



Social Worker Centralized Support

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the proviso was to help fund a School Social Work position at OSPI to provide state guidance and technical assistance related to the field of school social work in Washington state.

2. Description of services provided:

This proviso funded a position that provided technical assistance, training, and support for school social workers across the state. This included answering questions regarding the different ESA types (and redirecting cert questions to the appropriate department), providing guidance on the role of school social workers, and working with district and community partners.

3. Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:

N/A

Beneficiaries in the 2022-23 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	25
Number of Schools:	25
Number of Students:	3
Number of Educators:	15
Other:	10

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

No

5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2023	\$70,000	\$51,384

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

N/A



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

The proviso funding for the role has ended.

8. **Program evaluation or evaluation of major findings:**

There is a lack of understanding of the role of social workers within the education system in Washington leading to districts looking to fill positions with other ESA roles, even when a social worker would be qualified to take on the job duties. There is also a significant lack of understanding around different ESA roles, including their similarities and differences, which leads to districts not understanding how to hire and/or utilize ESA roles.

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

The most significant struggle for this program was that the position was left unfilled until November 2022 and the proviso was ended with less than 1 year of having someone in the role.

10. **Future opportunities:**

In order to move the program forward, the position needs to be funded.

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

\$70,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 is provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to provide centralized support and coordination, including supervision and training, for social workers hired by or contracting with school districts.

12. **Other relevant information:**

There is currently a mental health crisis in our schools and school social workers are uniquely poised to help address this crisis. A majority of BIPOC youth access mental health services at schools, a role that school social workers are trained to take on while also serving as the critical link between school, home, and community. By funding central leadership, it offers the opportunity to show that the state acknowledges this crisis and is committed to putting leadership in place that moves the profession forward – and therefore addresses the needs of our students.

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

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14. Program Contact Information:

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