



Proposed Final Report

# Opportunity Scholarship and Opportunity Expansion Programs

**Legislative Auditor's Conclusion:** The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) complies with statute to provide scholarships to low- and middle-income students. WSOS can improve legislative reporting by coordinating with state agencies.

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December 2019



Legislature created **Opportunity Scholarship** and **Opportunity Expansion Programs** in 2011.

Also directed a JLARC review (*ESHB 2088*).

We reviewed both programs. Presentation will focus on Opportunity Scholarship.

# Opportunity Scholarship organization



# Opportunity Scholarship complies with statute and provides funds to students

- WSOS staff works with partners to administer the scholarship.
- Up to \$22,500 over five years.
- Scholarships to eligible students.  
*(Washington resident, below 125% MFI, pursuing bachelor's degree, approved major, 2.75 minimum GPA.)*
- \$175 million total received in private donations and dollar for dollar state match.

# WSOS has funded more than 10,000 Opportunity Scholars

\$64 Million

SCHOLARSHIP COSTS

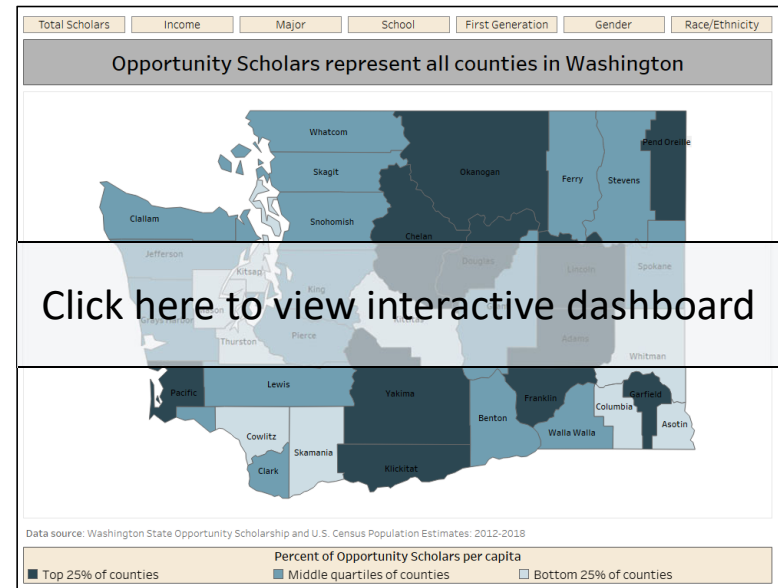
**21,000 Scholarships**

between academic years 2012-13 and  
2018-19.

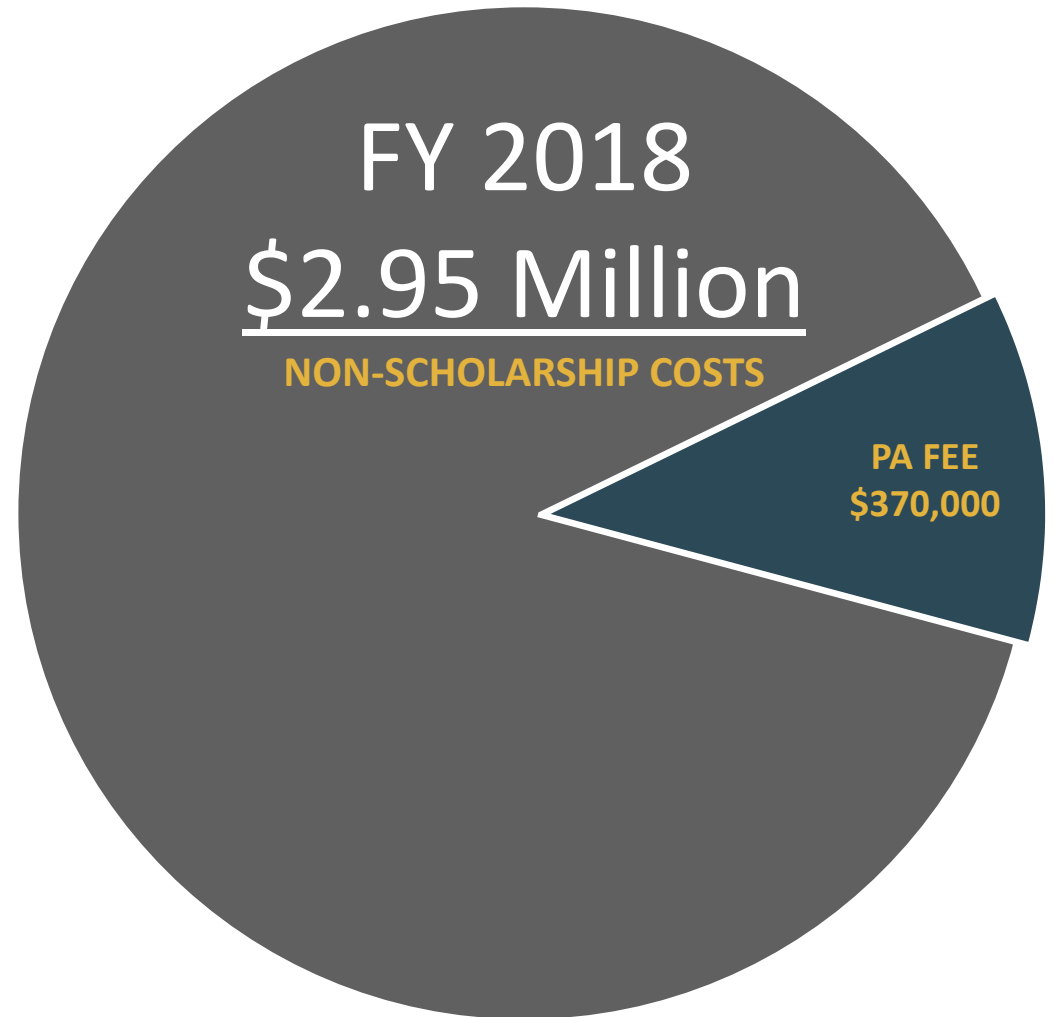
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SCHOLARSHIP COSTS

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**Reported  
program  
administration  
fee is only a  
portion of \$14  
million (FY13-19)  
spent on non-  
scholarship costs**



## Legislative Auditor Recommendation #1

WSOS should include its overall non-scholarship costs, including the total cost to administer the Opportunity Scholarship program, in its annual legislative report.

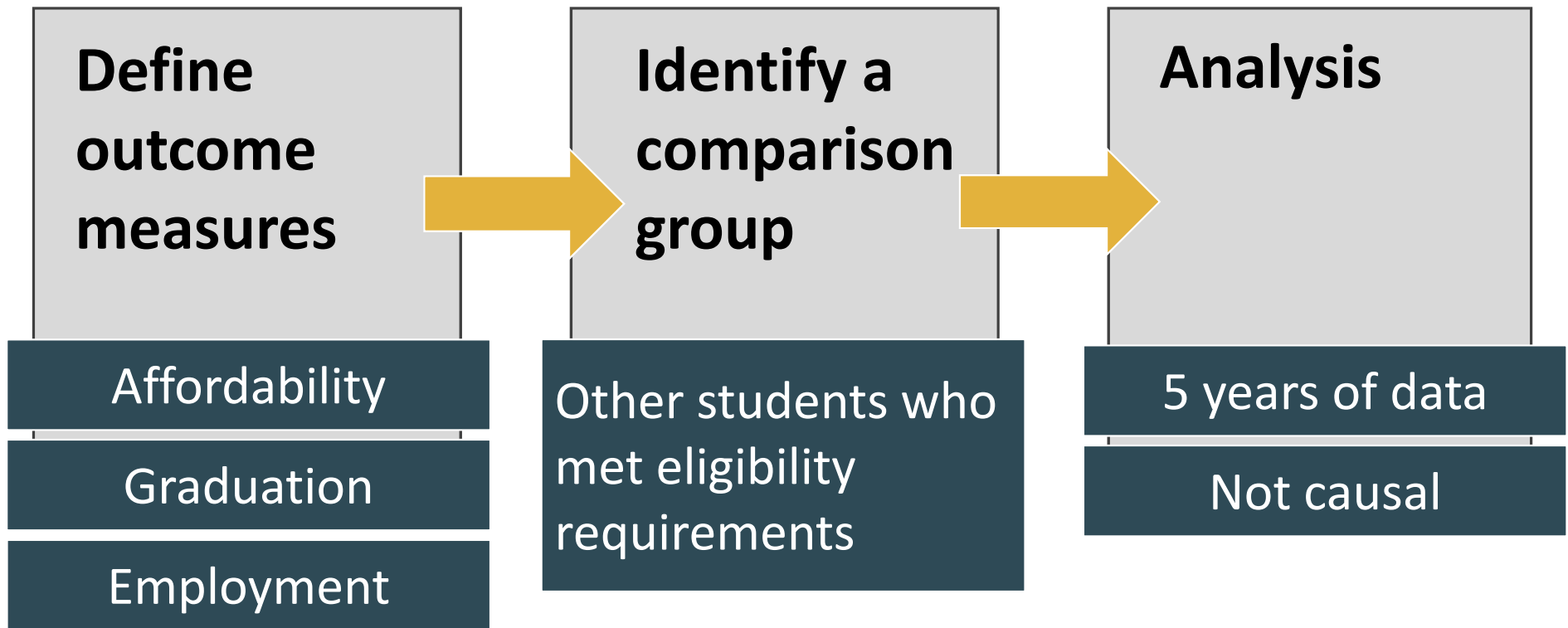
**WSOS and WSAC concur**



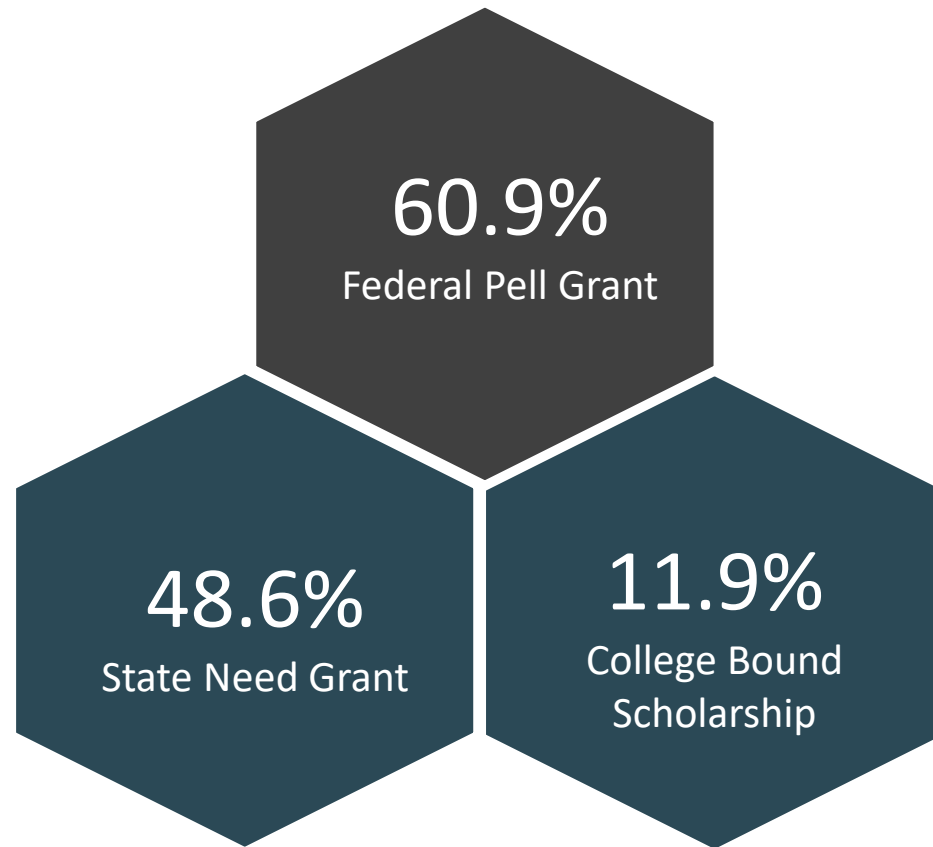
# Opportunity Scholar outcomes



# Process for analyzing outcomes for Opportunity Scholars

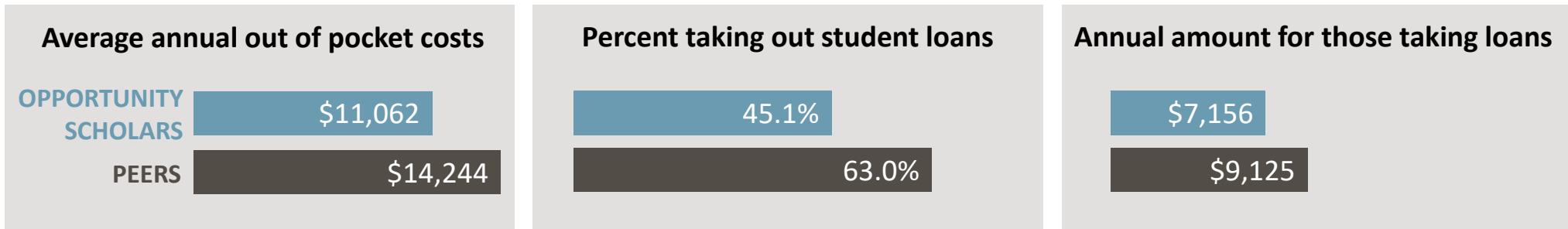


Opportunity  
Scholars also  
receive federal  
and state  
grants and  
scholarships



Data source: Office of Financial Management's Education Research and Data Center.

# Opportunity Scholars pay less out of pocket

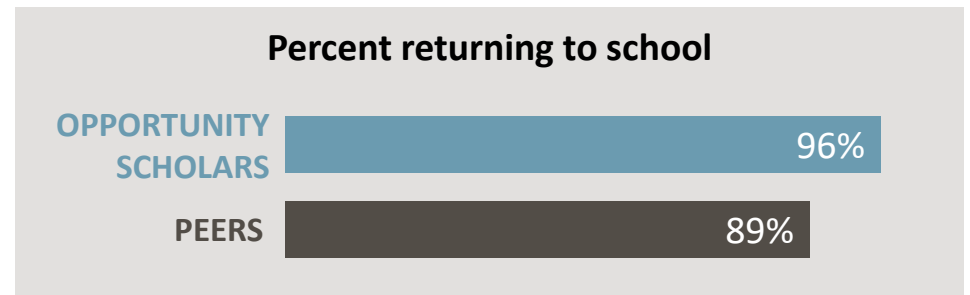


**Likely more affordable.**

Data source: Office of Financial Management's Education Research and Data Center.

# Opportunity Scholars return to school

Retention is the percentage of students returning to school in their second year.



**More likely to graduate.**

Data source: Office of Financial Management's Education Research and Data Center.

# Opportunity Scholars are employed in Washington

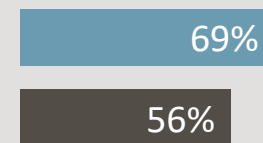
Percent employed in WA one year after graduation



Average annual wages for those employed full-time




Percent earning middle-income wages for those employed full-time



**More likely to earn middle-income wages.**

Data source: Office of Financial Management's Education Research and Data Center.



**WSOS does not have access to the financial aid or employment information state agencies collect.**

## Legislative Auditor Recommendation #2

WSOS should develop and implement a plan to coordinate with state agencies such as OFM's Education Research & Data Center (ERDC), the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), and the Employment Security Department (ESD) to provide additional information in its annual legislative reports.

**WSOS, WSAC, and ERDC  
concur**





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