



# Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## **South Kitsap FAFSA Completion Pilot**

### 1. **Purpose:**

The proviso is designed to increase financial aid application completion rates for both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Washington Application for Student Financial Aid (WASFA), especially for students and families who have historically been furthest from educational opportunity.

### 2. **Description of services provided:**

- **STEM Networks' support:** West Sound STEM Network (WSSN), based in South Kitsap School District (SKSD), provided staff to facilitate this proviso work. Drawing on existing expertise and established network foundations, the WSSN supported Washington's nine other regional STEM networks to connect with a wide range of local education, community, and government leaders to implement strategies designed to increase financial aid application completion in communities with historically lower completion rates.
- **Student Services/Supports Provided:**
  - In-school and community-based partnerships to support the provision of the newly required Financial Aid Advising Day from Senate Bill 6141 (2020).
  - FAFSA/WASFA completion events (lead and/or support)
  - One-on-one support for school counselors and school staff to increase awareness and utilization of strategies to increase application completion.
  - Dual language support for financial aid support events
- **School or District Services/Supports Provided:**
  - Identification and dissemination of existing resources and strategies as a foundation upon which to build new avenues for outreach and support
  - Training for staff on financial aid options, creating a college-going culture, available staff and resource support via the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), College Success Foundation (CSF), and area colleges, and the process for completing FAFSA/WASFA applications
  - Data support for school districts to direct outreach efforts to students not yet engaged in application process or needing technical assistance
  - Delivery of financial aid application completion strategies via a virtual environment

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

The initial proviso was only distributed to existing regional STEM networks. They were identified as ideal partners who could utilize their existing community connections to assess regional and community-based needs, develop and implement strategies for increasing a college-going culture and financial aid application completion rates, and evaluate potential strategies for scope of impact and scalability to a statewide approach,

**Beneficiaries in 2020-21 School Year:**

**Number of School Districts:** Data not collected  
**Number of Schools:** Data not collected  
**Number of Students:** Data not collected  
**Number of Educators:** n/a  
**Other:** *Name other...* All 10 regional STEM networks

contributed to this initial effort

**Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs):** 0 FTE  
**Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding:** 0

**FY21 Funding: State Appropriation:** \$300,000  
**Federal Appropriation:** \$0  
**Other fund sources:** \$0  
**TOTAL (FY21)** \$300,000

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	\$300,000	\$300,000

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

Fiscal Year	Number of School Districts	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Educators	Number of Other
FY21	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

This is the first year of this proviso.

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

The WSSN staff leading the implementation of this proviso work collected 'case studies' from all 10 regional STEM networks that highlight successful strategies for increasing financial aid application completion rates that were used in the region. The case studies, as well as four evidence-based 'foundational practices' that have been proven to positively impact financial aid application completion rates, are collected into a first draft of the FAFSA Application Completion Playbook. The Playbook will be posted on the WSSN and WA-STEM websites to ensure statewide access to this resource.

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

The continued building closures of most high schools during the fall of 2020 because of COVID-19 made it challenging for school staff to support seniors in completing their college and financial aid applications.

Virtual FAFSA/WASFA application support opportunities were inconsistently facilitated across the state as schools and communities struggled to connect and offer support within local safety regulations.

STEM Network partners had to maintain and attempt to expand connections with school staff and community leaders via mostly virtual/digital means, often without direct access to the people they were trying to serve.

10. **Future opportunities:**

In the 2021-23 omnibus bill [ESSB 5092, Sec. 522 (16)], an additional \$250,000 per year for both years of the biennium have been appropriated for the continuation of this effort.

The proviso Steering Committee is already working to improve staff understanding and implementation of the fall FAAD events as a prime strategy for increasing financial aid application completion rates.

The Playbook will also be updated annually to reflect additional lessons learned, new and promising strategies and regional approaches to improving the college-going culture in communities furthest from educational opportunity and successful strategies for improving financial aid application completion rates.

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

ESSB 5092, Sec. 1518 (29) \$300,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 is provided solely for the south Kitsap school district to co-develop a pilot strategy to increase completion rates for the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA).

12. **Other relevant information:**

With the inclusion of a financial aid information requirement in the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) via House Bill 1599 (2019) and the advent of the Financial Aid Advising Day (FAAD) requirement from Senate Bill 6141 (2020), there are systemic strategies being employed statewide to ensure students understand financial aid options and know how to access those fiscal supports. Time is needed to realize the impacts of these strategies, as well as the new auto-enrollment process for the College Bound Scholarship for students who qualify as low-income per Senate Bill 5321 (2021), which collectively should result in better postsecondary matriculation outcomes for all students.

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

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

Name: Kim Reykdal

Title: Program Supervisor Lead, Secondary School Counseling

Phone: 360-725-6168

Email: [kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us](mailto:kim.reykdal@k12.wa.us)