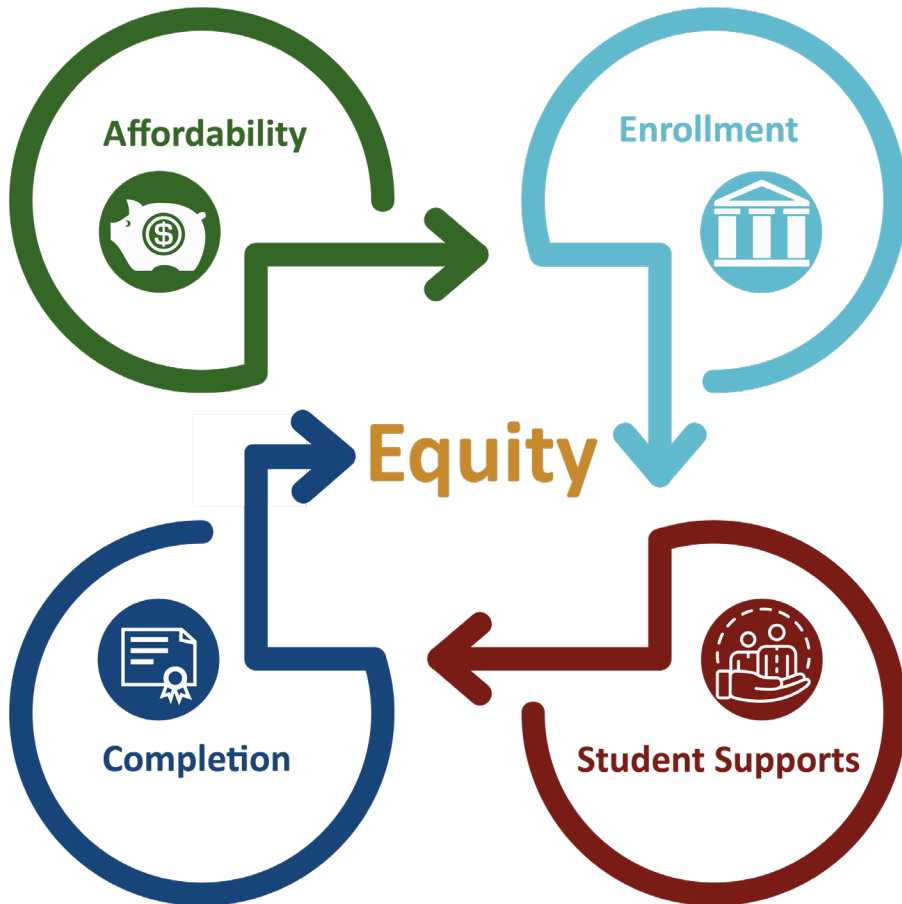
We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. In pursuit of our mission, the Washington Student Achievement Council:

- Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.
- Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.
- Advocates for the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education.





WSAC's Strategic Framework—Centered Around Equity



*If we build an **affordable** and **supportive** educational environment, more Washingtonians will **enroll** in programs and **complete** credentials.*



Washington College Grant (WA Grant)

Washington State has made a groundbreaking commitment to financial aid for low- and middle-income people of all ages with the **Washington College Grant**.



Welding

or



Nursing?

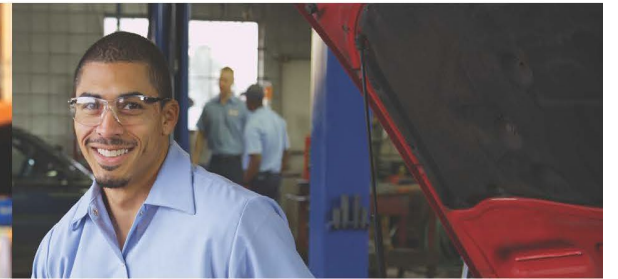


English

or



Computer Science?



Apprenticeship

or



College Degree?

Whatever the goal, Washington College Grant can help.



2024–25 Median Family Income (MFI) Ranges

Award amounts vary based on **family size** and **income**.

Family Size	Full Award	Partial Award
Eligible Student: Family of 1	Income: \$40,500 or less	Income: Up to \$62,500
Eligible Student: Family of 4	Income: \$78,500 or less	Income: Up to \$120,500

Students and families can use the [financial aid calculator](#) to estimate their potential WA Grant award.





Recent Legislative Wins: 2024 Session

Bill Number	Impact
HB 2214	Automatically qualifies all high school students in grades 10–12 on nutrition assistance for the maximum WA Grant award (before completing a FAFSA or WASFA)
SB 5904	Aligns state and federal financial aid eligibility time frames at six years or 150% of published program length
SB 6053	Allows OSPI to share all high school student contact information with WSAC



HB 2214: Connecting WA Grant and SNAP

Starting in the 2025–26 AY, students in grades 10–12 who receive **SNAP or Food Assistance Program benefits** will be automatically qualified for the maximum WA Grant award (full public tuition and fees).

- Students can be notified as early as their 10th grade spring (prior to FAFSA/WASFA completion)
- Students may graduate HS with up to **three years of guaranteed aid:**
 - SNAP in spring 10th or fall 11th = year one
 - ...in spring 11th or fall 12th = year two
 - ...in spring 12th = year three



WSAC Decision Packages: 2025 Session

Legislative Requests	Budget Requests
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Codify current WA Grant income thresholds (65% MFI) and bridge grants (\$500 stipends for max. award recipients)• Fully fund Passport to Careers awards and automatically qualify Passport-eligible youth for max. WA Grant awards• Add a tribal college to the Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness program and fund planning grants for colleges to engage in affordable housing partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OtterBot expansion (financial aid texting tool)• Student supports—low-cost meal plan pilot study



Questions?

- **Joel Anderson, Assistant Director of External Affairs, WSAC**
- joela@wsac.wa.gov
- (360) 515-3002 (office) / (253) 389-2818 (cell)

Thank you!

College Programs

Laura Coghlan (*she/her*)

Program Administrator – Student Services

Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (SSEH)

Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

lcoghlan@sbctc.edu



BASIC NEEDS SECURITY OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Food and/or Housing insecurity



Food insecurity



Housing insecurity



Homelessness



Former Foster Youth



Food insecurity



Housing insecurity



Homelessness





Passport to Careers (Passport)

The **Passport to Careers** program helps former foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth prepare for and succeed in college, apprenticeships, or pre-apprenticeship programs.

It provides a scholarship and support services from college staff.



SUPPORTING STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (SSEH)

Eligibility

- Enrolled student at a public college
- Experiencing homelessness
- At imminent risk of homelessness
- Or aged out of Foster Care

Supports

- Case management/referral
- Housing accommodations
- Food and other basic needs support



BENEFIT/BASIC NEEDS NAVIGATORS

Basic Needs Act SB1559 (2023)

Eligibility

- Current and potential students needing navigations support and/or resources (not limited to basic needs)

Supports

- 1st point of contact – intake, outreach, access to emergency aid
- Connections - community resources, college programs, public benefits
- Support transition to college – FAFSA/WASFA, WA College Grant, other pathway-specific grants

Connections- Poll

Do you know who your local college and/or K-12 contacts are?

[Menti link](#)

menti.com - code 2462 7665



Let's Make a Connection

- Who do we contact?
- Will they expect to hear from us?
- What does the law say?
- Is there a process in place for a warm hand-off?
- How can we collaborate? (Regional meetings, Open Houses)
- How do we promote this connection in our work?



Find Your Connection

1. Using the liaison lists for K12 and Higher Education, Find your corresponding contact.
2. In the chat box say "hello"!

[College Homeless Student Staff Contacts](#)

[Homeless Education Liaison Contact List](#)



Legislation



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WSAC Agency Request Legislation: 2025 Session

#1: WA Grant

- Codify current income eligibility thresholds (65% MFI)
- Codify bridge grants (\$500 stipends for maximum award recipients)

#2: Passport to Careers

- Fully fund awards (\$5,000/year) and wraparound services
- Auto-qualify Passport students for maximum WA Grant awards

#3: Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness

- Add eligibility for an accredited tribal college in WA (NWIC)
- Fund planning grants for affordable housing partnerships



Upcoming OSPI Webinars

- **October 16 and 17-** Repeat of Fall Trainings [\(Day 1\)](#) [\(Day 2\)](#)
- **October 30-** [Regional ESD 112 Gathering in Vancouver, WA](#)
- **November 7-** [McKinney-Vento and Foster Care](#)
- **November 21-** [McKinney-Vento, Department of Licensing and State ID](#)
- **December 4-** Panel and Questions: Unaccompanied Youth (Link TBD)
- **December 5-** [The Importance of Regional Connections](#)



- Office hours are held the first Friday of the month from 11:00am-12:00pm.
- If you have questions over the summer, please contact the [Homeless Education Inbox](#).
- To subscribe to our weekly newsletter, please email Melissa Rilette Burnce at melissa.riletteburnce@k12.wa.us





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