

June 13, 2025

# Ensuring Statutory Compliance in Running Start Income Verification

Adherence to [RCW 28A.600.310](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28a.600.310) and [2SHB 1973](https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1973-S2.SL.pdf?cite=2019%20c%20176%20s%202) – Use of RSEVF for Income Verification

Background

In 2019, the Washington State Legislature passed [2SHB 1973](https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1973-S2.SL.pdf?cite=2019%20c%20176%20s%202), amending [RCW 28A.600.310](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28a.600.310) to ensure equitable access to Running Start by simplifying the process for verifying students’ low-income status. The law authorizes the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to develop a centralized process for school districts to share this information with institutions of higher education.

Centralized Verification Process

In response, OSPI collaborated with SBCTC, the Council of Presidents (COP), and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to revise the [Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF)](https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2025-02/2025-26-rsevf-digital-signature.pdf). This form now includes a dedicated section to indicate a student’s low-income status, as verified by the high school counselor.

SBCTC Guidance

To ensure compliance with [RCW 28A.600.310](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28a.600.310), eliminate unnecessary barriers for students, and maintain consistency across Washington’s community and technical colleges, SBCTC issues the following directives:

1. Primary Documentation
   1. The Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF) must serve as the primary and sufficient documentation for determining a student’s low-income status for tuition and fee waivers, as well as funding for books and materials.
   2. Exception: If a student has already submitted other valid documentation confirming low-income status, that documentation may be used in place of the RSEVF.
2. No Additional Documentation
   1. Colleges must not request or require additional documentation from students unless there is clear, verifiable evidence that contradicts the information certified by the high school counselor on the RSEVF.
3. Streamlining Access
   1. Colleges may use internal processes such as vouchers or supplemental forms to subsidize fees, books and materials not covered under [RCW 28A.600.310](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28a.600.310). However:
      1. These tools must not require additional signatures from high school counselors or administrators.
      2. The goal is to facilitate access, not create new administrative burdens for students or school staff.
4. Limitations to FRPL Disclosure
   1. Recognizing that some districts’ Child Nutrition offices adhere more strictly to regulations governing the disclosure of FRPL information, colleges may contact school/district administrators or the Child Nutrition offices directly citing [RCW 28A.600.310(8)(b)(1)](https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28a.600.310) when FRPL eligibility is not available to school counselors. If school counselors are not able to access FRPL information for individual students, it is the responsibility of the district to provide documentation of FRPL-eligibility for all students enrolled in Running Start.

Policy Intent

This guidance reflects our shared commitment to a student-first approach—removing barriers, building trust in our K-12 partners, and ensuring equitable access to educational resources.