Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Safety Net Survey

2024

Authorizing Legislation: RCW 28A.150.392

Dr. Tania May
Assistant Superintendent of Special Education

Prepared by:

- **Amber O'Donnell**, Safety Net Administrative Program Specialist 2
  amber.odonnell@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6075
- **Sarah Kahne**, Safety Net Administrative Program Specialist 1
  sarah.kahne@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6075

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Safety Net funding is available to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate need for additional special education funding. Applicants must show need beyond state and federal funding already available to the LEA.

The Legislature requires OSPI to annually survey LEAs about their satisfaction with the Safety Net process. The survey is used to consider feedback from LEAs to improve the Safety Net process. More than 440 people from LEAs that applied for Safety Net received the survey in October 2024. The survey included 12 questions and was open for two weeks. OSPI received 110 responses.

BACKGROUND

There are two types of Safety Net funding, High-Need Individual and Community Impact. High-Need funding is on behalf of an individual student. Community Impact funding is for a factor that impacts the LEA. OSPI provides a bulletin, instructions, and application forms each school year.

Funding Awarded by the Committee

5,981 High-Need Individual applications totaling $210,422,986

Eighteen (18) Community Impact applications totaling $9,925,852

OSPI provided training to seven ESDs prior to the initial 2023–24 submission date. OSPI hosted two general trainings and recorded two training videos (one general overview and one walkthrough of the application platform). Eight mini-tutorial videos on specific aspects of the application platform were also provided. OSPI provided more than 150 scheduled one-on-one Zoom meetings and 38 office hours during the submission process.

The Safety Net Oversight Committee awards funding to applicants. The Committee has awarded more than one billion dollars since the program's beginning in 1996–97. In 2023–24, the Committee awarded funding to 145 LEAs. These LEAs included:

- School districts
- An Educational Service Agency (ESA)
- Four charter schools
- Two state schools

Ten of the 155 LEAs that applied did not receive Safety Net funding. Nine LEAs were not funded due to lack of demonstrated capacity on Worksheet A. One LEA was not funded due to cost calculation errors on the student application.

UPDATE STATUS

Respondents rated eight of the 12 questions on a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest and five the highest. Depending on the question, the lowest response was either 'not helpful' or 'disagree.' The highest response was either 'helpful' or 'agree.' 'Not applicable' was an available selection for eight of the questions. One question was a yes/no answer, and four questions were open ended. Survey responses were anonymous.

Survey Changes

There were no changes to the survey this year.

Survey Responses

The average response decreased slightly on several questions. Five of the eight questions had an average response above 4.0.

In the written comments, respondents said the process could be improved by:

- Streamlining the application process;
- Improving the application platform;
- Providing more feedback when applications are not funded;
- Removing barriers for small and medium sized LEAs.

Table 1: Average Response by Question

Question	Average Response
Q1. The 2023–24 Safety Net Bulletin—which outlined the process changes, application criteria, and submission deadlines—was clear.	4.17
Q3. The training provided by OSPI for the 2023–24 safety net process was helpful.	3.94
Q4. The safety net website includes information that is helpful to my LEA in the safety net application process.	3.79
Q5. OSPI staff members are helpful to my LEA in the safety net application process.	4.52
Q7. The safety net committee carefully considers my LEA's requests for safety net funding.	4.41
Q8. Although I may not always agree with the results, I was informed why my safety net applications were or were not funded.	4.48
Q10. My LEA's IEPs have improved as a result of the safety net process.	3.71
Q11. Although I may not always agree with the results, I believe the safety net standards are uniformly applied to all LEAs.	4.09

Source: **2023–24 Safety Net Survey results**

Follow-up from Workgroup Recommendations

House Bill 2242, Sec. 408 (2017) directed OSPI to review and make recommendations of possible adjustments to improve the Safety Net process. The study was performed by a Workgroup of 21 individuals who met multiple times during the 2017–18 school year. The Special Education Safety Net Study Report was submitted to the Legislature November 1, 2018.

The Workgroup recommended examining non-public agency (NPA) placement data as an area for further review. The table below contains data for out-of-district placements by placement type for the past three years. The data shows that the percentage of applications funded through Safety Net for out-of-district placements further decreased by 2.7 percent in 2023–24. This is likely due to the increase in the overall number of applications awarded. In 2023-24, there was a 24 percent increase in the number of applications awarded, while there was only an 8 percent increase in the number of applications awarded for an out-of-district placement.

Type of Placement	Total awarded for out of district placement	Number of Applications	Year	Percent of Applications
ESD program	$17,734,049	235	2023–24	3.9%
In state NPA	$57,767,147	592	2023–24	9.9%
Out-of-state NPA	$30,391,393	131	2023–24	2.2%
School district	$13,788,416	184	2023–24	3.1%
	$118,258,382	1,142	2023–24	19.1%
ESD program	$12,587,998	185	2022–23	3.8%
In state NPA	$44,752,644	550	2022–23	11.4%
Out-of-state NPA	$22,073,843	117	2022–23	2.4%
School district	$12,639,839	202	2022–23	4.2%
	$92,054,324	1,054	2022–23	21.8%
ESD program	$11,299,619	170	2021–22	4.4%
In state NPA	$34,721,358	468	2021–22	12.1%
Out-of-state NPA	$17,063,349	103	2021–22	2.7%
School district	$10,858,915	181	2021–22	4.7%
	$73,943,241	922	2021–22	23.9%

*Please note that the total awarded for the out-of-district placement types is the cost before threshold deduction. The cost before threshold is used as opposed to the award amount because applications may contain other costs and include more than one out-of-district placement location. The number of applications column may contain duplicate counts as a student may have attended more than one placement type during the school year.

Source: Safety Net Database

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

An application platform to provide a streamlined electronic submission process for applicants was developed and launched for the 2023–24 school year. OSPI expanded their training plan to incorporate both general overview training opportunities as well as more in-depth training on the application platform. In addition to 1:1 meetings with LEAs, OSPI offered Safety Net-specific office hours twice a week.

The Safety Net Bulletin and submission instructions are currently under development for the 2024–25 school year. OSPI continues to work with the application platform developer to provide improvements based on LEA feedback, develop additional training resources, and follow up with districts that have never applied for Safety Net.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

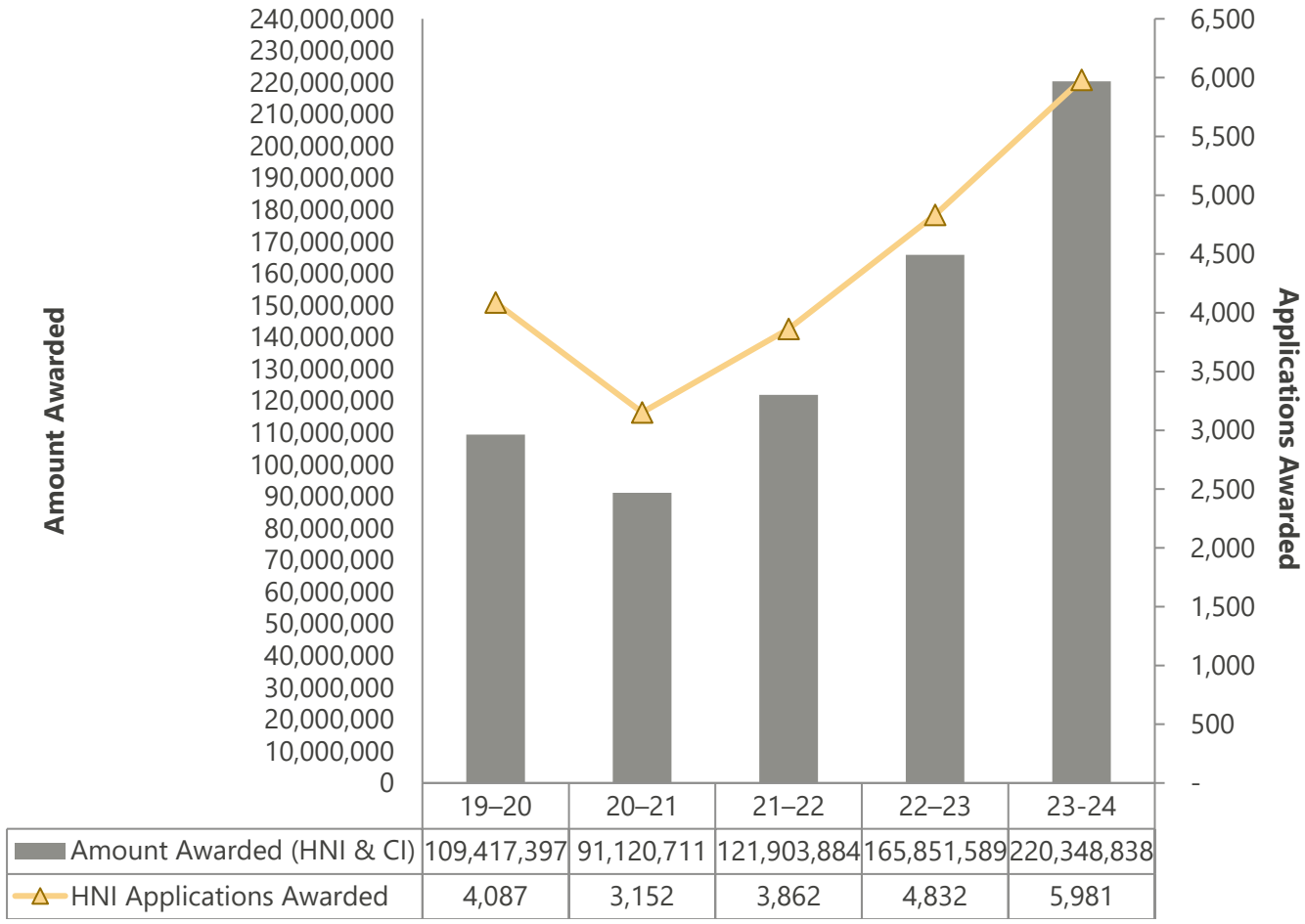
OSPI would like to acknowledge the effort and hard work that both applicants and committee members contribute to this process.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Safety Net Funding Amounts

In 2023–24, the State Safety Net Committee approved 145 LEAs for Safety Net funding. The committee awarded 5,981 High-Need Individual student applications, and 18 Community Impact applications for a total of $220,348,838 (see Figure 1).

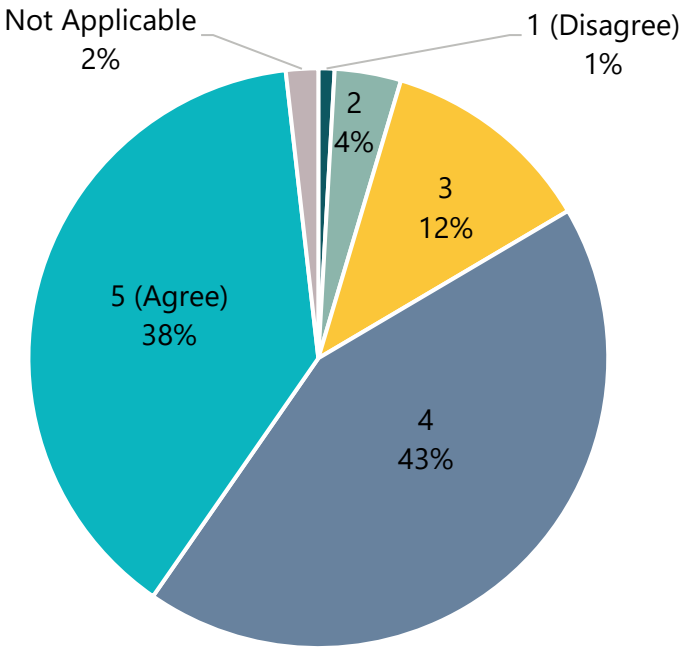
Figure 1: Safety Net Funding 2019–20 through 2023–24



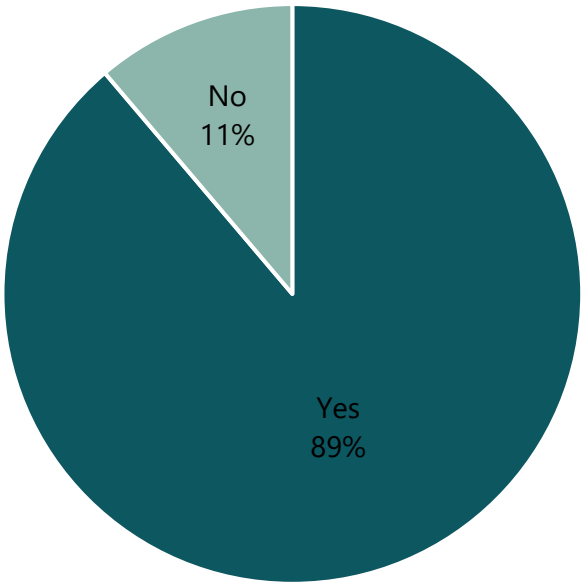
	19–20	20–21	21–22	22–23	23-24
Amount Awarded (HNI & CI)	109,417,397	91,120,711	121,903,884	165,851,589	220,348,838
HNI Applications Awarded	4,087	3,152	3,862	4,832	5,981

Appendix B: Safety Net Survey Results

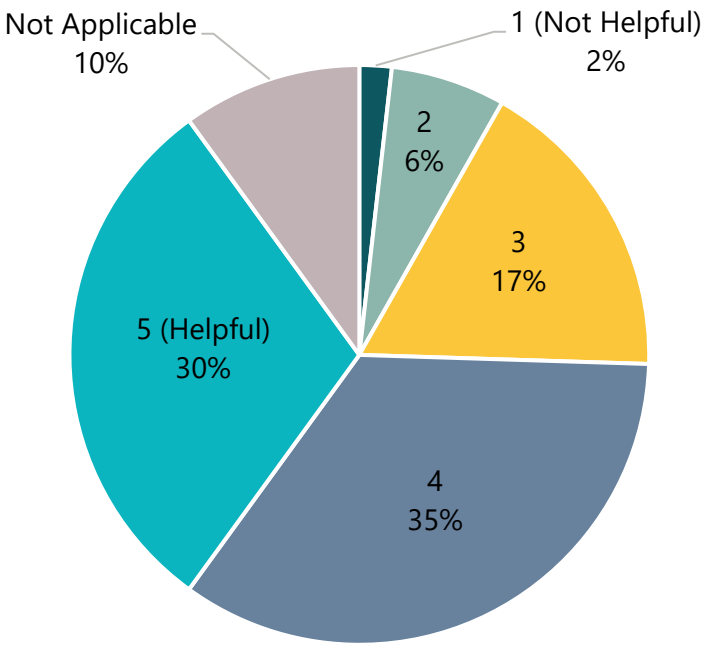
1. The 2023–24 Safety Net Bulletin—which outlined the process changes, application criteria, and submission deadlines—was clear.



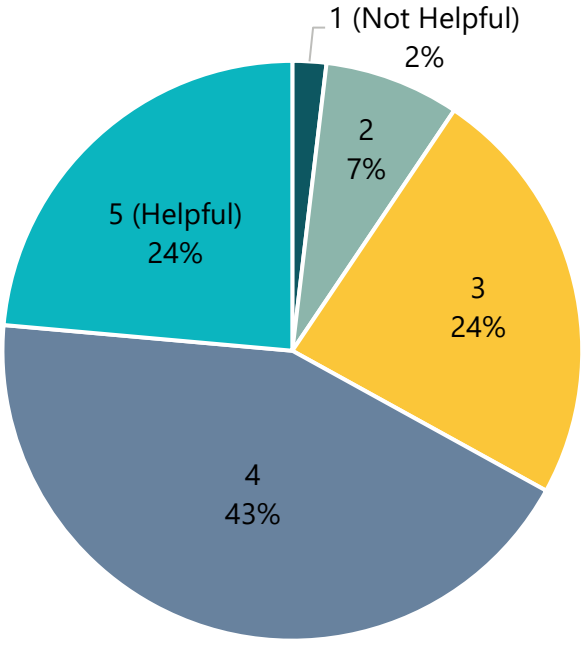
2. Did you utilize training provided by OSPI-such as in person trainings, Zoom meetings, webinars, or training videos-for the 2023–24 Safety Net process?



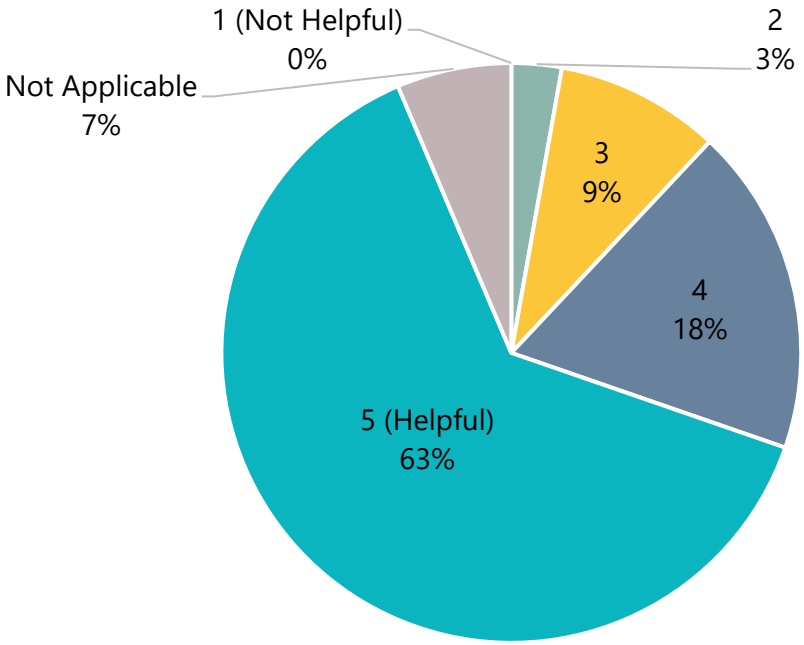
3. The training provided by OSPI for the 2023–24 Safety Net process was helpful.



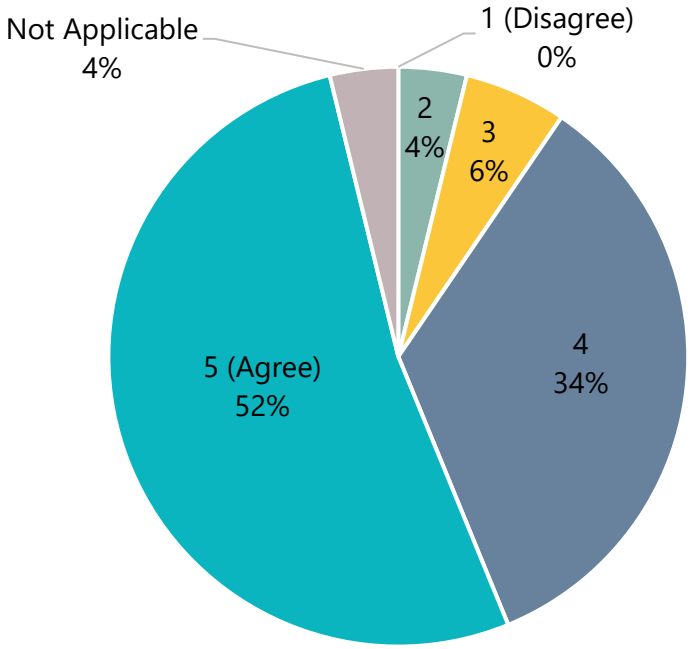
4. The Safety Net website includes information that is helpful to my LEA in the Safety Net application process.



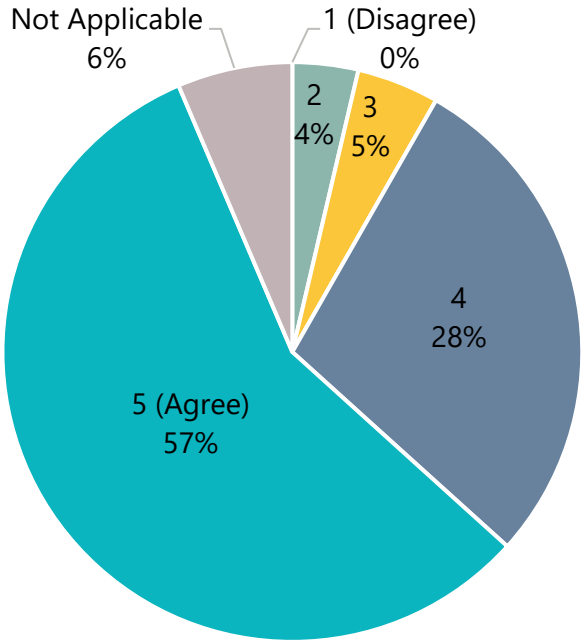
5. OSPI staff members are helpful to my LEA in the Safety Net application process.



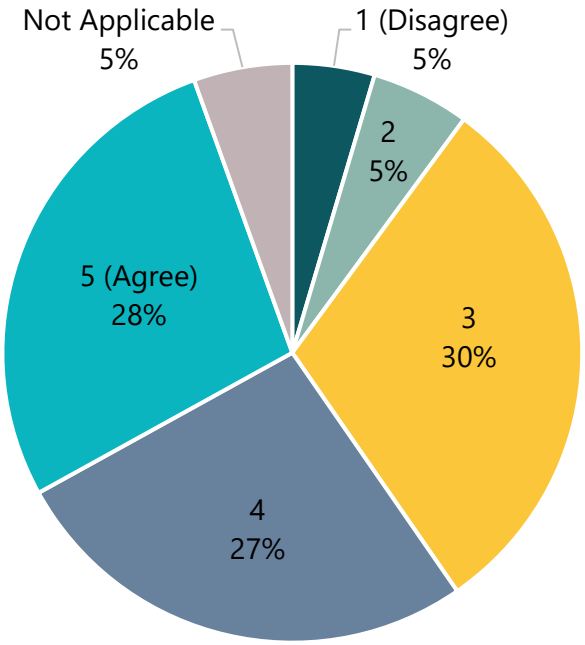
7. The Safety Net committee carefully considers my LEA's requests for Safety Net funding.



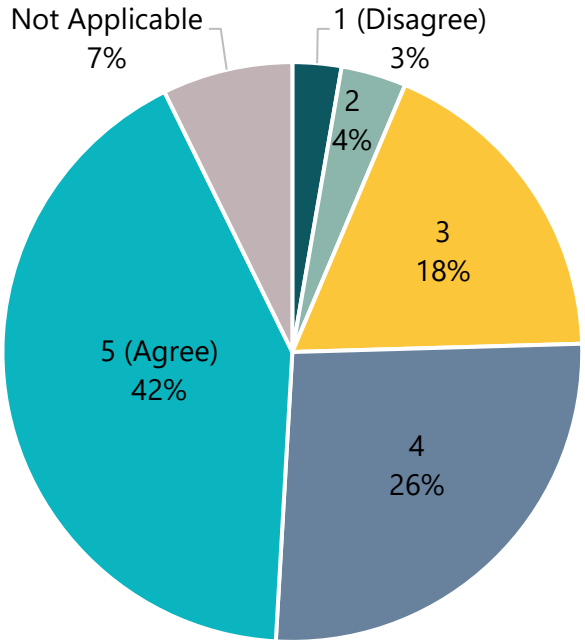
8. Although I may not always agree with the results, I was informed why my Safety Net applications were or were not funded.



10. My LEA's IEPs have improved as a result of the Safety Net process.



11. Although I may not always agree with the results, I believe the Safety Net standards are uniformly applied to all LEAs.



Appendix C: Safety Net Survey Comments

Table 3: Survey Question 6

Please provide an example for question 6.
Answered all emailed question promptly.
When I have specific questions they will offer to meet with me virtually to make sure they understand the questions and provide answers either then or soon thereafter.
We had our ESD Co-Op complete our application, so did not have any contact with OSPI staff on it.
They were quick in responding to emails, setting up zooms and guiding me through with step by step as needed. Sarah and Amber made this possible for me to complete!
Respond quickly, flexible
Responding to emails and returning phone calls
Responsive to email and phone calls and send out clear communication outlining deadlines etc.
OSPI Staff are helpful, but sometimes difficult to engage with unnecessary fox-tango-alpha information included. Additionally, feedback for adjustments is limited. It would be VERY helpful if we could have more detailed feedback in order to reduce errors in future submissions.
Very responsive and helpful when questions arise.
I am new and just learning this process. I spoke with some of the staff members and found their input helpful. I appreciate the zoom meetings and their patience.
OSPI support was very timely and helpful. Each time I had a question, I had appropriate follow up, typically within the same day.
This past year had challenges using EGMS. The OSPI team was very responsive when I had questions.
The OSPI staff, I usually talk to Amber, are always willing to answer questions about process, applications, and required information.
Calling regarding specific questions ie worksheet c.
During the weekly open hours sessions, staff were very willing to jump in a breakout room to help anyone. Many times staff would remain in the session just in case there was a need for support.
Anytime I have asked for support, everyone from SNET has been helpful.
Answered questions quickly and willing to help.
OSPI staff members were very helpful through the application process. This was our first time applying they answered questions and made an effort to reach out if they though we might not have totally understood something.
I did not do the application but I reviewed and signed off. Carol Snyder did our (application) and she was able to navigate and the EGMS help desk was very helpful.
Due to forms not included in EGMS, our award was severely impacted.
The email replies were often confusing and did not answer our questions.
Always willing to take a call or help out with a specific situation. We really appreciated the support.
Always answer my questions in a timely manner.
Availability to hold office hours, meet 1:1 and follow up emails were great!

Please provide an example for question 6.
I reached out about a question I had on my application, and I was able to get on Zoom with them within 48 hours. They stayed on with me until my question was answered.
I have emailed specific questions, and staff members respond within 24 hours with clear direction. I appreciate this so much!
Sarah and Amber are wonderful! Very supportive, helpful, responsive, and available when guidance/help/support was needed. Thank you!
Email questions are answered in a timely manner and staff are always willing to help. However, I have received guidance, followed that guidance and have had funding reduced because of following that guidance.
When we had a question specific to a student, Safety Net staff were able to help us navigate the documentation of the unique circumstance.
Team was responsive when questions were needed. Answers weren't always clear.
My questions were answered efficiently during office hours.
Amber O'Donnell answered my questions quickly.
Quick responses to email questions that I asked.
Always flexible to meet. Had great help.
They answer our questions and do a good job supporting during the spring application. However, I feel like it would be a 5 if some of the answers gave more technical direction.
I was able to utilize the office hours or Ms. Kahne's emails with quick responses.
Answered questions and supported the process.
Sarah always responded promptly for questions and offered guidance.
When asked specific questions, some staff are very helpful in reviewing applications.
Quick response rates and helpful solutions.
Available and responsive.
We have always gotten near immediate answers to questions.
They were available to answer questions for the person completing worksheet Cs.
Sometimes when we ask questions we receive courteous and helpful information. Sometimes the information is sent in a discourteous and dismissive manner. It continues to be an issue that OSPI folks rarely take phone calls.
Amber O'Donnell is amazing!!
Staff members took phone calls and set up zoom meetings whenever we reached out.
When the Safety Net staff can be reached they are very helpful. Emails are responded to fairly quickly, but it's very hard to have an in-person phone call.
When I had a zoom call with the staff helping with the Safety Net process they were knowledgeable and gave clear direction.
Amber was extremely responsive to our questions and so helpful in guiding a new team through the process.
Staff understands district needs and issues with the application process and provide support.
Sara K. is always prompt in responding to emails and answering questions.
Feedback from the previous year was implemented but each year we get different feedback.
They are always willing to walk through any questions and offer support and patience.
The team made themselves very available to answer questions and meet in zoom rooms. They were incredibly helpful.

Please provide an example for question 6.
The staff are extremely helpful and very responsive to any questions we may have. Also willing to hop on a zoom to support any issue.
We were able to (have) questions answered specific to our district.
I have one OSPI staff member that I reach out to and she is very responsive.
Sarah and Amber are incredibly responsive via email, and always willing to support with a phone call, Zoom, or screenshots!
Staff were responsive and readily available. The online office hours were very helpful, but we found staff were very willing to connect outside of those if needed. It felt very supportive.
They helped me understand how to put in the staff minutes.
Responses to individual questions and support, particularly from the administrative program specialist were very helpful, and appreciated. Support for how to address some of the EGMS challenges is still and ongoing issue. This is more about the program limitations in the sales force application, particularly around Worksheet C submissions.
They usually respond within 24 hours and work to help.
They provided guidance around deadlines as well as the ESY and transportation calculators.
They have been very responsive to all of our questions and wonderings.
The change to EGMS was hard but the office hours and support provided by this team helped exponentially as questions came up throughout the process.
Amber O'Donnell was helpful in that she double checked things that she saw in our application directly with me.
The team worked 1:1 with me to help me properly categorize expenses.
They are always available to answer any of my questions. They also created excel spreadsheets this year which were incredibly helpful.
They are always quick to respond to email questions!
I have an admin assistant that does the logistical work, and regularly attends office hours and seeks answers to questions.
Sarah helping with the spreadsheets was helpful.
Very responsive to emails and willing to help.
Quick and clear responses for any questions outside of office hours.
OSPI STAFF ARE VERY HELPFUL, BUT THE EGMS SYSTEM IS NOT USER-FRIENDLY AND, IN MY OPINION, MADE THE PROCESS A BIT MORE CHALLENGING.
I attended many of the Zoom drop-ins provided and everyone was patient, kind and helpful.
Whenever we had questions or concerns, the OSPI (team) have been responsive and helpful.
We had questions about potentially including refugees in our Community Impact application and Amber O'Donnell set up a zoom meeting with us to discuss our questions. She was very helpful.
I've had several questions answered by direct email over the years.
Each time I talk with my support person at OSPI they are patient and kind with helping me through the process.
Very responsive to several calls and emails. Timely and easy communication with
The OSPI staff was very responsive and supportive throughout the whole process. I can't say enough about how willing and ready they were to support.

Please provide an example for question 6.
I really found that office hours were incredibly helpful. I also found that staff were responsive (and) supportive and got back to me very quickly when I emailed questions. Staff support was excellent and I appreciate the one to one support the most.
I often email questions to the safety net team at OSPI and they always respond promptly with clear answers.
Answer questions in a timely and efficient manner
Always answer questions quickly
They were very responsive to every question I emailed to safety.net@k12.wa.us. EGMS bugs were either solved quickly or a workaround was developed in a timely manner.
An OSPI staff member helped several times with confusing EGMS revisions.
We reached out several times for clarification and received assistance.
My assistant completes the paperwork. I am now reviewing IEPs of students who may be Safety Net. My assistant participates in all of the OSPI webinars and instruction in the process.
OSPI's team responds promptly to email and voice messages.
Every email I sent was responded to promptly. There were several times that Amber or Sarah would hold a zoom meeting with me, with screen sharing, so I could show them what was going on, and they were always able to be helpful.
I have not consulted with OSPI, however our compliance secretary has, and I believe she has found OSPI guidance helpful.

Table 4: Survey Question 9

Please list helpful tools or supports that were available or provided to your LEA.
The bulletin is helpful as is the training and other supports from staff.
Feedback on worksheets and data entered. For example, the loss of a little amount because of an error or missing element. I was notified of the missing pieces and asked to provide it.
Clarification on unique situations is very helpful.
Communication is good and detailed.
The zoom meetings
The OSPI team is responsive when I email or call.
Awards letter and reasoning.
I appreciate how quickly they answer questions and provide solutions to potential issues.
Letter was clear.
The trainings that OSPI provided. Links on the webpage for safety net trainings in EGMS and all the Safety Net materials were helpful for someone new to the process.
EGMS help desk
The guidance was helpful and when I did something wrong, redirecting me back to the 'rules' was helpful.
I was given time with our business manager, I hired a consultant from the local ESD. I attended training provided by OSPI.
I have watched the webinars, read the directions and guidance. The EGMS site, which many actively dislike, I have found while clunky is adequate.
Anything that was unclear and/or missing, they reached out and provided an opportunity to make sure it was considered and submitted for consideration. This was very helpful.
The new EGMS system might prove to be a good tool in the future but currently is limiting and time consuming.
Annual bulletin, office hours.
NCESD provided a day for us to get together and work on our applications. They were able to answer questions and provide technical assistance.
EGMS is difficult to navigate and can be glitchy, but I was able to call the support lines and get assistance.
OSPI website; email
I was confused about why my HNI didn't get the full amount we requested.
The EGMS site is not user friendly at all-but the staff supporting the process are wonderful
Narratives within the report; also helpful to watch the zoom during reviews
Not applicable
The explanations were helpful and offered us insight for changes or areas to amend for future submissions.
I was able to provide reports to support our Supplemental Contracts figures for our capacity calculations. And, Amber O'Donnell always response in a timely manner to my e-mails.
The feedback was general and stated the reason, but did not always give the why for the reason. More concise feedback, and possibly a guide of how applications are reviewed and decisions made would be helpful for the LEA preparers.
Office hours. Local ESD support
The High Need Conditional Award Summary was very helpful!

Please list helpful tools or supports that were available or provided to your LEA.
Email communication and EGMS support is very helpful. During deadlines, response times are quick.
Responding to questions
Training, Esd commentary, ieponline support
Office hours, zoom rooms and videos
Trainings, Zooming with OSPI staff members, office hours about Safety Net.
Previously the list of codes for an IEP that had a compliance issue.
User manual for EGMS troubleshooting was valuable.
OSPI staff office hours, OSPI safety net staff individual supports, webinar trainings.
The training on the new system was not as helpful as we had hoped. We had to figure out a lot out on our own.
Office hours and Zoom meetings
There were some trainings offered by our ESD that were helpful.
The office hours were the best tool possible.
When I asked some questions about my funding, they got right back to me and sent me the information I needed to research further.
The EGMS video and the quick responses to emailed questions by Amber and Sarah were helpful.
Office hours, collaboration of other districts asking questions within those zoom calls.
The worksheets provided to upload information were helpful, as were the Zoom drop-in hours.
Office hours
Digital resources and direct communication have been helpful.
I used the ESDs information to complete the application.
The staff at OSPI
A lot of information was provided, even though we interpreted the IEP services differently, I wish program review experts from WISM were connected with the OSPI fiscal team when interpreting IEP services.
Office hours and recordings of trainings.
Upload doc for staff salaries in EGMS
Office hours. Quick responses to email questions. Follow-up on documents that were not opening properly. Explanations for funding decisions. Budget reconciliation support.
Countless EGMS support. Help on calculations of applicable FTE formulas.
I would likely need to take advantage of tools available, even though my assistant makes the applications.
The weekly office hours were super helpful.

Table 5: Survey Question 12

Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.
Get rid of EGMS, the system is convoluted, terrible to navigate, and does not align with the needs of safety net.
I understand that there is legislation and specific rules about the process, but the meetings where the committee reviews the recommendations could go much faster…
These funds should be given before to districts and not a reimbursement process. In our district, this was an extreme situation, and the OSPI staff, Amber and Sarah were very helpful. I couldn't imagine doing this for more than 2 students. The information collected and then inputted into EGMS would be at least a month's worth of work for 10 students.
The safety donut hole is a big fiscal problem for small LEAs. Not being able to recover between 200 and 240K is a challenge, and a lot of levy dollars go into special ed. Also, high cost high needs students that go to out of state or even in state NPAs need a different system. The applications should rollover, or those students should become the responsibility for the state. Too many of our local LEA human resources go into this process and it is a bit of a trap.
It would be VERY helpful if we could have more detailed feedback in order to reduce errors in future submissions. Larger LEAs have additional staffing and expertise in submission of safety net applications that median and smaller districts may not have. This is such a unique program. Completing it yearly is barely enough practice to build proficiency if the volume is small. THANK YOU!
I agree that they were uniformly applied BUT do not agree that they provide equity. In a small district where we struggle to have the training and time to do this while other schools have many people who are trained to do this work.
Our district submits lots of student applications and so we learn the muscle memory of where you need to go to enter all the information. It would be helpful if the screens moved from one to the next as you complete each section rather than having to search for the next section.
Although improved, there is still a compliance factor to this. It seems that funding should not be contingent on IEP development since there is a funding need regardless.
how would we be able to answer 7 &11...really?
The EGMS system is VERY complicated and most of the time we can not access the system.
Unfortunately there is a flaw in the system. For example, our district has a lot of students receive their services in an inclusionary manner provided by paraeducators but overseen and instruction planned by the sped teacher. This means that the sped teachers average direct service minutes are very low which skewed the total we could ask for a student and made it a very high $ number. We were denied that amount even though we were following the guidelines. It was frustrating to be denied the funding when in fact we were using the calculations provided by OSPI. I would hope this is fixed in the future so we don't continue to be denied the funding or given partial funding when we are in fact using OSPI provided calculations.
Thank you.
I would like to have more information on aligning costs to the IEP services.
Entering the information for students and staff is time consuming, but I understand the reasoning behind using this format. I hope that some of this information will roll over, but still anticipate a burden to input all the data.
EGMS is a nightmare - not just for grants but for safety net and WISM as well.

Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.
I struggle to answer with the uniform standards because I think that the threshold to meet SN requirements is too high. Or, that if it remains this high, that there is a weighted allocation to this. High poverty/small districts struggle with the funding capacity to serve the needs of our high cost IEPs, and the gap between the apportionment and the SN threshold is still a hardship to meet within our current budget constraints.
Improve the EGMS system and please keep track of guidance offered.
Better explanations of what was "wrong" with the IEP; the current explanations are 1-2 sentences per IEP. Easier ways to document extra costs, e.g. costs for support during extracurricular events that are not always held in set amounts of time. Acknowledgement of the true costs for hiring contracted staff to meet student needs; the job market is tough for special positions, and districts are absorbing the costs of doing business (travel time, mileage fees, minimum hours, etc.) in order to meet student needs--this is on top of absorbing the costs of the threshold for each student.
The system is difficult and duplicates work for staff
The duration and complexity of this process have severely impacted our students who are in desperate need of support. The extensive hours my staff and I have been dedicating to complete the application are not only draining but also seem to drain resources that could be better utilized to directly support our students. I believe we could significantly reduce costs for taxpayers while enhancing the support for our students if we could streamline and make the process more efficient. I urge you to consider reviewing the current system and exploring avenues for improvement that prioritize our students' needs.
Safety Net rewards cost inefficiency, districts that are cost efficient are at a disadvantage. Also, our district has put much effort into pursuing Medicaid billing but that hurts us on Schedule A, whereas a district that does not any or much effort to pursue Medicaid is in a better position to be approved for Safety Net.
Create a system that is user friendly (so far, EGMS is not that user friendly)
The threshold is really high especially for rural districts. We had several students that we considered applying for, however they were right at threshold. The process continues to be cumbersome and time-intensive.
Over the past 10 years I have experienced the intent of Safety Net changing. In the past, it was not a "gotcha". In recent years, it has become an extremely frustrating process. Every aspect of what we are submitting is scrutinized and dollars that were expended for a student are lost due to technicalities.
Better understanding of Charters in general- without bias
Thank you!
LEAs are essentially rewarded for more restrictive placements. If we are to send a student to an NPA the process for filing for safety net is terrifically easy, and for in-district placements with a collection of services, it's much more difficult. We had several qualifying kindergarten students who needed 1:1 or 2:1 paraeducator support in a very small classroom... and we hired a teacher to support them and get them as much general education support as possible. Once the students started spending the time in the general education environment and we properly documented it, we stopped getting funding for the teacher with safety net... had we kept them from the general education placement (more restrictive) we would get full funding. There needs to be a system of review where we can appeal situations like this where we're providing

Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.
access, and it still needs more staffing to implement. Please feel free to contact me for specifics. Robert Hascall; Stanwood-Camano; Executive Director of Special Services; rhascall@stanwood.wednet.edu. Thank you
I don't know
Although I appreciate the open meetings it is difficult to take the time from the workday to observe the deliberations.
The federal IDEA and Preschool grants are on a reimbursement basis. We will only have the revenues associated with the expenditures. However, Worksheet A forces us to claim all the revenues (the entire grant award) when we don't have the expenditures to match.
Please see previous 2 written answers.
More PD offered sooner in the process. Lessen the amount of documentation required.
It is a VERY time consuming process. With limited staff due to budget constraints and limited time due to the over-whelming amount of work all aspects of special education requires, we are limited more by the workload than by the compliance.
We paid over 1 million dollars in additional expenses to other districts last year for 11 students, our safety net was about $275,000. In small rural districts that don't have programs in their district, it can be a hardship.
It is a misnomer that if you have a student that is in day treatment or that if you have a student with 1:1 support that you get fully reimbursed. OSPI needs to communicate to district administrators (superintendents, principals, school boards) etc. that it is not necessarily the case of a full "refund".
Training teaching versus feedback
I feel we were working side by side with our OSPI support, keep up the access to support/OSPI staff for the LEAs.
There should be full funding and LEAs not required to go through this process. It is time consuming and costly.
I think as the EGMS continues to be utilized, the system will continue to be more streamlined.
We spend almost as much in safety net process submissions as we receive. As a reimbursement program, I truly believe there is a way to make the submission process less cumbersome and staff intensive on the LEA side. I am hopeful this will evolve as the legislative changes move forward related to uncoupling compliance and financial cost reimbursement of our high needs students. I also am hopeful that the ongoing advocacy around the percentage funding cap for students with IEPs removal will address the need for community impact funding processes.
Using EGMS made it a bit more cumbersome. Hopefully, this will get better with more practice. It may help to give better directions on who should get which permissions within the system. We ended up with only one person that could make changes. It was also a bit of an issue to have to use "work arounds" to complete the recently submitted budget.
Navigating the EGMS system has been complicated and often not user friendly.
Honestly, some of it is messaging. A lot of districts think that the application is impossible so they don't even try. One other suggestion is to tell us about the Safety Net decision Zooms more than one day in advance so that we can make sure we're available to watch.
To continue to be available for any questions. As stated earlier, the excel spreadsheets were very helpful this year. If they can think of any additional ways to make the application easier that would be beneficial.

Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.
Having a more streamlined application process would be helpful. The new EGMS system is very cumbersome and not user-friendly. Having to jump back and forth wastes a lot of time. Being able to see everything on 1 page, as we used to with the old excel Worksheet C format would be great.
The safety net application process is very complex, and I recognize the need for that complexity. However EGMS made it unnecessarily difficult. Navigating the tech tool itself should not be so cumbersome that it adds hours and cost to the work of sending in a submission.
In the first year using the EGMS system, there seemed to be many bugs and the system is not necessarily user friendly. In working with EGMS for the past year, I am becoming more used to it but it's not intuitive.
Safety net needs to be addressed all year long. Since OSPI receives the special education count broken down by LRE and location, they should be able to fund NPAs that students are attending. It is an extreme burden on districts less 3,000 FTE to front load and pay these expenses during the school year.
Include clearer and more concise directives for Medicaid, transportation, and community impact applications.
Anyway that the process could be made less time-consuming would be helpful. There are so many documents to upload, which takes a lot of time when we submit for so many students. More training on spreadsheets that other people use that potentially HR or another group could fill out would also be helpful to spread the workload for districts. Also, keeping as much information as possible in the system for the next year would also be very helpful.
To our knowledge, Safety Net applications have not been as equitably dispersed as necessary. We have heard that Safety Net should be much more accessible to all districts and we hope this is the case.
We are unable to claim many students with high cost because we are utilizing a rotating cast of substitute staff for 1:1 supports. There must be an alternative minimum cost we can reference in these situations where we are unable to tie services to an individual's salary.
I am not sure at this time
No EGMS. More training documents with hypothetical examples. I cam across a document explaining concurrent services a few years ago but not sure where it is housed. Would be nice to have FAQs and "tip sheets" available on the safety net website.
Removing reviewing IEPs for funding loss was good. Other examples of matrices for calculations (such as BCBA)
The changes made to the threshold this year and the coming changes to the award adjustments for mistakes are evidence to me that OSPI is listening to the feedback provided.
In my 45 years of public education, this application was one of the most difficult tasks I have ever completed. It took me three months to apply for just one student. It was hard to understand which items were going to be precalculated and which were not. Even though I was already experienced with EGMS, the process was nonetheless daunting. I had eight help desk sessions, of which OSPI helpers were miraculous. The legislature helped by passing the bill that addressed the high stakes of making a mistake on the safety net application. And, because small rural districts have so much outside need for special ed. contracting support, small budgets and high stakes just to stay in business, one factor-- safety net funding-- is critical. Thanking the legislature for higher special ed funding and for safety net. But, unforseeable

Please list additional ways in which you think the safety net process can be improved.
costs and unfunded mandates are putting our small school districts in danger of sustaining services. HELP!!!!!
I do not know if the standards are uniformly applied. It does seem as if it is very dependent on the individual's interpretation.
Some safety net IEP reviewers have a reputation for being much much much much much more particular than others.
I appreciate the safety net process, however, like many directors feel overwhelmed by the amount of work it takes to receive some expenditures back from the state. The Safety net process, as it stood last year and the years prior took a .5 administrator to review IEPs as well as at least a .5 FTE Office professional to complete the process. I appreciate the new parameters around the process, meaning less work on the administrator who oversees the process. The fact that it is focused on the "services" provided by the district that create a financial impact is more along the lines of intent of safety net, rather than focusing on compliance of the whole IEP itself. Thank you.

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