

## Washington Achievers Scholars

1. **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Washington State Achievers Scholars Program is to serve low-income, underserved students become college ready and navigate the college admissions process. College Preparatory Advisors provide direct supports to students as well as recruit, train and manage volunteer mentors who are match with students. These volunteers, under the support and supervision of College Preparatory Advisors, help to reduce the barriers to college faced by students.

2. **Description of services provided:**

This contract funds two student support programs providing college advising and readiness services to high school students.

Higher Education Readiness Opportunity (HERO) program: HERO provides support and guidance that 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students need to successfully navigate the transition from middle school to high school, manage the academic rigor of high school, and become college-ready. Outcomes of the program are:

- Ensure students possess good academic behaviors that lead to strong performance in school. To ensure students are practicing good academic behaviors, HERO Advisors monitor attendance, evaluate academic performance and offer workshops in study skills, test-taking strategies and time management.
- Support students' development of academic mindsets so there is the belief that college is possible. The program encourages the development of academic mindsets to ensure that students feel a sense of belonging at school and a belief that abilities can grow with effort.
- Equip students with the skills and knowledge to become college-ready. The program provides students with group activities and experiences so they can learn about college and career choices, admissions requirements and resources to pay for college.

Achievers Scholars: The Achievers Scholars Program provides 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students with college planning support and tools to successfully navigate the college admissions process. In addition, College Preparatory Advisors recruit and train community members to serve as volunteer mentors for students. The program focuses on:

- Admission Navigation refers to a student's understanding of and ability to successfully navigate post-secondary education admissions including entrance exams, college essays, application materials and pre/post processes.
- College Fit & Match – Match refers to how well students meet institutional requirements for admission. The elements of fit influence how well students would integrate into a college's academic, social, and communal life. Characteristics of fit can impact a student's college persistence and completion.
- Paying for College refers to students' knowledge and skills required to locate, assess, process and evaluate post-secondary financial aid resources.

Achievers services include one-on-one college planning assistance, transcript evaluation and course planning support, Achiever group meetings, college workshops, college visits and experiences, summer programming and high school to college transition support.

Students enrolled in the HERO and Achievers programs are monitored for progress toward sets of milestones. Most program activities are offered school-wide and not limited to students enrolled in College Success Foundation programs in order to promote a college-going culture in each building.

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

**Student Services:** Students must complete a HERO or Achievers student application during the fall of their 9<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Student eligibility is based on:

- Income – Family income may not exceed 70% of the median family incomes used for the administration of the Washington State Need Grant Program
- Academic Standing – For Achievers, students must possess a minimum 2.0 GPA and be on-track with credits for high school graduation. For HERO, students must be in good academic standing based on school progress reports.

**Beneficiaries in 2017-18 School Year:**

# of School Districts: 9  
# of Schools: 27  
# of Students: 2,799  
Other: N/A

# of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs): 0.0  
# of contractors/other staff associated with this funding: 40.8

**College Success Foundation Staff FTEs associated with this funding:**

Position Title	FTEs	Description
College Preparatory Advisor	27	Full-time school-based advisors who provide college planning supports to students in 11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> grade. College Prep Advisors work in Auburn, Bremerton, Highline, Kent, Port Angeles, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, and Yakima school districts.
HERO Advisors	7	Full-time school-based advisors who provide college readiness supports to students in 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> grade. HERO Advisors work in Bremerton, Highline, Port Angeles, Seattle and Tacoma school districts.
Program Associates	2*	Regionally-based staff who provide administrative support. Program Associates work in Bellevue, Seattle and Spokane.
Program Managers	2.3*	Regionally-based managers who provide supervision and support to school-based advisors.
Director/Program Officer	2.3*	Directors and Chief Officer who provide regional and/or statewide oversight and support.

\*These are full-time positions but only a portion of the FTE is allocated to this funding.

FY 18 Funding: State Appropriation: \$3.940 million  
Federal Appropriation: \$0.0 million  
Other fund sources: \$0.0 million  
TOTAL (FY18) \$3.940 million

4. Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding? If yes, explain. No
5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
FY18	\$3,940,000	\$3,940,000
FY17	\$3,940,000	\$3,940,000
FY16	\$2,549,000	\$2,549,000
FY15	\$1,875,000	\$1,875,000
FY14	\$1,875,000	\$1,875,000
FY13	\$675,000	\$675,000
FY12	\$675,000	\$675,000
FY11	\$750,000	\$750,000
FY10	\$750,000	\$750,000
FY09	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

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

Academic Year	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<i>Funding for 9<sup>th</sup> grade programs started in FY16</i>										80	245
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<i>Funding for 10<sup>th</sup> grade programs started in FY16</i>										79	120
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	606	585	576	595	271	442	473	480	650	627	724	1,249
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	574	606	585	576	595	271	442	473	480	610	677	694
<b>Total # of Students Served</b>	<b>1,180</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,161</b>	<b>1,171</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>1,237</b>	<b>1,560</b>	<b>2,308</b>
<b># of High Schools Served</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>

7. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):  
Since inception, the Achievers Scholars program has experienced significant changes prompted primarily by the sunset of a Gates Foundation grant in 2010. In particular, the grant provided Achievers students with a college scholarship as well as financial resources for program operations. Without these resources, there were major impacts on the program with two highlighted below.
8. Evaluations of program/major findings:
  - High School Graduation Of the 1,129 – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Achievers, 1,086 students (96%) have graduated from high school on time.
  - College Enrollment Plans Of the 1,086 – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Achievers who graduated from high school in June 2018, 1,009 of these Achievers (93%) have enrollment plans to attend a college or university the fall term immediately after graduation.

- Program Participation Over the 2017-18 school year, 97% (or 199) of 206 tenth grade HERO students participated in one or more college and/or career experiences by June 30<sup>th</sup>. These activities included HERO meetings, college and career workshops, and campus visits.
- Test Preparation For the 2017-18 school year, 85% (or 175) of 206 tenth grade HERO students completed an ACT or SAT preparation activity by June 30<sup>th</sup> of their tenth grade year. These activities included ACT/SAT practice tests and workshops.

Data from surveys that tested knowledge and program experience is being cleaned and analyzed

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

As noted above, changes resulting from the sunset of the Gates Foundation grant has impacted the Achievers Scholars program and presented challenges for the program to address. In 2015, the program engaged in an assessment and re-design process to address some challenges but issues remain.

- With the ending of the Achievers scholarship, a key incentive for students to participate in program activities was eliminated. In youth programming, the use of incentives is a common tool to recruit and engage students who face competing interests. Incentives can range from recognition (i.e. certifications, awards), activities (i.e. time on basketball court, visit to a park), food (i.e. pizza party, candy) and monetary (i.e. stipend, scholarship). For the Achievers program, for example, participation in the Hometown Mentor Program was a condition of receiving a college scholarship. Without this incentive, College Preparatory Advisors must invest greater effort and time toward recruitment and engagement. Coupled with the increase in the rigor of the college admissions process and requirements, the demands on CSF staff have intensified and strained their capacity.
- The Gates Foundation also provided additional financial resources for program operations. For example, a cadre of program associates were previously funded to recruit and support mentors at two high schools. Without the funding for program associates, College Preparatory Advisors have taken over the coordination of mentoring activities for 50 mentors in addition to serving 100 Achievers per year as well as other students in their schools.

The program remains committed to mentoring and providing the high quality supports for students. At the same time, the program is faced with restricted capacity due to limited resources. Over the 2018-19 school year, the Achievers program will engage in a program evaluation and re-design process, with a particular focus on the Hometown Mentor Program, to address this challenge.

10. **Future opportunities:**

The program is eager to engage in a program assessment and re-design process over the 2018-19 school year. The assessment process will be guided by the organization's Research and Evaluation team to ensure a rigorous review and design process. Partner organizations with expertise in various programmatic components have already been engaged to support and collaborate on this process. It is expected that a re-designed program will maximize the opportunities presented by this state funding and ensure the highest quality services for low income students who seek a college degree.

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

**Budget Proviso: SSB 5883** Section 501(25) - \$3,940,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2018 and \$3,940,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2019 are provided solely for the Washington State Achievers Scholarship and Washington Higher Education Readiness program. The funds shall be used to: Support community involvement officers that

recruit, train, and match community volunteer mentors with students selected as achievers scholars; and to identify and reduce barriers to college for low-income and underserved middle and high school students.

12. **Other relevant information:**

The services of College Prep Advisors and HERO Advisors are available to all students in the 27 buildings, not just those enrolled in the HERO and Achievers programs. Activities include, but were not limited to, HERO and Achievers meetings, college application help sessions, financial aid information nights, FAFSA completion events, SAT/ACT test prep, campus visits, career field trips, study skills workshops, scholarship assistance, and high school to college transition support. By extending participation beyond those enrolled in programs, HERO and Achievers have the opportunity to promote the college-going culture of the state's schools.

Statewide, there were 17,487 interactions between advisors and non-CSF students during the 2017-18 school year. These activities were often coordinated in close partnership with school staff which resulted in 1,358 interactions with school partners. Beyond students, there were also 2,227 interactions with parents/guardians of students. Advisors spend considerable time providing college resources and expertise to parents and families, many who have not attended college themselves.

13. **List of schools/districts receiving assistance:**

Location/District	High School	HERO	Achievers
Auburn Public Schools	1. Auburn Mountainview High School		X
	2. Auburn Riverside High School		X
	3. Auburn High School		X
Bremerton Public Schools	1. Bremerton High School	X	X
Highline Public Schools	1. Evergreen High School	X	X
	2. Highline High School	X	X
	3. Mount Rainier High School		X
	4. Tyee High School		X
Kent Public Schools	1. Kent Meridian High School		X
	2. Kentridge High School		X
	3. Kentwood High School		X
Port Angeles Public Schools	1. Port Angeles High School	X	X
Seattle Public Schools	1. Cleveland High School		X
	2. Garfield High School	X	X
	3. Rainier Beach High School	X	X
Spokane Public Schools	1. Ferris High School		X
	2. Lewis and Clark High School		X
	3. North Central High School		X
	4. Rogers High School		X
	5. Shadle Park High School		X
Tacoma Public Schools	1. Henry Foss High School	X	X
	2. Lincoln High School		X
	3. Mount Tahoma High School		X
	4. Stadium High School		X
	5. Wilson High School		X
Yakima Public Schools	1. A.C. Davis High School		X
	2. D.D. Eisenhower High School		X

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