

Homeless Student Educational Outcomes

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Budget Language

\$36,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$36,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for chapter 212, Laws of 2014 (homeless student educational outcomes).

Proviso Purpose

The \$36,000 proviso funding is aimed at improving educational outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness in Washington State by assisting school districts in identifying and supporting homeless students. These funds were allocated to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop and publish detailed reports on the educational outcomes of homeless students, which are made available on the OSPI website.

This funding also supports OSPI's ongoing efforts to educate school districts about the importance of identifying homelessness in children and youth. Under SSB 6074, OSPI is required to post a brochure on its website outlining the educational rights of homeless students, to inform both parents and students. Additionally, OSPI is tasked with producing a short video on identifying homeless students and providing them with the necessary services and supports. This video posted on the OSPI website serves as a resource for school district staff to aid in training and raising awareness. Lastly, OSPI will adopt and distribute best practices for selecting and training the federally mandated school district homeless liaisons.

Services Provided

The services offered include ongoing development of training programs, materials, resources, and data reports related to identifying and supporting students in homeless situations. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) delivers training and professional development, documentation, guidance, printed parent information, video and webinar links on the OSPI website, and other resources required by SSB 6074. These efforts aim to ensure that school district staff, parents, and youth have access to the necessary information and resources. Updated videos that showcase the stories of children and youth experiencing homelessness are regularly produced and posted to the OSPI website. In addition, OSPI has hired a Homeless Education Training Supervisor to specifically train and provide professional development to district homeless liaisons and other school staff. This



ensures that all liaisons receive annual training on identifying homeless students and are informed of best practices to support them at the local level. The Homeless Education Training Supervisor has conducted three regional in-person workshops for district liaisons and staff and created online learning modules and enhanced webinar content. Part of the Homeless Education Training Supervisor's position is funded through the proviso. OSPI also submits a report to the Governor and Legislature, beginning in 2015 covering data on homeless students, including enrollment numbers, academic performance, and other subgroup details.

Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

SSB 6074 does not include grants or other direct funding to local districts.

Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

Number of School Districts:	295 + tribal compacts and charters
Number of Schools:	N/A
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	N/A

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No.

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2025	\$36,000	\$35,989
2024	\$36,000	\$35,900
2023	\$36,000	\$32,358
2022	\$36,000	\$33,236
2021	\$36,000	\$36,000

Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2025	295 districts (plus charter schools, Tribal Compacts and other LEAs)
2024	295 districts (plus charter schools, Tribal Compacts and other LEAs)
2023	295 districts (plus charter schools, Tribal Compacts and other LEAs)

2022	295 districts (plus charter schools, Tribal Compacts and other LEAs)
2021	295 districts (plus charter schools, Tribal Compacts and other LEAs)

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

Programmatic updates to the proviso include expanded training provided by OSPI and increased staffing dedicated to supporting the training and professional development of local district personnel on identifying and addressing the needs of students experiencing homelessness. A collaboration between the OSPI McKinney-Vento Office and the OSPI Communications Office has resulted in the production and release of OSPI Original Films, which share the stories of children, youth, families, and liaisons to raise public awareness. These films are publicly accessible and are used in liaison trainings to enhance understanding and inform both district staff and the broader community about the impacts of homelessness. They have also been featured across other OSPI programs and divisions.

To meet the growing demand for professional learning, OSPI has increased both the number and frequency of McKinney-Vento training opportunities. During the 2020–21 school year, OSPI utilized a portion of Homeless Student Stability Education Program (HSSeP) funds, combined with federal McKinney-Vento grant funds, to hire a temporary homeless education trainer to help meet expanded training needs. This position has since become a permanent full-time Program Supervisor role, responsible for developing and delivering Canvas-based online trainings, webinars, and additional professional development opportunities.

Furthermore, with one-time federal funding provided through the American Rescue Plan – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) program, OSPI hired a full-time position to manage the daily operations of ARP-HCY subgrants to school districts. When ARP-HCY funding ended in September 2024, this position was retained and transitioned to oversee the development of grant application packages and management of the new Educational Grant Management System (EGMS) for all grant-funded Homeless Education projects.

Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

The key evaluation component of the proviso is the annual homeless student data report prepared for the legislature. This report highlights the ongoing academic successes and challenges of students in homeless situations including:

- Meeting graduation requirements.
- Experiencing disproportionate discipline compared to most other student groups.
- Higher than average absence rates.
- Lower assessment scores compared to most other student groups; as well as information regarding sub-populations such as students receiving specialized services, are migrant, unaccompanied, or are identified in other student groups.

Annual homeless student data collection efforts indicate a growing population of students experiencing homelessness in our state.

Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

The program continues to face challenges in sustaining ongoing support for students experiencing homelessness. The federal American Rescue Plan – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) funding, allocated by Congress specifically to assist students in homeless situations, enabled Washington State to provide grants and services to more than 200 school districts—many of which had never previously received state or federal funding targeted for this population. However, this one-time funding ended on September 30, 2024, leaving districts facing significant gaps in staffing and services for vulnerable students.

Since the U.S. Department of Education began requiring annual homeless student counts, the number of identified students experiencing homelessness has steadily increased. Currently, more than 40,000 homeless children and youth are enrolled in Washington’s public schools. Meeting the growing demand for relevant and up-to-date materials, training, and other resources remains a continuing challenge.

Additionally, many districts face frequent staff turnover, particularly among McKinney-Vento liaisons. The liaison role is often assigned to individuals who are unfamiliar with the requirements of the position or who already carry multiple responsibilities, limiting the time available to fulfill the role effectively. This ongoing turnover, combined with limited staffing capacity, continues to hinder the accurate identification of students experiencing homelessness and the consistent delivery of services to meet their needs.

Future Opportunities

Efforts to raise awareness and provide support for child and youth homelessness should be expanded to include younger children, such as infants, babies, and preschoolers (including Head Start), along with older youth transitioning out of high school into the workforce or higher education. With over 40,000 school-aged children experiencing homelessness in our state, there is an ongoing need for adequate funding, increased awareness, and enhanced support systems.

The implementation of SSB 6074 has led to the development of additional resources for local school districts and expanded training opportunities. Most notably, the required Legislative Report has offered a more detailed analysis of the educational outcomes for homeless students in our state. As we continue to uncover the disparities in educational performance among homeless students, and as school district staff receive better local support, further investments in the OSPI Homeless Children and Youth program could be crucial. OSPI’s program supervisors collaborate closely with districts to integrate best practices, coordinate with other state and federal initiatives, and fulfill the requirements set by federal law. Given the growing demands from districts, the increasing number of homeless students, and the need for ongoing

professional development at the local level, OSPI will need to strengthen its capacity to sustain effective support and implementation.

Demand upon OSPI as well as the demand upon our local school districts continues to grow. With additional federal reporting, district technical assistance and grant management responsibilities have been added to the duties of our staff. Ongoing efforts to comply with program requirements per reauthorized federal legislation (or new state legislation) continue to challenge the capacity of existing program staff at OSPI.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2025 Fiscal Year.](#)

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