



Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB)

Annual Legislative Report

December 2023

Washington Student Achievement Council



**WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL**
EDUCATION › OPPORTUNITY › RESULTS

Table of Contents

Annual Legislative Report	1
Acknowledgements	3
Introduction and Notice of Administrative Changes.....	4
Notice of Administrative Changes.....	4
Guiding Principles, Performance Accountability Metrics, and Recommendations	5
Guiding Principles	5
Performance Accountability Metrics	5
Recommendations.....	5
Summary of WEIA Investments: 2023–25 Biennium	7
2024 Meeting Schedule and Goals	9
Appendix A: 2023–24 Meeting Timeline.....	10

Acknowledgements

The Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB or “Board”) would like to thank all members and supporting staff for their efforts to advance the Board’s work in 2023. Current members include:

Washington State Legislature

- Sen. Emily Randall; Co-chair, WEIAOB; Chair, Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
- Rep. Vandana Slatter; Chair, House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Committee
- Sen. Jeff Holy; Ranking Member, Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
- Rep. Alex Ybarra; Ranking Member, House Postsecondary Education and Workforce Committee

Business Representatives

- Jane Broom; Co-chair, WEIAOB; Senior Director, Microsoft Philanthropies
- Dr. Steven Ashby; Director, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
- Charles Knutson; Senior Manager – Public Policy, Amazon
- *Note: Two seats for business representatives are currently vacant.*

Labor Representatives

- William (Bill) Lyne; President, United Faculty of Washington State
- Mark Riker; Executive Secretary, Washington State Building Construction and Trades Council

Higher Education and Workforce Development Representatives

- Ruben Flores; Executive Director, Council of Presidents
- Paul Francis; Executive Director, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
- Michael Meotti; Executive Director, Washington Student Achievement Council
- Eleni Papadakis; Executive Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- Dr. Theresa (Terri) Standish-Kuon; President and CEO, Independent Colleges of Washington
- *Note: Two seats for student representatives—one of whom must be from a community or technical college—are currently vacant.*

Introduction and Notice of Administrative Changes

The Board was established in 2019 through [E2SHB 2158](#) and is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Providing guidance and recommendations to the legislature on what workforce education priorities should be funded with the Workforce Education Investment Account (WEIA)
- Ensuring accountability that the workforce education investments funded with WEIA are producing the intended results and are effectively increasing student success and career readiness, such as by increasing retention, completion, and job placement rates

WEIA was also established in 2019 through E2SHB 2158 and is Washington’s first dedicated fund for higher education. As defined in [RCW 43.79.195](#), expenditures from WEIA may only be used for higher education programs, higher education operations, higher education compensation, and state-funded student aid programs. Additionally, expenditures from WEIA must be used to supplement, not supplant, other federal, state, and local funding for higher education.

The Board must submit an annual report to the legislature detailing its recommendations for workforce education priorities that should be funded with WEIA. More information about Board governance and operations can be found in [RCW 28B.77.310](#).

Notice of Administrative Changes

The passage of [ESB 5534](#) in 2023 transferred staff support responsibilities for the Board from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTB) to the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). This legislation also expanded the Board from 17 to 18 members by creating a new seat for a WTB representative and clarified that WTB would continue to maintain a public data dashboard for the Board.

WSAC hosted its first Board meeting on September 27, 2023. A timeline of 2023–24 meetings is included in Appendix A.

WEIAOB Website

All Board documents—including meeting materials, annual reports, and other publications about WEIA investments—can be found at <https://wsac.wa.gov/WEIAOB>.

Guiding Principles, Performance Accountability Metrics, and Recommendations

The Board approved a series of guiding principles and performance accountability metrics in 2021 to help shape annual recommendations for workforce education priorities that should be funded with WEIA. These include:

Guiding Principles

- Help achieve the goal that 70 percent of students in each cohort of Washington high school graduates complete a postsecondary credential
- Provide support for equitable educational access and economic outcomes for systemically underserved students
- Help Washington businesses fill the jobs of the future with qualified Washington students, including the current workforce
- Improve statewide systems and/or test innovative approaches that can be replicated across institutions

Performance Accountability Metrics

- Statewide Student Enrollment
- FAFSA / WASFA Completion in Grade 12 (and others)
- Washington College Grant-eligible Student Enrollment
- Postsecondary Completion Rate
- High School to Postsecondary Retention Rate
- Time to Degree
- Economic Outcomes

Recommendations

Based on these principles and metrics, the Board maintains the following recommendations and presents them to the legislature for consideration:

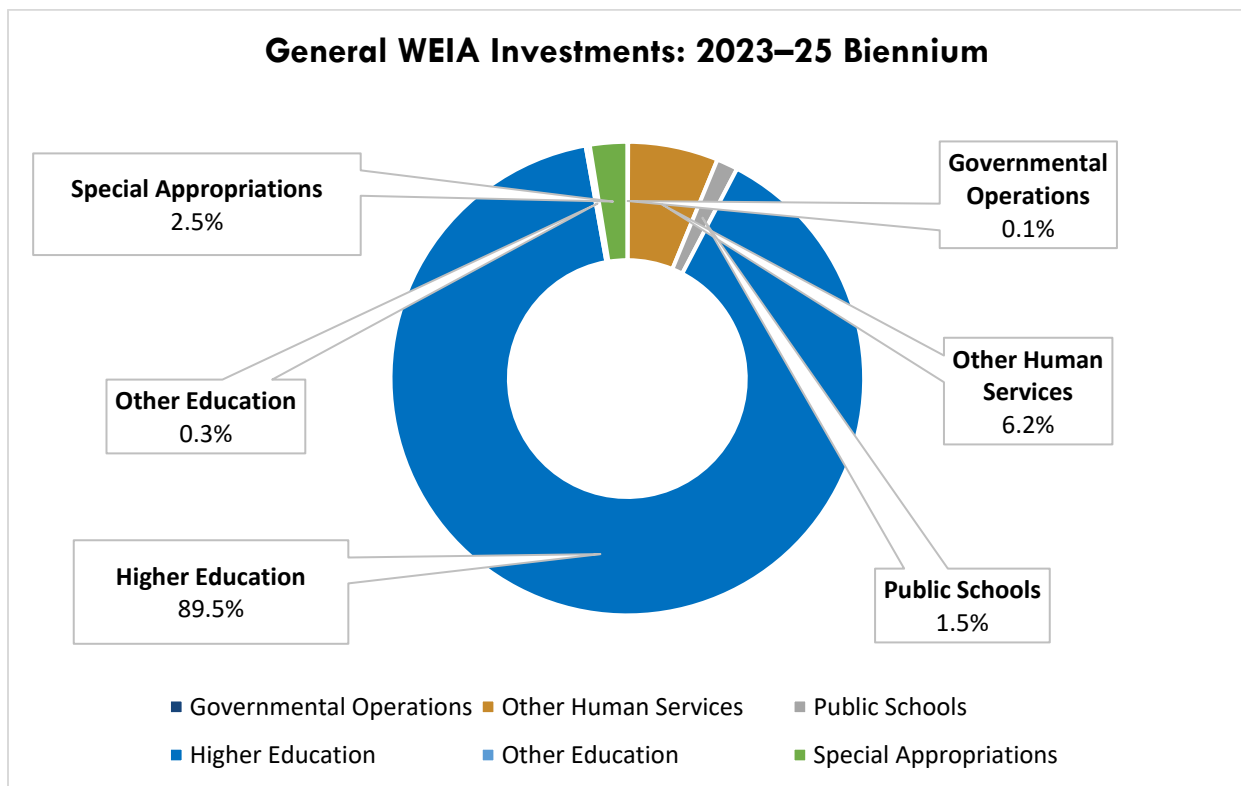
- **Fully fund policy requests that closely track to WEIA’s original intent and the Board’s principles to equitably increase the number of Washingtonians with high value credentials.** Specifically, the Board recommends that the legislature fund programs which:
 - Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to communities with traditionally low rates of matriculation;

- Increase the availability and accessibility of student retention, success, and support services;
 - Add capacity to current high-demand degree programs; and
 - Add new programs in technical, high-demand fields and occupations
- **Prioritize more WEIA resources on equitable high-tech degree production.** The Board recommends that the legislature specifically focuses resources from WEIA onto high-tech degree production—inclusive of occupations in healthcare, the skilled trades, and other sectors and occupations that require technical knowledge, skills, and credentials—to align with the legislature’s original intent and help address this critical access and equity gap.

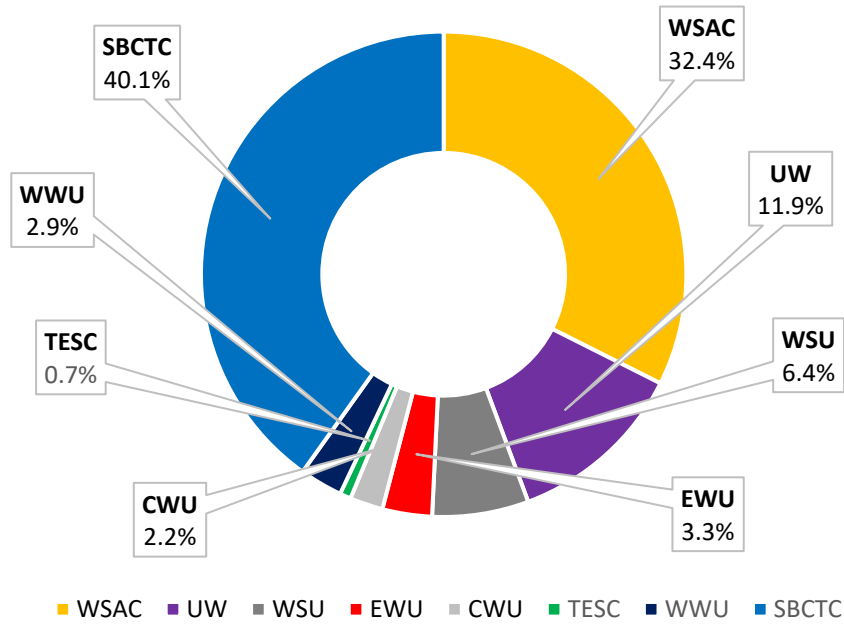
Summary of WEIA Investments: 2023–25 Biennium

The legislature’s 2023–25 biennial operating budget included nearly \$836.5 million in expenditures from WEIA overall, with close to \$748.7 million invested in the higher education sector. Meanwhile, the Economic Revenue and Forecast Council’s November 2023 revenue forecast projected nearly \$842.8 million in WEIA revenue during the 2023–25 biennium. Some of the most significant WEIA investments are summarized below:

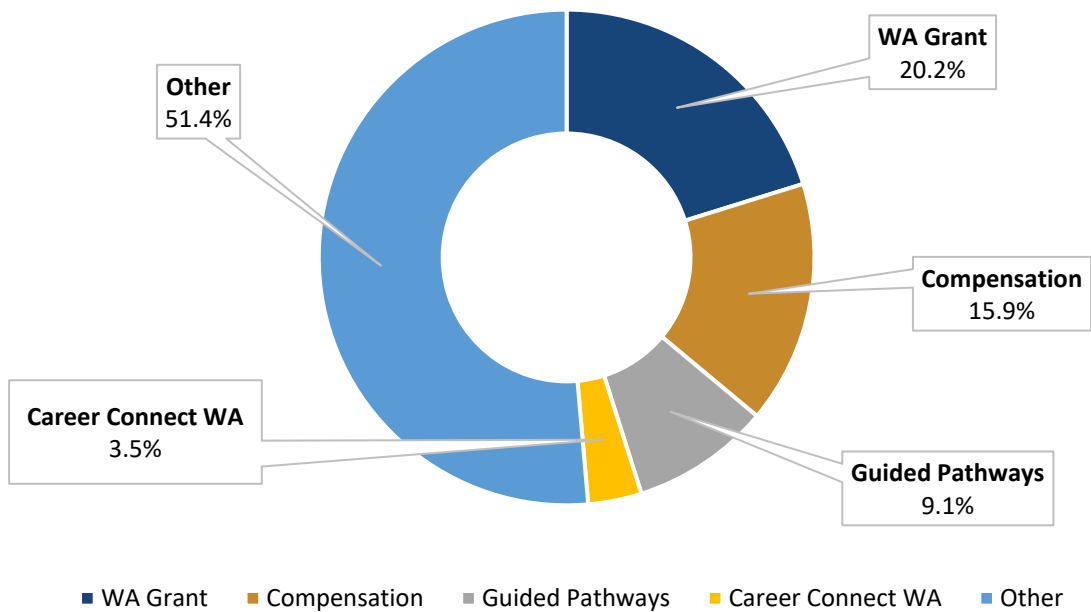
- **Washington College Grant Program (WA Grant):** \$169.0 million
- **Compensation:** \$132.6 million
- **Guided Pathways:** \$75.8 million
- **Career Connect WA:** \$29.2 million
- **Other:** \$429.9 million



Higher Education WEIA Investments: 2023–25 Biennium



Issue-Specific WEIA Investments: 2023–25 Biennium



2024 Meeting Schedule and Goals

During the Board meeting on September 27, 2023, a calendar of 2024 meeting months was approved. Since then, the following meeting dates in 2024 have been finalized:

- Thursday, January 4
- Thursday, April 25
- Thursday, June 20
- Wednesday, September 18

An outline of these dates and anticipated meeting topics is included in Appendix A.

The Board currently has four vacancies: two for business representatives and two for student representatives, one of whom must be from a community or technical college. Members of the Board and WSAC are collaborating to recruit candidates who may fill these vacancies in 2024.

To support the development of future recommendations for workforce education priorities that should be funded with WEIA, the Board intends to annually review legislative proposals that align with its guiding principles and performance accountability metrics from stakeholders within the higher education and workforce development sectors. Following further discussion, these proposals may be adopted by the Board to be included in recommendations to the legislature.

Additionally, the Board intends to annually review enacted biennial and supplemental operating budgets to ensure that funds from WEIA are being appropriately allocated toward workforce education priorities. This work may also include—but is not limited to—the annual review and discussion of WEIA revenues, expenditures, and ending balances as summarized by staff from WSAC; the annual review and discussion of reports from the Governor’s office, state agencies, and other public and private entities that include information on the outcomes of WEIA expenditures; and other related tasks.

Appendix A: 2023–24 Meeting Timeline

The following table outlines quarterly meeting dates and agenda topics for the Board through the end of the 2024 calendar year:

Meeting Date*	Agenda Topics
September 27, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review WEIA fund and 2023–25 operating budget • Discuss 2024 budget/policy proposals from stakeholders • Discuss and adopt recommendations to Governor’s office for 2024 • Adopt 2024 meeting timeline
January 4, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss remaining 2024 budget/policy proposals from stakeholders • Approve recommendations to legislature for 2024
April 25, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss results of 2024 legislative session and supplemental budget • Review new reports on WEIA fund investments
June 20, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review WEIA fund revenues/expenditures • Discuss Board strategy for FY2025
September 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss 2025 budget/policy proposals from stakeholders • Approve recommendations to Governor’s office for 2025 • Approve annual Board report • Adopt 2025 meeting timeline

**Specific dates for 2024 meetings were selected after the meeting on September 27, 2023, and added to Appendix A.*