Senate Bill 6514 Work Group 8/9/18 Webinar Notes

Participants (alphabetical by last name, with organizational affiliation(s) in parentheses)**:**

Mark Bergeson (Washington Student Achievement Council, meeting facilitator), Maryann Brathwaite (Northwest Career Colleges Federation), Susan Colard (Department of Licensing), Devon Crouch (Independent Colleges of Washington), Christian Crowell (Student at The Evergreen State College), Claudia D'Allegri (Sea Mar Community Health Center), Tam Dinh (Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, Saint Martin's University), Cody Eccles (Council of Presidents), Jennifer Ellsworth (Washington State University), Lindsey Frallic (Everett Community College), April Hendrickson (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education), Joe Holliday (State Board for Community and Technical Colleges), Marny Lombard (Forefront), Donn Marshall (Senate Bill 6514 work group facilitator), David Shulman (Northwest Career Colleges Federation, Seattle Film Institute), Peter Schmidt (Department of Veterans Affairs), Rosemary Simmons (University of Washington Bothell), Jason Smith (Everett Community College), Michelle Starkey (Mount Saint Mary's University)

1. Introduction

a. Objectives - (1) to inform Request for Proposals (RFP) review criteria development for the grant program and (2) review grant work group recommendations to-date and address outstanding RFP issues. The entire meeting was spent addressing objective (1).

b. Review 7/25 and 7/30 online meetings – The facilitator listed recommendations arrived at during previous meetings and called for editorial suggestions for 7/25 and 7/30 meeting notes. Nobody suggested any edits.

c. Review grant program purpose outlined in SB 6514 sections 3(1) and 1(4)(c):

   o *3(1) The purpose of the grant program is to provide funding to postsecondary institutions for the institutions to create partnerships with health care entities to provide mental health, behavioral health, and suicide prevention to students in their institutions.*

   o *1(4)The legislature intends to implement task force recommendations by:*
   (c) Creating a grant program for resource-challenged institutions to help develop suicide prevention programs in those institutions, which may include for example, enhancing treatment services to student veterans; creating campus-wide crisis services; expanding existing crisis plans to integrate suicide intervention; reentry, including medical leave that supports reentry; postvention; and creating links and referral systems between campus behavioral health resources and community-based mental health resources.

2. Discussion

a. RFP framing of grant program purpose.

   • The bill language is broad, representing a spectrum of work ranging from awareness campaigns to support groups to behavioral and mental health. Discussion of whether to add language in the RFP to clarify or narrow the language in the bill led to a consensus to leave the RFP language

broad rather than focus on a particular part of the spectrum of work that the bill language represents.

- Similarly, discussion of the related issue of whether to earmark different pots of money to address different parts of the spectrum of work (with different scoring criteria associated with each pot) led to a consensus not to do so.

- For providers, the term "behavioral health" is an umbrella that includes both mental health and substance abuse, so it does not make sense to say "mental health comma behavioral health." Behavioral Health can mean different things in different contexts. So it would be helpful to clearly articulate mental health, substance abuse, and behavioral health for the sake of communicating clearly. WSAC can add language to clarify relationships.

- From a provider perspective, if we are trying to create an impact on suicide prevention we have to be able to assess behavioral health, including holistically integrated mental health and substance abuse.

- It would be good to include in the RFP information on the package of resources that will come available in 2020 as free resources under Section 2 of the bill.

- (From GoToMeeting chat log) Section 1(4)(c) material consists mainly of "examples" rather than expectations. Grant proposals need not be limited to these examples.

- Consensus: keep the framing language in the RFP broad, and do not break the spectrum of work into multiple pieces with separate funding and scoring criteria for each.

b. Proposal review criteria.

- The WSAC RFP template divides proposals into three components: a technical proposal, a management proposal, and a cost proposal. This structure is not set in stone, but it has served well in the past.

- The group reviewed suggestions from prior meetings around partnership and from the public input compilation.

- The group discussed review criteria to include in RFP along the following dimensions:

   o Should we apply the SB 6514 section 3(2)(b) criteria to all institutions rather than just public ones?

      ☐ Section 3(2)(b) text [with underlining added by WSAC staff to highlight key criterial components]: *The council must identify which public institutions of higher education have the <u>greatest need</u>, have a clear and strong demonstration of willingness from <u>leadership to utilize the statewide resources</u> created under section 2 of this act, and <u>can develop partnerships to enhance capacity</u>. From those identified public institutions of higher education, proposals that enhance treatment services to <u>student veterans</u> must be given priority.*

      ☐ Consensus: apply the section 3(2)(b) criteria to all applicants.

- o Program design
  - ☐ Design is the biggest thing, and management is basically the ability to carry out the design. However, in order for us to score the design we need to identify what are the outcomes and how the design will meet the outcomes.
  - ☐ One approach is to let applicants identify their own campus-specific objectives and outcomes, as long as they fit within the overall purpose of the bill. On the plus side, this approach is inclusive. On the minus side, this approach limits our ability to draw general research conclusions and could make it hard for proposal reviewers to judge outcomes.
  - ☐ It is difficult for us to specify outcomes for all grantees, such as "we reduced suicide rate by X" because we don't have a good baseline. But, depending on what people are proposing, we can talk about participation--the number lives that are being touched (number of students have been served, number of people participating in prevention activities, number of people receiving information).
  - ☐ A proposal reviewer could judge and score based on how valid, achievable, and evidence-based the objectives were.
  - ☐ We should look at what is the need of the institution, what is their design to address that need, and what are the outcomes they have set; and if there's internal consistency among those three then that's a solid proposal. Having all of the grantees come up with the same outcomes is not what the legislature asked us to do.
  - ☐ The number of suicides usually is so small that having a reduction would not be as valuable as seeing that we've trained 80% of the faculty and the referrals to the counseling center and to the behavioral intervention teams and the care teams have increased by 40%. That's good data that leads to suicide prevention.
  - ☐ The bill does not require evaluation. But on the other hand part of the grantee's responsibility will be to have some way to measure outcomes, even if determined by the applicant. The RFP could include an evaluation requirement where the applicant evaluates its performance at achieving the objectives that it set.
  - ☐ Consensus: let applicants establish their own objectives (consistent with the purpose language of the bill) and their own activities; and require their own evaluation plan to see how successful they are at meeting their objectives.
- o Partnership quality
  - ☐ Partnerships should be meaningful. Discussion in prior meetings highlighted the importance of partnership authenticity, for community partners as well as healthcare providers.
  - ☐ Partnerships with healthcare can provide a path to successful intervention, for example when a student expresses suicide ideation.
  - ☐ Quality could be evaluated based on the potential for the partners to help the grantee achieve its objectives. This makes sense because partnerships will be institution-specific, similar to the way outcomes are institution-specific.
  - ☐ Consensus: include partnership quality as a dimension.

- o Need - Should we include it as a scoring dimension and how should be measure it? For example, should we reward use of measures that the data work group is contemplating?
  - □ When this bill and a prior bill were being considered, a lot of attention was paid to the ratio of students to staff working in a mental health capacity. Perhaps need could be represented as a staffing shortage in terms of administrative or other resources to address suicide and mental health issues.
  - □ One component of need is lack of resources at that institution (however quantified). Another component is high-risk populations. We already have veterans specifically named but there are other high-risk populations that people could include, if they're serving that population or have a high percentage of high-risk population within their institution. A third component is high incidence of suicide and a pattern of high suicide completion rates.
  - □ With veterans it can be challenging because there are a significant number of veterans who do not self-identify as such on campuses, but there are some statistics that are readily available from campus certifying officers.
  - □ Consensus: include need as a dimension with components related to high-risk student populations served and lack of resources to help those populations.

- o Impact on Washington students
  - □ Impact is integral in the purpose of your program or design. You can't design a program without thinking about what you want to accomplish, what impact or outcome.
  - □ With any kind of programming there is a range of impacts that depend on each group. For example, impacts could include: simple awareness of what kind of signs and symptoms what could lead to suicidal thoughts, reducing stigma and shame, providing more access to services, or making services more culturally appropriate for different types of students.
  - □ Proposers naturally include impact in their design, but they need to be able to tease it out and tell us about it. Having impact as part of our criteria forces people to really think through and clarify how they will measure their impact.
  - □ Be careful to ask for easily quantifiable impact metrics.
  - □ I seems like we are using impact and outcomes synonymously. Whether we call it, impact, outcome, or learning objective, it gets back to internal consistency. The grant must identify objectives and then come up with some kind of data to show that it had a positive impact.
  - □ (From GoToMeeting chat log) Outcomes could be tied to the data that schools will be required to report on beginning June 1, 2019.
  - □ Consensus: include outcomes for Washington students as a dimension.

- o Face-to-face versus online - Should we have any scoring incentive that values one versus the other or just be agnostic on that?
  - □ There is a value to ensuring that applicants are addressing their online population as well. How are they going to offer Suicide Prevention or intervention for those students? How do they do that? It's a population that we should keep our eye on.
  - □ If we're letting colleges set their own objectives and holding them to their own objectives, it is best to be agnostic with regard to face-to-face versus online.

- Consensus: no preference for face-to-face versus online.

- New program versus building on prior efforts - Do we want to reward building on prior efforts or building new programs or do we want to remain agnostic on that issue?
  - The component that calls for active collaboration with community partners and community providers is what's really important here, and that wouldn't preclude continuing or expanding existing programs.
  - Rewarding building on prior efforts could potentially go against one of our needs if we really want to focus on lack of resources. If we work with something to expand a current program, that school may already have a lot of resources.
  - Consensus: no preference for new efforts versus building on prior efforts.

- Cultural competency
  - Applicants should be sensitive to the community they are trying to reach. Culture does not mean ethnicity only—rather, it means the culture of the population that's being served: gay lesbian, transsexual, etc.
  - Consensus: include cultural competency as a scoring dimension.

- Sustainability
  - Realistically the best a grant of this nature (short duration and limited funding) could do is set things up for the future. So it makes total sense to include sustainability.
  - Some smaller institutions are starting with nothing, so even a one-time education campaign could accomplish huge amounts. Sustainability is ok as long it doesn't become a tipping point that excludes proposals that might not be oriented that way.
  - Historical perspective - The first recommendation in the 1138 report is ongoing State funding for more resources. Sustainability is probably not something we want to emphasize because we understand that the campuses with need don't have the ability to sustain.
  - A community partner may be someone that might help sustain in the future. So there could be some incentive to continue the good work that is being started.
  - Consensus: include sustainability but do not emphasize it.

- Reward evidence-based approaches or encourage creativity (encourage people to try something new?)
  - Each campus has its own culture so they will probably determine creative ways or avenues; and any institution would also look inside research or try to put into practice something that does work or has been proven to work in the past.
  - We could reward either evidence-based or strength of a logic model that might be proposed.
  - We could require a logic model as a component of the proposal. Other grant programs often do so.
  - Consensus: not reached due to lack of time. Continue discussion at next meeting.

- (From GoToMeeting chat log) Thoughts about criteria to add points in evaluation of proposals:
  - Inclusion of identification of need (how assessed)
  - Utilization of evidence-based interventions

- ☐ Emphasis on prevention
- ☐ Strength of logic model
- ☐ Strength of capacity to fulfill proposal
- ☐ Identification of measurable outcomes
- ☐ Plan for measuring those outcomes
- ☐ Internal consistency of proposal.

3. Public Comment

a. No public comment. As with the 7/25/18 and 7/30/18 meetings, members of the public were free to join the discussion at any time and did so.

4. Draft Recommendations

a. New recommendations (based on 8/9/18 discussion)
   o Keep the framing language in the RFP broad, and do not break the spectrum of work into multiple pieces with separate funding and scoring criteria for each.
   o Apply the section 3(2)(b) criteria to all applicants.
   o Let applicants establish their own objectives (consistent with the purpose language of the bill) and their own activities; and require their own evaluation plan to see how successful they are at meeting their objectives.
   o Review criteria include:
      - ☐ Partnership quality
      - ☐ Need, with components related to high-risk student populations served and lack of resources to help those populations
      - ☐ Outcomes for Washington students
      - ☐ Cultural competency
      - ☐ Sustainability (but do not emphasize it)

b. Prior recommendations (based on 7/25/18 and 7/30/18 discussions)
   o The maximum award amount should be $60,000.
   o The RFP should not include sector set asides, but the structure of the RFP should enable more than 6 awards to be made. [Note: during the meeting, a suggestion was made to remove the language after "asides." With a maximum award of $60,000, that language is no longer necessary.]
   o The RFP should allow optional partners to be included in partnerships, without restriction on the number of applicants a partner that is not a postsecondary education institution can partner with.
   o The RFP should allow joint applications by consortia of institutions.

5. Other

a. Next Steps
   o 8/23/18 grant work group online meeting 1:30-3:00 pm.
   o 8/27/18 SB 6514 whole group face-to-face meeting 10:00 am-2:00 pm at Bates Technical College.