



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Building Bridges Programming

1. **Purpose:**

Funding is provided for statewide Building Bridges programming. Building Bridges programming is defined in RCW 28A.175.025 as supporting local partnerships between schools, families, and communities to create a system to identify students at risk of dropping out and provide timely prevention, intervention, and reengagement programming for such students. Funding is also specifically provided for the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program.

2. **Description of services provided:**

- Implement Graduation: A Team Effort (GATE) programming, including monthly webinars and regular advisory committee meetings focused on dropout prevention, intervention, and reengagement practices and policies.
 - Over the course of the year, Building Bridges staff hosted and created monthly webinars that drew 300+ viewers each month on topics around graduation equity and strategies for increasing equity in schools through attendance, career and college readiness, and more. These sessions were recorded and have been viewed widely on YouTube.
 - The GATE Advisory group is made up of cross-agency membership from youth serving organizations across the state.
 - The Building Bridges Grant provided grants to Community Based Organizations to provide engagement and reengagement services to students statewide, including mentoring, tutoring, and after school events.
- Develop and update tools for district/school use for improving student outcomes.
 - Staff have worked in partnership with Gonzaga University staff to implement a pilot program with schools that were identified for improvement. The pilot was created to support schools in providing timely leadership coaching and supports focused on using a multi-tiered framework of supports through regular data review and using a collaborative team approach to evaluate the success of supports.
 - Staffing paid out of this proviso raised awareness of evidence-based practices and processes, including identification of exemplar efforts to serve as local models, support comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and reengagement system development.

- Reengagement programming supports provide technical assistance and supports to districts offering, or considering offering, reengagement programs such as Open Doors.
- Districts that offered JAG received grants to offset the cost of programming. JAG programming includes delivering competencies, engaging students in leadership activities, and working with local employers to create strategies and partnerships that are healthy and supportive to JAG students. JAG Specialists do this while blending three key approaches: Project Based Learning; Trauma Informed Care; and Employer Engagement. In Washington, most Specialists are also CTE teachers.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

Building Bridges and GATE resources can be accessed by all schools. For 2019-20, grants were specifically directed toward youth serving community-based organizations to assist with engaging and reengaging students.

Districts that offer JAG are eligible for grants. Students are eligible for JAG services if they face graduation challenges or barriers such as chronic absenteeism, low academic performance, lack of motivation, lack of transportation, history of suspension, lack of family support, incarcerated parents, poverty, are on government assistance, etc. Once identified as potentially eligible by an advisor, teacher, counselor, or building administrator, each student is interviewed to determine their barriers, whether they would benefit from the program, and whether they want to be an active participant.

Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	All district can access GATE/Building Bridges tools and resources. 11 districts (JAG grants) and (17) School Districts through Building Bridges grants.
Number of Schools:	13 (JAG grants) + 31 (Building Bridges) Grant beneficiaries)
Number of Students:	366 (JAG) + 430 (Building Bridges) Beneficiaries)
Number of Educators:	38
Other:	6 Counties

Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 2.7

Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 0

FY21 Funding: State Appropriation: \$810,000

Federal Appropriation: \$0
Other fund sources: \$0
TOTAL (FY21) \$810,000

4. **Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?**

- No
 Yes, please explain.

5. **State funding history:**

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY21	\$810,000	\$763,170
FY20	\$802,000	\$692,182
FY19	\$795,000	\$679,228
FY18	\$923,000	\$899,965
FY17	\$511,000	\$512,064
FY16	\$251,000	\$235,424

6. **Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:**

Fiscal Year	Number of Districts
FY21	295 (26 directly)
FY20	295 (5 directly)
FY19	295
FY18	295
FY17	295
FY16	295

7. **Programmatic changes since inception (if any):**

N/A

8. **Evaluations of program/major findings:**

Building Bridges found that the work of supporting a continuous reengagement system was more relevant than ever before this year. As a result, we are redoubling efforts to maintain membership of mandated groups and collect their feedback to reduce barriers this year.

No program audits were conducted in FY20 for JAG programming.

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:**

With the unexpected, required adjustments to virtual communications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Graduation A Team Effort Advisory Meetings were put on hold until Winter 2021.

This proviso supported multiple dropout prevention programs. With limited resources and capacity, and growing need for additional services, some districts had to choose between programs.

JAG Specialists usually collect an extensive amount of data. JAG Specialists faced challenges with staffing and capacity caused by the pandemic, and were not as consistent with data reporting as past years.

Building Bridges grants were awarded to youth serving community-based organizations. These partners struggled with access to data and struggled with data collection procedures while excelling at connecting with families and youth and responding to foundational needs.

10. **Future opportunities:**

We will be reconvening the GATE Advisory group to revisit the reboot with new staff over the next year and provide updated recommendations for dropout prevention, intervention, and reengagement.

Building Bridges Grants will continue to be offered to BIPOC Youth Serving Community Based Organizations to increase access to education.

The systems work with Gonzaga will be scaling up to 5 ESDs and 9 additional schools.

11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

ESSB 5092 Sec. 1501 (4)(h)(i) - \$280,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2020, \$280,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021, and \$1,052,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation are provided solely for dropout prevention, intervention, and reengagement programs, including the Jobs for America's graduates (JAG) program, dropout prevention programs that provide student mentoring, and the Building Bridges statewide program. 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, \$522,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation for fiscal year

2020, and \$530,000 of the dedicated marijuana account—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 are provided solely for the Building Bridges statewide program.

12. **Other relevant information:**

N/A

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

Name: Dixie Grunenfelder

Title: Executive Director, of Student Engagement & Support

Phone: 360-878-0138

Email: dixie.grunenfelder@k12.wa.us