

Fully fund State Need Grant

Reduce student debt and increase college graduation rates

FY 2019

\$83 million to support 21,000 more students

Fully funding State Need Grant (SNG) can help Washington address persistent opportunity gaps in K-12 and postsecondary education. Serving the 21,000 eligible-but-unserved students is an important step toward creating equitable access and support for all students in our higher education system.

State Need Grant is the foundation for improving college affordability.

With only partial funding, eligible students don't know if they will get a grant from year to year. Students should be able to estimate and plan how they'll pay for college in advance. Full funding for SNG will support a clear and stable path to graduation for all eligible students.

To meet the state's educational attainment goals, we must remove cost barriers where possible. Eligible students who don't receive a grant borrow more money, work more hours, and enroll in fewer classes—all of which are less conducive to academic success. SNG also serves as an important funding source for the College Bound Scholarship, which has increased high school graduation rates for low-income students to the same rate as the statewide average for several years. As Washington's K-12 graduates become more diverse and less affluent, SNG is a key component of any strategy to increase educational attainment.

SNG is critical to ensuring more working-age adults return to school and complete their program of study. The breadth and scope of SNG make it vital to adult reengagement; students can use funds for both certificate and degree programs, and they have the flexibility to attend part-time. To meet the state's attainment goals, we must reach students beyond traditional, recent high school graduates. Increasing

the college-going rate for returning adults can help improve Washington's stubbornly low postsecondary participation rate.

Fully funding State Need Grant would reduce student debt and increase graduation rates throughout our postsecondary education system.

Research shows that students who receive grants are more likely to earn a credential than otherwise-similar students. We anticipate an increase of 1,650 completions each year as a result of this funding. In addition, we should see lower debt loads at graduation. Over time, the growth in graduation rate and total awards would lead to increased overall attainment statewide.



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