

Dropout Prevention / Building Bridges / JAG Grants

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of the Building Bridges program was to award grant funding to address dropout prevention, intervention and retrieval both through the development of systems approaches that create collaborative local partnerships and the provision of direct services to students. JAG is one program that has provided prevention, intervention and retrieval as a direct service to students.
2. **Description of services provided:** The Building Bridges grant program awarded grants to build a comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval system. The average cost per student directly served was approximately \$385.00 without including those who will benefit from tier one interventions (all students) and the development of systems which are going into implementation phase this year. Based on the evaluation and previous program outcomes the following strategies were required elements of the 2009–11 Building Bridges Grant Program:
 - Utilization of a ***Dropout Early Warning and Intervention System*** that uses quality student data to identify students at-risk; has a multidisciplinary school/community *student support team* to put students into interventions and regularly monitor student progress and make adjustments as necessary; and employs student advocates to provide *intensive, individual case management* to students identified at the highest risk levels and engage in *dropout recovery efforts* with students who have previously dropped out.
 - Development and implementation of a ***multi-tier system of support framework*** that provides progressively intensive school and community-based interventions.
3. **Criteria for grants:** Each partnership was to include at least one school district, and shall be led by one of several specified entities. Partnerships were required to identify students at risk of dropping out of school, or who have dropped out, and provide those students with assistance and support to facilitate the continuation of their education. These grants were to serve at-risk middle and high school students. Targeted student populations to be identified include youth in foster care, the juvenile justice system, special education, and youth who have dropped out of school. The current cohort of grantee districts have used a cycle of inquiry (a process for preparing, identifying issues, understanding issues and their root causes, creating a plan and taking action, and then evaluating the results to begin the cycle again) for the data they have collected to create a problem of practice and theory of action customized to their district's needs. This year the cohort groups will implement their plans of action, collect and analyze their data and adjust as needed.
4. **Beneficiaries in 2016-17 School Year:**

# of School Districts:	32 JAG School Grants
	9 Building Bridges District Grants
# of ESD	2 ESD Grants

FY 17 Funding: **State Appropriation:** \$511,000 Building Bridges / \$1,000,000 JAG

** Partnerships were required to leverage both cash and in kind resources as the required 25% match.

FTEs	3.5 FTEs
-------------	-----------------
5. **First year funded:** 2007 fiscal year-Building Bridges, 2011-JAG
6. **State funding since inception:**

Fiscal Year	Amount	Building Bridges	JAG
FY17	\$1,511,000	\$511,000	\$1,000,000
FY16	\$1,251,000	\$251,000	\$1,000,000
FY15	\$1,000,000	\$189,000	\$811,000
FY14	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
FY13	\$337,000*		\$135,000
FY12	\$337,000*		\$135,000
FY11	N/A*		\$150,000
FY10	\$337,000*		
FY09	\$675,000*		
FY08	\$2.5 million*		
FY07	\$2.5 million*		

*Building Bridges and JAG were reported separately until this year

7. Number of beneficiaries (e.g., schools, students, districts) since inception:

Fiscal Year	# of districts BB	# of Districts JAG
FY 17	3 grant packages. 2 ESDs , 9 districts	32 district school grants
FY16	2 grant packages. 2 ESDs , 4 districts	29 district grants
FY 15	2 grant packages, 1 ESD, 10 districts	32 district grants
FY14	3 grant pkgs. 1 ESD, 9 districts	1 grant 21 districts
FY13	3 grants. 8 districts	
FY12	3 grants. 8 districts	
FY11	N/A	
FY10	5 grants. 11 districts (from 1/10-6/10)	
FY09	5 grants, 11 districts	
FY08	15 grants, 36 school districts	
FY07	15 grants, 36 school districts	

8. Evaluations of program/major findings: The 3rd party evaluation required by the legislation was conducted by the WSU Area Health Education Center- Spokane. The results of the program evaluation of the Building Bridges Grant Program finds that it demonstrated statistically significant success in reducing dropout risk. Programs identified the most “at-risk” students for services under the Building Bridges Grant. The program demonstrated significant gains in credits earned and social adjustment with more intensively engaged students.

- Building Bridges services result in significant increases in credits earned by students at-risk for dropout.
- Students with greatest need (lowest levels of credits earned) received the most services and gain the most in credits earned.
- Students receiving both academic and nonacademic services showed the greatest academic gains.

- Engaging dropouts requires distinct identification and engagement strategies outside of conventional school strategies for supporting enrolled students.
- JWG continues to expand into more school districts- nationally more than 90% of JAG students graduate from high school. Washington State JAG participants have had an average graduation rate of 95% between 2014-2017.

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:** Funding allocated for the grant program for fiscal year 2011 was insufficient to sustain the grant program. OSPI terminated the grant program as of June 30, 2010. Limited grant funds were made available again in 2012. Ongoing funding for both systems capacity development and direct services continue to be a need.
10. **Future opportunities:** Based on the lessons learned from the grant program, OSPI put forward a Dropout Reduction decision package which was not funded. The purpose of the package allowed OSPI to implement a comprehensive dropout reduction initiative in school districts by expanding the use of a research based, longitudinal and disaggregated student information data system, to identify students at risk of dropping out; progress monitor identified students, and drive administrative decision making. If funded, this project would strengthen the dropout reduction initiative already underway in the state of Washington and support the continued development of a cross-systems policy framework; the coordination of services across agencies and the expansion of these practices to all Washington State schools to support dropout reduction. A smaller version of this effort is being developed through a restructuring of the 13-15 Building Bridges grant award criteria. The emphasis will be on the early identification of at risk youth, implementation of district wide dropout prevention processes and program sustainability through the effective use of education data.

11. Statutory and/or Budget language:

RCW 28A.175.025 Building Bridges program — Grants. Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this purpose, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction shall create a grant program and award grants to local partnerships of schools, families, and communities to begin the phase in of a statewide comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval system. This program shall be known as the Building Bridges Program.

RCW 28A.175.075 Building bridges work group — Composition — Duties — Reports. (1) The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction shall establish a state-level Building Bridges work group that includes K-12 and state agencies that work with youth who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of school.

Budget Proviso: 2ESHB 2376, Sec. 501 (29), page 192, \$1,000,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2016 and \$1,000,000 of the general fund-- state appropriation for fiscal year 2017, and \$762,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation are provided solely for dropout prevention, intervention, and reengagement programs, including the Jobs for America Graduates (JAG) program, dropout prevention programs that provide student mentoring, and the Building Bridges statewide program. Starting in school year 2014-15, students in the foster care system or who are homeless shall be given priority by districts offering the Jobs for America's Graduates program. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction shall convene staff representatives from high schools to meet and share best practices for dropout prevention. Of these amounts \$251,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation for fiscal year 2016, and \$511,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation for fiscal year 2017 are provided solely for the Building Bridges statewide program.

RCW 28A.305.190 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules governing the eligibility of a child sixteen years of age and under nineteen years of age to take the GED test if the child provides a substantial and warranted reason for leaving the regular high school education program, if the child was home-schooled, or

if the child is an eligible student enrolled in a dropout reengagement program under RCW [28A.175.100](#) through [28A.175.110](#)

RCW 28B.15.067(6) The tuition fees established under this chapter shall not apply to eligible students enrolling in a dropout reengagement program through an interlocal agreement between a school district and a community or technical college under RCW [28A.175.100](#) through [28A.175.110](#).

12. Other relevant information: The Building Bridges Legislation also calls for a state-level workgroup. This group is comprised of more than 90 members. Funds were not provided for the workgroup, and more than 30% of the Building Bridges supervisor's time is dedicated to the staffing of this workgroup.

13. List of schools/districts receiving assistance:

Model programs:

- Sunnyside School District, Franklin Pierce School District, Spokane School District, Kelso School District
- Evergreen School District, Kelso School District; Ocean Beach School District, Woodland School District; Oakesdale School District
- ESD 113 and ESD 101

Jobs for Washington's Graduation (JWG):

- Aberdeen School District; Bremerton School District; Clover Park School* District; Everett School District*; Evergreen School District*; Federal Way School District; Ferndale School District; Franklin Pierce School District; Grand Coulee Dam School District; Granite Falls School District; Highline School District; Lynden School District; Manson School District; Meridian School District; Moses Lake School District; Mt. Vernon School District; Northport School District; Olympia School District;* Orting School District*; Renton School District; Spokane School District*; Vancouver School District; Wall Walla School Wenatchee School District; Yakima School District
(* ended relationship in 2015)

14. Program Contact Information

Dixie Grunenfelder, Director of K12 System Supports

System and School Improvement

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Office: 360-725-0415 | Cell: 360-402-4251 | Fax: 360-753-1953

dixie.grunenfelder@k12.wa.us