REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# UPDATE: Homeless Students Data

## 2019

**Authorizing legislation:** RCW 28A.300.540

**Martin Mueller**
**Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education and Student Support at OSPI**

**Deb Came, Ph.D.**
**Assistant Superintendent of Assessment and Student Information at OSPI**

**Prepared by:**

- **Melinda Dyer,** Program Supervisor
  melinda.dyer@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6050
- **Justin Ward,** Data Analyst
  justin.ward@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6060

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# Executive Summary

Currently, there are more than 1.35 million children and youth experiencing homelessness enrolled in schools across the nation. Students experiencing homelessness are more likely to suffer academically and are less likely to finish school when compared to their housed peers. Homeless students are less likely to engage in school, more likely to have higher absentee rates, and more likely to have lower test scores. The federal McKinney-Vento Act broadly defines homelessness in an effort to provide supports for students living in a variety of unstable housing situations; thus ensuring school stability and continued enrollment at a time when a student's nighttime residence may be constantly changing. In 2001, the McKinney-Vento Act began requiring all school districts to annually report the number of students experiencing homelessness enrolled in their schools. These reports show school districts have reported increased numbers of students experiencing homelessness every year since then.

In addition to the McKinney-Vento Act requirements, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6074 (2014), which aims to improve educational outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The bill does this by bolstering homeless student identification and establishing further data reporting requirements.

## Table 1: Change in the Number of Homeless Students

| School Year | Number of Homeless Students |
|---|---|
| 2008–09 | 20,780 |
| 2009–10 | 21,826 |
| 2010–11 | 26,049 |
| 2011–12 | 27,390 |
| 2012–13 | 30,609 |
| 2013–14 | 32,539 |
| 2014–15 | 35,511 |
| 2015–16 | 38,017 |
| 2016–17 | 39,450 |
| 2017–18 | 40,365 |

**Source:** The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), 10/1/2018

The number of students experiencing homelessness represented in Table 1 has increased over the years. In part, this increase may be due to better data quality and school district reporting in the collection of data.

For more information related to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the education of youth experiencing homelessness, please visit the following websites:

- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [Homeless Children and Youth](#),
- The [National Center for Homeless Education](#),
- The [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#), or
- The [Schoolhouse Connection](#).

# Background

## Legislation

In 2014, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6074, which requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to report data on students experiencing homelessness to the Governor and the Legislature every other year starting January 10, 2015. This report will provide a more in-depth analysis of data pertaining to students experiencing homelessness than is currently required by the United States Department of Education under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. The statewide assessment data to be reported by OSPI must include performance outcomes disaggregated by at least the following groups of students: White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native, low-income, transitional bilingual, migrant, special education, and gender.

Additional information regarding student participation in a variety of supportive educational programs will also be included in this report.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act) defines "homeless" as follows:

The term "homeless children and youths"--

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

(B) includes—

(i) children and youths who are sharing the house of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are

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abandoned in hospitals;*

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section(a)(2)(C));

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who quality as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

*Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster placement" was removed from the definition of "homeless" on December 10, 2016.

# Update Status

## Homeless Enrollment

During the 2017–18 school year, 40,365 students were identified as homeless, which amounted to 3.4 percent of students statewide. Additional information on state enrollment demographics is located in the "Student Enrollment Information" section of the state Report Card.

# Conclusion and Next Steps

For students experiencing homelessness, schools are often the safest, most stable and supportive places. Stability is critical to the academic success of these students. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) provides training, technical assistance, and opportunities for grant funding to local school districts as they work to serve the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

In 2016, the Legislature passed the Homeless Student Stability and Opportunity Gap Act (House Bill 1682) to amend state laws related to improving educational outcomes for students experiencing homelessness through increased identification services, in-school supports, and housing stability. The resulting State Homeless Student Stability program complements the

federal McKinney-Vento program, providing additional support and resources for school districts beginning in the 2016–17 school year.

The new State Homeless Student Stability grant was designed to improve identification of students experiencing homelessness and to build local education agency (LEA) capacity to provide support to those students, particularly unaccompanied homeless youth. Through a competitive grant competition that concluded in June of 2018, OSPI awarded $830,000 to 12 school districts for the 2018–19 school year. Funds will be used for a range of LEA determined priorities, including:

- Professional development for school districts and building-level liaisons related to meeting the needs of homeless students.

- Increased time for liaisons to carry out their McKinney-Vento responsibilities and remove obstacles to identification, enrollment, attendance, and school success.

- Increased staff focused on the specific needs of unaccompanied homeless youth, including graduation and planning for post-secondary options.

- Increased partnerships with community-based organizations, particularly those that provide tutoring, mentoring, and mental health services.

In addition to Washington's state-funded Homeless Student Stability and Opportunity Gap Act, Congress reauthorized the federal McKinney-Vento Act in December 2015 under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and all public schools fully implemented the changes on October 1, 2016.

The McKinney-Vento Act, originally enacted in 1987 as the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, provides identification, enrollment, and access to children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Act serves to provide school stability for students experiencing homelessness, as each change of schools may cause further delays in a student's academic progress. The Act promotes the academic success of students experiencing homelessness and ensures students experiencing homelessness are able to enroll and participate fully in all school activities, ensuring a free, appropriate education.

Provisions of the Act include immediate enrollment even if a student lacks records, the right to remain in their school of origin when in the student's best interest, transportation, and other academic supports. Washington currently provides approximately $888,630 in federal McKinney-Vento grant funding to two multi-district consortium programs and 27 school district programs.

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## Table 2: Homeless Student Enrollment by Student Group

| Student Group | # of Homeless Students | Total Student Population | % of State Population that is Homeless |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Students | 40,365 | 1,194,095 | 3.4% |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Male | 20,327 | 618,333 | 3.3% |
| Female | 20,038 | 575,762 | 3.5% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 1,214 | 16,447 | 7.4% |
| Asian | 966 | 91,297 | 1.0% |
| Black/African American | 4,536 | 53,750 | 8.4% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 12,689 | 278,430 | 4.6% |
| White | 15,890 | 644,171 | 2.5% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 1,016 | 13,431 | 7.6% |
| Two or more | 4,042 | 96,240 | 4.2% |
| **Student Group** | | | |
| Unaccompanied | 5,914 | 6,927 | 85.4% |
| Special Education | 8,792 | 183,427 | 4.8% |
| English Learner | 7,137 | 141,030 | 5.1% |
| Low-Income | 39,215 | 562,731 | 7.0% |
| Learning Assistance Program (LAP) | 10,291 | 171,485 | 6.0% |
| Migrant | 1,978 | 23,727 | 8.3% |
| 504 Plan | 1,351 | 50,274 | 2.7% |
| Gifted | 246 | 45,215 | 0.5% |
| Running Start | 367 | 27,831 | 1.3% |

**Source:** CEDARS, 10/1/2018. Count of students enrolled at any point in the school year.

## Table 3: Homeless Student Enrollment by Grade Level

| Grade Level | Number of Homeless Students | % of Students who are Homeless | Total State Enrollment | % of State Enrollment who are Homeless |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-K | 1,066 | 2.6% | 50,004 | 2.1% |
| Kindergarten | 3,011 | 7.5% | 85,036 | 3.5% |
| 1st | 3,123 | 7.7% | 86,600 | 3.6% |
| 2nd | 3,025 | 7.5% | 86,606 | 3.5% |
| 3rd | 3,058 | 7.6% | 88,976 | 3.4% |
| 4th | 3,020 | 7.5% | 90,715 | 3.3% |
| 5th | 2,985 | 7.4% | 89,683 | 3.3% |
| 6th | 2,717 | 6.7% | 87,078 | 3.1% |
| 7th | 2,649 | 6.6% | 85,029 | 3.1% |
| 8th | 2,569 | 6.4% | 85,048 | 3.0% |
| 9th | 2,577 | 6.4% | 86,348 | 3.0% |
| 10th | 2,844 | 7.0% | 85,574 | 3.3% |
| 11th | 3,207 | 7.9% | 90,783 | 3.5% |
| 12th | 4,514 | 11.2% | 96,615 | 4.7% |
| **Total** | **40,365** | **100.0%** | **1,194,095** | **3.4%** |

**Source:** CEDARS, 10/1/2018. Count of students enrolled at any point in the school year.

## Table 4: Homeless Student Enrollment and Nighttime Residence

| Nighttime Residence | Description | # of Homeless Students |
|---|---|---|
| Doubled-Up | Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason. | 29,772 |
| Hotels/Motels | Living in hotels/motels due to lack of alternate adequate accommodations. | 2,533 |
| Shelters | Supervised publicly or privately operated facilities designed to provide temporary living accommodations. (This category included children and youth who were "awaiting foster care" during the data collection period. As of December 10, 2016, the term "awaiting foster care" was removed from the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.) | 5,102 |
| Unsheltered | Includes living situations such as cars, parks, campgrounds, temporary trailers, abandoned buildings, and substandard housing. | 2,958 |

**Source:** CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

# Homeless Student Academic Outcomes and Graduation Rates

## Table 5: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in English Language Arts by Student Group

| Student Group | Grade Level | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 10th |
| Statewide | 55.5% | 57.3% | 59.2% | 55.9% | 59.6% | 58.9% | 69.5% |
| Homeless (All) | 31.1% | 31.9% | 32.3% | 29.3% | 33.4% | 32.6% | 37.3% |
| **Gender** | | | | | | | |
| Female | 35.3% | 35.2% | 36.0% | 35.5% | 41.4% | 39.4% | 37.3% |
| Male | 26.8% | 28.6% | 29.0% | 23.1% | 25.8% | 26.1% | 29.9% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | | | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 25.8% | 13.2% | 19.0% | 12.2% | 21.2% | 16.3% | 30.8% |
| Asian | 44.8% | 44.6% | 57.1% | 38.9% | 50.0% | 48.1% | 47.2% |
| Black/African American | 26.8% | 20.0% | 22.5% | 20.4% | 24.4% | 21.7% | 31.5% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 24.3% | 26.4% | 26.7% | 23.8% | 29.1% | 27.2% | 28.4% |
| White | 36.9% | 39.9% | 38.6% | 36.9% | 41.3% | 40.0% | 43.4% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 20.3% | 18.8% | 25.4% | 35.0% | 21.7% | 21.2% | 38.7% |
| Two or more | 36.0% | 36.3% | 38.5% | 31.1% | 34.6% | 40.9% | 43.1% |
| **Student Groups** | | | | | | | |
| English Learner | 11.8% | 11.0% | 8.7% | 5.9% | 10.0% | 7.6% | 11.4% |
| Low-Income | 31.1% | 31.8% | 32.2% | 29.4% | 33.5% | 32.5% | 38.0% |
| Migrant | 17.9% | 16.4% | 21.0% | 14.3% | 20.4% | 25.9% | 28.4% |
| Special Education | 11.7% | 9.7% | 10.6% | 7.0% | 7.6% | 7.8% | 11.3% |
| Section 504 | 39.7% | 25.3% | 39.7% | 23.0% | 45.6% | 40.4% | 40.6% |

**Source:** 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

## Table 6: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in Math by Student Group

| Student Group | Grade Level | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th | 10th |
| Statewide | 57.5% | 53.8% | 48.5% | 48.2% | 49.0% | 47.5% | 40.6% |
| Homeless (All) | 33.4% | 27.6% | 23.1% | 21.8% | 21.0% | 19.6% | 11.6% |
| **Gender** | | | | | | | |
| Female | 32.8% | 25.5% | 23.0% | 23.0% | 22.5% | 20.7% | 10.7% |
| Male | 34.0% | 29.7% | 23.3% | 20.6% | 19.6% | 18.5% | 12.4% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | | | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 24.7% | 19.1% | 7.6% | 6.8% | 8.8% | 7.0% | 7.7% |
| Asian | 53.2% | 50.9% | 50.0% | 38.9% | 38.1% | 40.7% | 31.5% |
| Black/African American | 25.9% | 12.6% | 15.0% | 12.1% | 14.1% | 13.7% | 8.8% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 27.6% | 22.4% | 19.9% | 18.3% | 16.0% | 16.0% | 7.7% |
| White | 40.4% | 36.7% | 27.6% | 27.1% | 27.5% | 25.3% | 13.5% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 21.9% | 15.6% | 15.9% | 19.7% | 15.9% | 12.1% | 4.7% |
| Two or more | 36.1% | 25.7% | 26.3% | 24.6% | 22.8% | 17.7% | 15.2% |
| **Student Groups** | | | | | | | |
| English Learner | 20.2% | 12.6% | 8.5% | 4.7% | 5.5% | 7.8% | 3.3% |
| Low-Income | 33.3% | 27.5% | 22.9% | 21.9% | 21.0% | 19.4% | 11.9% |
| Migrant | 29.9% | 20.3% | 16.5% | 11.8% | 13.4% | 19.3% | 10.5% |
| Special Education | 14.2% | 10.2% | 5.9% | 4.7% | 3.3% | 4.9% | 1.9% |
| Section 504 | 28.4% | 25.3% | 26.0% | 23.6% | 23.1% | 21.3% | 8.3% |

**Source:** 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

**Table 7: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in Science by Student Group**

| Student Group | Grade Level | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **5th** | **8th** | **11th** |
| Statewide | 55.1% | 52.9% | 30.3% |
| Homeless (All) | 31.3% | 27.4% | 14.7% |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Female | 30.5% | 26.3% | 14.1% |
| Male | 32.0% | 28.4% | 15.4% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 18.5% | 11.5% | 13.0% |
| Asian | 56.1% | 40.0% | 20.5% |
| Black/African American | 18.7% | 18.9% | 7.8% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 23.5% | 18.8% | 10.5% |
| White | 41.5% | 37.5% | 19.3% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 15.9% | 9.1% | 9.2% |
| Two or more | 36.8% | 35.0% | 16.5% |
| **Student Groups** | | | |
| English Learner | 8.7% | 7.7% | 2.9% |
| Low-Income | 31.0% | 27.3% | 14.8% |
| Migrant | 13.7% | 16.4% | 8.7% |
| Special Education | 11.1% | 9.2% | 3.6% |
| Section 504 | 35.6% | 35.6% | 17.8% |

**Source:** 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

**Table 8: Homeless Student Performance on the English Language Proficiency Assessment**

| Student Group | % Proficient | % Progressing | % Emerging |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statewide | 13.8% | 73.4% | 10.4% |
| Homeless (All) | 7.6% | 67.7% | 20.6% |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Female | 8.8% | 68.2% | 18.7% |
| Male | 6.5% | 67.2% | 22.3% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 6.0% | 83.7% | 11.2% |
| Asian | 13.3% | 63.1% | 18.9% |
| Black/African American | 7.7% | 64.1% | 22.7% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 7.3% | 67.1% | 21.8% |
| White | 10.9% | 64.7% | 20.6% |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 4.3% | 74.3% | 16.4% |
| Two or more | 10.2% | 75.7% | 13.0% |
| **Student Groups** | | | |
| English Learner | 7.6% | 66.7% | 21.3% |
| Low-Income | 7.6% | 68.1% | 20.4% |
| Migrant | 7.5% | 69.0% | 20.1% |
| Special Education | 2.0% | 74.8% | 15.6% |
| Section 504 | 8.9% | 67.9% | 19.6% |

**Source:** 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

**Table 9: Homeless Student Graduation Rates, 4-Year Adjusted Cohort, Class of 2018**

| Student Group | Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | Cohort Dropout Rate | Continuing Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statewide | 80.9% | 11.2% | 8.0% |
| Homeless (All) | 55.5% | 28.3% | 16.2% |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Male | 49.8% | 32.6% | 17.6% |
| Female | 60.8% | 24.2% | 14.9% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 43..4% | 41.4% | 15.2% |
| Asian | 73.7% | 10.6% | 15.6% |
| Black/African American | 59.3% | 21.5% | 19.2% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 54.7% | 30.3% | 14.9% |
| White | 54.2% | 29.4% | 16.4% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 57.9% | 29.0% | 13.1% |
| Two or more | 57.7% | 24.8% | 17.5% |
| **Student Groups** | | | |
| English Learner | 50.2% | 32.9% | 16.9% |
| Low-Income | 55.8% | 28.0% | 16.2% |
| Migrant | 55.8% | 32.3% | 11.9% |
| Special Education | 46.5% | 30.4% | 23.1% |
| 504 Plan | 51.0% | 31.9% | 17.1% |

**Source:** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2018 graduation data.

## Table 10: Homeless Student Graduation Rates, 5-Year Adjusted Cohort, Class of 2017

| Student Group | Adjusted 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate | Cohort Dropout Rate | Continuing Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statewide | 82.7% | 13.9% | 3.4% |
| Homeless (All) | 58.9% | 33.6% | 7.5% |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Male | 53.6% | 37.9% | 8.4% |
| Female | 65.3% | 27.5% | 7.2% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 46.0% | 44.5% | 9.5% |
| Asian | 66.9% | 22.0% | 11.0% |
| Black/African American | 59.8% | 30.2% | 10.0% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 60.0% | 31.2% | 8.8% |
| White | 59.6% | 33.6% | 6.8% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 74.7% | 17.6% | 7.7% |
| Two or more | 61.1% | 33.4% | 5.5% |
| **Student Groups** | | | |
| English Learner | 57.5% | 33.3% | 9.3% |
| Low-Income | 59.8% | 32.4% | 7.7% |
| Migrant | 62.9% | 27.5% | 9.6% |
| Special Education | 53.4% | 34.5% | 12.2% |
| 504 Plan | 56.5% | 34.2% | 9.3% |

**Source:** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2018 graduation data.

## Homeless Student Absenteeism and Behavior

### Table 11: Homeless Student Absenteeism and Truancy by Student Group

| Student Group | Number of Students Chronically Absent* | Percent of Students Chronically Absent | Number of Students Truant** | Percent of Students Truant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Statewide | 161,965 | 15.4% | 80,854 | 7.7% |
| Homeless (All) | 12,033 | 36.2% | 8,504 | 25.6% |
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Female | 6,060 | 36.5% | 4,261 | 25.6% |
| Male | 5,973 | 36.0% | 4,243 | 25.6% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | | | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 489 | 49.5% | 381 | 38.6% |
| Asian | 241 | 28.4% | 199 | 23.4% |
| Black/African American | 1,370 | 36.1% | 1,173 | 30.9% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 3,437 | 33.0% | 2,496 | 23.5% |
| White | 4,825 | 37.0% | 3,087 | 23.7% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 335 | 41.5% | 230 | 28.5% |
| Two or more | 1,334 | 40.6% | 937 | 28.5% |
| **Student Group** | | | | |
| English Learner | 1,531 | 26.5% | 1,151 | 19.9% |
| Low-Income | 11,637 | 36.6% | 8,165 | 25.7% |
| Migrant | 422 | 25.7% | 265 | 16.2% |
| Special Education | 2,914 | 41.2% | 1,965 | 27.8% |
| 504 Plan | 513 | 46.8% | 298 | 27.2% |

**Source:** CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

* Students with 18 or more full-day absences (excused or unexcused).

** Students with either five or more full-day unexcused absences in any continuous 30-calendar-day period or students who have 10 or more full-day unexcused absences in the school year. Truancy rates are based on reported absences, not whether or not a truancy petition was filed.

## Table 12: Homeless Student Suspensions and Expulsions by Student Group

| Student Group | # of Students that were Suspended or Expelled* | % of Students that were Suspended or Expelled |
|---|---|---|
| Statewide | 45,522 | 3.8% |
| Homeless (All) | 3,937 | 9.8% |
| **Gender** | | |
| Female | 1,181 | 5.9% |
| Male | 2,757 | 13.6% |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 160 | 12.1% |
| Asian | 37 | 3.7% |
| Black/African American | 608 | 12.8% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 1,023 | 7.9% |
| White | 1,587 | 9.8% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 94 | 8.9% |
| Two or more | 464 | 10.4% |
| **Student Groups** | | |
| English Learner | 449 | 6.4% |
| Low-Income | 3,830 | 9.5% |
| Migrant | 163 | 7.8% |
| Special Education | 1,365 | 15.6% |
| 504 Plan | 185 | 15.2% |

**Source:** CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

*Students that received one or more of the following: short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion.*

**Chris Reykdal** • State Superintendent
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building • P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200