The background of the cover is a light green color with a faint, stylized illustration of a person standing at a crossroads. The person is positioned in the center, facing away from the viewer, looking down at the paths that branch out in four directions. The paths are depicted as glowing, curved lines that create a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a focus on the central theme of choice and action.

***Critical Crossroads: A Call for Action***

**The 2012 Strategic Action Plan for  
Educational Attainment**

**December 2012**

**Washington Student  
Achievement Council**

# Washington Student Achievement Council

## ***About the Council and this Report***

The Washington Student Achievement Council was created by the Washington Legislature in 2012. The Council consists of nine members: five citizens, including one college student, and four members representing the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Council of Presidents of the public four-year institutions, and the Independent Colleges of Washington.

Among its many duties, the Council has the primary assignment to prepare a “Ten-Year Roadmap” for achieving the goal of increasing the state’s educational attainment level. The first step in developing the Roadmap is to prepare a Strategic Action Plan, which identifies the key challenges and priorities to be addressed in the Roadmap.

That first step, the Strategic Action Plan, is this report—“***Critical Crossroads: A Call for Action.***” This report was submitted to the Governor and Legislature in December 2012. It identifies five key challenge areas that will be addressed in the Ten-Year Roadmap, which is due to the Governor and Legislature by December 1, 2013.

Underlying this Action Plan is the Council’s recognition that all of the Council’s work must convey the importance of creating and sustaining a culture of both opportunity and expectations regarding education; that all of us—in and out of the education establishment—need to reinforce the notion that achievement, graduation, and hard work are expected of our students and all parts of our education system. And that our educators, elected officials, and taxpayers need to be ready and willing to do their part to help those students succeed.

# Critical Crossroads: A Call for Action

## Introduction

If all of Washington's families and businesses—and in particular its sons and daughters—are to compete successfully in an emerging information-based global economy, then Washington must urgently make sweeping reforms and improvements to its education system. If changes are not made, we face the serious risk to our economy and democracy of creating two Washingtons—not divided by the Cascades or political parties—but based on educational achievement.

To realize our state's potential and avoid the risks of inaction, we must acknowledge that: (1) large numbers of current students are failing to meet requisite standards for the new economy and lack access to the training and education they will need; (2) we cannot presently fulfill the growing demands by our employers for a skilled workforce from among our graduates; (3) demographic and economic forces have produced significant education and employment gaps, particularly for Washingtonians of color and, if no changes are made, these gaps will likely become greater over time; and (4) perhaps most problematic of all, we lack a strategic, coordinated, and comprehensive plan to address these growing challenges.

This "Action Plan" acknowledges the extraordinary efforts made by educators and administrators every day in a variety of institutional settings to provide education throughout Washington. But, well-meaning efforts of so many people in this state have not produced the needed outcomes. This Action Plan does not begin with the premise that any one component of the education system has failed or that the needs of any one sector are more important than the needs of others. Indeed, there have been notable successes at various institutions and within various parts of our educational system that deserve our recognition. We should view the successes of our students with great pride.

This plan recognizes, however, that the realities of our economy, a growing population, and demographic patterns require new levels of collaboration, integration, and focus within our educational system as well as additional investment. We all have a shared responsibility for the educational attainment of our students, and we must ensure that all of our residents have equitable access to education.

Washington took assertive action in the 1990's to build new state college campuses. And, in the following decade a concerted effort was undertaken to upgrade and expand our older campuses. We now must address other barriers and obstacles to access and recognize that, if we are successful in doing so, we will need to increase the capacity of our system (physical, technological, and programmatic) to serve a growing number of students.

This report is a first step in addressing what is clearly emerging as a crisis and, in the coming months, we intend to use this report to initiate a broad public discussion. The report is an Action Plan. Its purpose is to identify the obstacles that need to be addressed and present a plan to complete, by December 2013, a comprehensive "road-map" for achieving and sustaining a viable, accountable, and effective education system.

**Our Record of Performance.** Too many of our students enter kindergarten unprepared to learn, drop out of high school before graduation, graduate without the skills to enter the marketplace, seek higher education unprepared for the rigors of college, fail to earn a degree, or graduate without the competencies to succeed in our increasingly sophisticated economy.

**The New Economy.** Washington touts its proximity to Asia and that it is home to a collection of cutting edge 21<sup>st</sup> century companies competing at the highest levels of the global economy. Our

**14,817** = the number of Washington public school students who started ninth grade in 2006 but dropped out by 2011 (18% of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class).

**17,800** = the number of international workers provided H1-B visas to fill jobs in Washington because local talent was not available in 2010.

employers tell us that they must be able to hire employees who have 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. If our residents do not have the requisite skills, our employers will move or expand company divisions elsewhere, continue to rely heavily on workers trained in other states or nations, or they will fail. And if that happens, our residents will not have access to good paying jobs and stable employment.

**Our Growing Disparity.** Our economy is beginning to mirror the national economy where social mobility has faltered and educational attainment suited to the new economy will project either economic success or economic struggle. This harsh reality threatens our social fabric and its burdens fall disproportionately on those who are now struggling, whose families do not have a history of higher education, and who come to school unprepared and unsupported at home.

Demographic patterns suggest that this punishing reality of higher expectations and enormous obstacles to achievement will only grow. More and more of our student age population is coming from groups who have

been historically under-represented in postsecondary education—and over-represented in the number of students who drop out of high school.

**The Need for Planning.** General Eisenhower once said that “Plans are worthless, but planning is indispensable.” Plans are static and immediately outdated, but planning is a way of thinking about our future that is invaluable as we make decisions about priorities and resources. Despite the extraordinary efforts of so many—in our classrooms, in our legislature, and in our communities—our education system is an aggregation of separate institutions and sectors lacking a comprehensive, integrated approach to addressing these issues. The answers are found in both traditional and non-traditional learning opportunities, as offered by private and public entities—from early learning through post-graduate education. We need to begin with a commitment to shared responsibility for the success of all of our students and an understanding how each part of the system can contribute to that end.

**492%** = the growth of the Hispanic high school age population from 1986 to 2010.

Hispanics are now **16%** of the 15-19 year-old population but are only **8%** of postsecondary enrollment.

This Action Plan is an important first step. It does not assume that additional funding is needed to begin addressing this challenge, though adequate and sustained investment both in the aggregate and in its strategic allocation is undoubtedly necessary. Rather, this Action Plan focuses on what can be done now to start the development of a long-term Roadmap to align our education system and increase its capacity to meet increased demand.

The Council has identified five critical obstacles to student achievement and levers for fundamental change:

1. Readiness
2. Affordability
3. Institutional Capacity and Student Success
4. Capturing the Potential of Technology
5. Stable and Accountable Funding

This report does not focus exclusively on what resources and changes are needed at our institutions of higher education, for it is our fundamental belief that the challenges we face in educational attainment, especially at the postsecondary level, cannot be addressed by the higher education sector alone. This report will focus on the nature and scope of the obstacles to higher student achievement and also provide examples of current efforts to address these priority areas.

It then presents a framework and work plan for preparing, over the next twelve months, a Ten-Year Roadmap for exploring these obstacles and identifying various opportunities that can lead to change. This roadmap will be presented to the Governor and Legislature in December 2013.

Appendices at the end of this report provide detailed information about Washington's education landscape, including a description of the various state entities that have education oversight responsibility and data about student demographics and enrollment.

## Levers for Change

### Challenge 1: Readiness

Student readiness is the foundation of educational success. Preparation for successful learning is not only about a student's acquisition of learning skills and competencies, it also is about a student's belief in the value of education and that he or she can succeed. Our discussion of student readiness focuses on what barriers to preparedness exist within the education sectors and what is being done and needs to be done to address those barriers.

#### *Early Learning*

We begin by recognizing that perhaps the biggest barriers to preparing for a successful education are those which many children face before they even enter kindergarten. Accessible pre-natal health, adequate nutrition and wellness, and stable and supportive family environments are important foundations for student success.

*Nearly 1/5 (18%) of our state's children live in families whose income is below the poverty level.*

The Washington Department of Early Learning was created in 2006 as the first cabinet-level agency to focus on the learning needs of the "Pre-K" population. The department is engaged in many important efforts that will lead to education success. One important example is a new partnership program between the Department of Early Learning and the state's community and technical colleges. This partnership has created online early childhood education classes with pooled enrollments through WashingtonOnline (WAOL). The colleges worked together to establish common criteria for recognizing community based organization-provided training (CBO) for credit towards early childhood education credentials.

The Council recognizes that our four-year institutions do not have a responsibility for direct intervention in this area, though they do provide related academic programs for educators and health professionals. The Council is interested in knowing how the public and independent institutions could expand their participation in partnership efforts to address this challenge.

To assist the Council in preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap, we call upon the Department of Early Learning to work with our community and technical colleges, the OSPI, and the public and independent four-year universities to assess and share with the Council how the needs of the Pre-K population have implications for K-20 learning and how higher education could contribute to addressing this barrier.

### ***Opportunities Lost in the K-20 Pipeline***

The fastest growth in the state’s younger population is among groups that traditionally have not been well served by our education system. Establishing a “college and career readiness culture” among these groups is essential to maintaining Washington as a vital place to live and work.

Too many students either fail to complete high school or fail to continue to postsecondary education after they graduate from high school. Overall, 18 percent of all public school 9<sup>th</sup> graders drop out of high school without graduating, but some groups of students are more likely to drop out than others. Students with limited English skills, students from migrant families, and American Indian students have dropout rates between 30 and 37 percent. Students who are Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black, or come from low income families have dropout rates between 26 and 29 percent.

**26% to 37%** = the percentage of students of color and from lower income families who drop out of high school.

**30%** = the percentage of all high school graduates who do not enroll in higher education within five years after leaving high school.

For those who do graduate from high school, making the transition to college presents yet another challenge and some groups of students are less likely to enroll than others. Overall, 30 percent of all high school graduates do not enroll in a postsecondary institution within five years of graduation.

Those less likely to enroll include students who are Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, or low income. Over 46 percent of these groups of students do not enroll. Proximity to a postsecondary institution may influence college going behaviors among high school students as well.

The Council believes that early outreach and support is essential to curb the above losses. Currently, many public and private organizations in Washington are working collaboratively to enhance student preparation and college access. Such organizations employ a diverse set of approaches to address this critical challenge.

One promising effort has been the College Bound Scholarship program for low income 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This program guarantees a scholarship to those students who enroll in the program, graduate from high school in good standing, and matriculate to institutions of higher education. In 2008, 57 percent (15,863) of all low-income students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade enrolled in the program. By 2012, that increased to 77 percent (24,688).

As part of our work plan to develop the Ten-Year Roadmap, we will ask the K-12 and higher education sectors in consultation with private organizations to propose an integrated strategy for sustaining and expanding effective outreach and support programs for vulnerable students.

### *Aligning High School Graduation Requirements and College Admission Standards*

Currently, high school graduation requirements do not align fully with college admission standards. This is a critical barrier for the very students who are motivated to attend and succeed in college. They **must know** early in their educational path what courses they need to take in middle and high school in order to be admitted to college. Those who succeed in meeting these requirements should have a place in our system of higher education.

Some important work is underway in this area. For example:

- The alignment of high school graduation requirements for both math and English with college admission requirements is nearing completion.
- Common Core State Standards for all high schools have been developed and will be fully implemented along with a new assessment system by 2015.
- Participation in dual credit programs is increasing. Students participating in these programs earn high school and college credits at the same time. There are currently 60,300 high school students who are completing college courses while in high school.

**52%** = the percentage of 2008 high school graduates who **did not** complete the minimum courses required for admission to a public baccalaureate institution in Washington.

Our work plan for preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap will include a review and assessment of what actions are being taken and need to be taken to address the challenges of alignment. This assessment will also include a determination of what sustaining mechanisms will be needed to ensure ongoing alignment of high school graduation and college admission and transfer requirements.

### ***Remedial Education***

Many students entering college do not have the level of preparation necessary for success. Nearly three-fifths of students entering community colleges from high school require at least one remedial course, usually in math. This diverts limited higher education resources to high school level teaching; lengthens the time and cost to graduation; and leads to higher education inefficiency and lower attainment rates.

*3/5 = the proportion of high school graduates who need remedial coursework at our community and technical colleges.*

With scarce resources, our community and technical colleges have undertaken meritorious efforts to assist in providing remedial education. Our state's four-year institutions are also allocating scarce resources to address this barrier. However, these good efforts are mitigations; they do not fix the problem.

The recent Supreme Court ("McCleary") decision requiring the state to fully fund K-12 basic education provides a unique opportunity for demonstrable reductions in the need for remedial education.

Our work plan for preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap will ask the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education to advise the Council on how full funding of Basic Education will result in less need for remedial education following graduation.

### **Challenge 2: Affordability**

American public higher education is founded on the principle of shared responsibility. Over time, public policy and law recognized that public higher education was to be accessible to all people and, that to make it so some people would need assistance in paying their share of college tuition.

*"The expenses of the universities are defrayed partly by the public, and partly by the individuals profiting of them."*

— Thomas Jefferson, 1823

As a result, at the national and state level, student financial aid programs were created. These programs were not designed to control or reduce the **cost** of college education. Rather, they were designed to provide financial aid to needy students to help **pay** the students' share or price of college.

In Washington, students qualify for state financial aid (State Need Grant) if their family income is 70 percent or less than the state's median income: eligibility is \$57,500 or less for a family of four.

Washington is recognized as a leading "high-aid" state. Our state's elected officials have continually demonstrated their commitment to helping lower-income students attend college. Since 2000, the Legislature has increased total State Need Grant funding by 240 percent (based on **constant** dollars). At the same time, tuition revenue at our state's public institutions of higher education grew (in constant 2000 dollars) by **151 percent**.

However, because of demographic changes in our state, record numbers of students enrolling in higher education are financially needy. The number of financial aid applications has increased significantly (exceeding 500,000) in Washington for 2011-12, a **61 percent increase** over the past four years.

This level of increased demand and the concurrent increases in college tuition have exceeded the capacity of financial aid funding, despite the significant increases in that funding cited above. As a result, the State Need Grant program has experienced record numbers of eligible students unable to receive the grant due to limited funding.

In 2011-12, nearly 32,000 eligible **students** did not receive the grant, which represents 30 percent of the total eligible population. These students work more, take fewer classes, incur greater debt and drop out more often than their peers who do receive a grant. In addition, other aid programs have been impacted by the state budget.

State Work Study was significantly reduced, by 66 percent, and several other merit and workforce aid programs were completely suspended. It is important to emphasize that the above data do not show the number of people who did not apply for college admission because of the unavailability of financial aid.

Compounding this problem is the reality that the barrier of higher education affordability is no longer limited to lower-income families. The rising cost of tuition, particularly at public universities and colleges, is exceeding the resources of many middle-class families.

There are many activities underway concerning college affordability in Washington:

- As mentioned earlier, the number of seventh and eighth graders enrolling in the **College Bound Scholarship Program** for low income seventh and eighth graders is increasing.
- **An evaluation of current State Need Grant policies**, which is being conducted by Council staff, will be linked with the results of a student outcomes study being conducted by the Washington Institute for Public Policy. Upon the integration of these two studies, information and recommendations will be made to the Legislature about how limited financial aid dollars can be best spent.
- **A study concerning the feasibility of creating a Higher Education Loan Program** is currently underway. The study, assigned to the Council by the Legislature, involves the participation of higher education representatives, state finance experts, and independent financial consultants.
- **An information and counseling website for financial aid recipients** providing links to financial support opportunities was assigned to the Council and is under development.

These activities are important because they will help ensure that limited dollars are spent effectively and that students will have access to information about available financial aid resources. However, these efforts do not offer a different way of addressing college *affordability*.

*In 2000, annual tuition and fees at our public four-year institutions was about 5% of the state's median income for a family of four.*

*By 2012 it had more than doubled to 11%.*

As discussed earlier, the conventional approach to college affordability has been to subsidize the price of attending college by providing those in need with financial assistance. In the conventional model, student **price** (tuition) is held as a constant and financial aid is directed toward that expense.

This model works well when: (1) public college tuition increases at a fairly predictable rate—paralleling overall inflation and increases in personal and family incomes; (2) the number and proportion of students needing financial aid is relatively constant; and (3) the state has sufficient resources to mitigate increases in cost for those in need.

None of these three conditions now exist. Specifically: (1) tuition, as discussed above, has increased dramatically, much more than the rate of inflation and growth in personal and family incomes; (2) the number and proportion of students needing financial aid has grown dramatically; and (3) the lack of the same state resources that led to the steep rise in tuition also limits the ability of the state to adequately mitigate the price of attending college. Clearly, a new paradigm to complement the traditional model is needed. The Council will review the current model of financial aid and explore options to address affordability.

In addition to examining ways to help students and their families pay the price of higher education, we must also look at the cost drivers of providing that education as more students enter and move through the entire course of higher education. This is a challenging inquiry since there has been considerable concern expressed that our teachers, faculty and administrators are not adequately compensated. To address the issues of cost, we will need to address the efficiency and efficacy of our education system and ask difficult questions about the traditional manner in which education is provided. We address some of these issues later in this report in the section titled “Stable and Accountable Funding.”

In preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap, the Council will examine ways to reduce the price of education to students and their families. The Council will explore feasible strategies to reduce the amount or cost of course credits students need to purchase at the institution at which they will graduate by honoring course credits earned in high school, on-line, or through work experience.

### **Challenge 3: Institutional Capacity and Student Success**

Washington has been very successful in educating and graduating those students **who enroll** in college. During the 2009-10 academic year, Washington was first among all 50 states in the efficient production of baccalaureate degrees among students already enrolled in college. An undergraduate who attends one of Washington’s four-year public colleges or universities has an excellent chance of successfully completing his or her studies and receiving a baccalaureate degree.

More than 70 percent of the students who access higher education in Washington do so first at a community or technical college (CTC). Nearly one-third of students who enrolled in community and technical colleges intend to transfer and complete a bachelor’s degree.

*In 2009-10, Washington ranked 1<sup>st</sup> nationally in the efficiency of four-year degree production, but . . .*

... Washington ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> of the fifty states in baccalaureate degree production and 36<sup>th</sup> in graduate degree production.

Washington also is very efficient in graduating students enrolled in graduate and professional programs. Among all 50 states, Washington ranked fifth in 2009-10 in graduating students who are enrolled in graduate and professional degree programs.

But, despite comparatively high completion rates among those who enter our institutions, Washington still lags the nation in overall degree production. Washington ranks 42nd in baccalaureate degree production and 36th in graduate and professional degree production.

We need to increase capacity because too many eligible Washington students currently do not have access to postsecondary education and, if we are successful in addressing achievement at the high school level, we will actually increase competition for limited spaces. The challenge of adequate capacity is exacerbated by the desire to attract students who will pay premium rates. While there are good educational and fiscal reasons to attract foreign students, our first priority must be to find spaces for qualified Washington students, particularly in high-demand fields.

In earlier sections of this report we identified strategies to address challenges faced by our state's K-12 and traditional college-age population in the areas of readiness and college affordability. However, raising our state's level of educational attainment will also require meeting the educational needs of older residents, whether they are first-time or returning students. Currently, Washington ranks below the national average in the enrollment of 25 to 49 year olds as a percentage of its total population in that age group.

The Council is also concerned with recent media attention to national reports contending that many students graduate from college without core academic skills. The Council will seek to understand the implications, if any, of these issues to Washington.

In its work plan for preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap, the Council will investigate the development of measurable targets and milestone dates for meeting the challenge of increased demand for postsecondary education; including the greater participation of returning adults. As part of that review, the Council will explore how prior and concurrent learning credit should be recognized by the higher education institutions.

As part of the Ten-Year Roadmap, the Council will ask our public and private institutions of higher education to describe how they assess the skills, knowledge, and experience students will need to succeed after graduation. This discussion should address how curricula and other learning opportunities include courses and other experiences that will develop the requisite skills and, importantly, how these skills will be evaluated and assessed prior to graduation.

## Challenge 4: Capturing the Potential of Technology

The availability and use of information technology for providing education is widely recognized. Our state's educational institutions have for many years been using evolving e-Learning technologies as part of their instructional programs. For example, Washington's community and technical college fall quarter online enrollment grew from 373 FTE students in 1998 to 20,025 FTE students in 2011, and e-Learning now accounts for 31,684 FTE students in the CTC system.

The availability of e-Learning to provide education to people who live in remote areas, distant from a college, and to working adults also is widely recognized. Again, our state's colleges and universities have made many of **their** courses available to **their** students who are place-bound or who work full-time.

In addition to continuing technological changes, though, a new model for packaging online education has emerged. This model involves the "bundling" of instructional courses and programs developed by different academic entities and the "brokering" of this product by public or private entities to both students *and* institutions of higher education.

*20% = the percentage of CTC students who attend partially or completely online. The number is increasing.*

*318% = the increase in students enrolled in WGU Washington from fall 2011 to fall 2012.*

For example, Western Governor's University (WGU) Washington has experienced a dramatic increase in student participation. In 2011, WGU Washington enrollment was 895. It is now 3,750. And, recently, the University of Washington (UW) received a Gates Foundation grant to develop a Massive Online Open Courses program (MOOC). The program will be offered for the 2012-13 academic year. In addition to free courses offered to the general public, the UW was the first university in the U.S. to provide credit classes and certificate programs on the MOOC platform.

Elsewhere in the nation, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of California-Berkeley, and other institutions are offering MOOCs, which are available for free or for a small fee. However, very few MOOCs currently offer academic credit or lead to degrees.

The Council believes that online learning can play an important role in addressing the barriers of affordability and student readiness and that the WGU and MOOC models could be a primary vehicle to help address those barriers. The Council recognizes the need for institutions to integrate these learning products into their curriculum and to ensure that they offer quality content.

*The University of Washington will offer a "MOOC" program in 2013.*

*The cost to students will be about 40% less than traditional program enrollment.*

The Council has also heard concerns that on-line courses pose a competitive challenge to traditional bricks and mortar education, particularly if such institutions fail to adequately embrace the potential of this technology. In addition, the Council has a statutory responsibility and will play a role in ensuring consumer safeguards in this arena.

While we have much more to learn about the appropriate role of evolving information technology and its use in higher education, it is clear that the Ten-Year Roadmap will need to address its potential and risks in a strategic and comprehensive manner.

Our plan for preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap, the Council calls upon the SBCTC and the public and independent four-year institutions to inform the Council of efforts underway to integrate on-line learning and discuss the feasibility of and requirements for fully integrating online learning opportunities into each institution's instructional program. This assessment should include a discussion of how on-line learning could lower the students' cost of attendance and the cost of expanding system capacity.

### Challenge 5: Stable and Accountable Funding

The Supreme Court has directed the state Legislature to take immediate action, starting in the next state budget, to fully fund K-12 Basic Education. Current estimates are that the 2013-15 state budget will add about \$1 billion to the K-12 budget.

Unlike K-12, higher education is currently a “discretionary” area of the state's budget. This means that appropriations to higher education are not tied to either a constitutional or statutory mandate.

State funding of higher education comes mostly from the state's General Fund, which is dependent upon the state property tax, sales tax and other tax revenue. These sources of revenue, particularly excise taxes, are not *stable* in that downturns in the state's economy have dramatic impacts on the amount of tax revenue available to the state. Consequently, planning for higher education expansion and enhancement is difficult because the funding base is not predictable.

While the effort to ensure a sufficient and stable source of state revenue is ultimately a matter of public policy and choice, public higher education can and should develop a clear and defensible funding plan. This plan should include the three components of public higher education financing; state funding to institutions, student tuition, and financial aid, and be based on funding standards that reflect the need for academic quality and the efficient and accountable use of public resources.

Importantly, this plan will be used by the Council as it develops its biennial funding recommendations for the public higher education sector. These recommendations, which are a statutory mandate of the Council, will need to look at not only the “gaps” in current funding levels, but the additional resources which will be needed if we are successful in addressing the barriers discussed above.

*State appropriations to all public institutions have decreased by **28%** since FY 2000.*

*To mitigate the loss of state dollars, tuition revenue increased by **151%** since FY 2000.*

*Over the same time period, student (FTE) enrollment has increased by **23%**.*

*This decline in state funding and increase in enrollment has resulted in per-student state funding decreasing by **42%**.*

Specifically, we expect to have significantly more students over time ready and applying for admission to institutions of higher education. The Council's Ten-Year Roadmap must address the operating and capital investments which will be needed to enroll and educate these students. Our Ten-Year Roadmap must present a financially and educationally sound path to meeting the increasing educational needs of our growing population.

In addition to increasing instructional program capacity, we must also recognize the economic importance to Washington of the research mission of our research institutions. While much of the important research is funded by non-state dollars, the state must adequately fund the human and physical infrastructure needed to compete for research funding.

Our plan for preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap calls upon the SBCTC and the public four-year institutions to work with Council staff in developing, in coordination with the Office of Financial Management and legislative staff, a public higher education plan of financing.

This plan should address sustainable funding sources and defensible funding benchmarks which the Governor and Legislature will have confidence in when making resource allocation decisions.

## Preparing the Ten-Year Roadmap

In this “*Call for Action*,” we have identified *several tasks* that we intend to discuss with our colleagues throughout the education sector. We need to understand what efforts are underway and what will be needed going forward. These assessments need to be based on data and our plans must establish measurable goals that can be assessed and evaluated over time. The development of a Roadmap and its implementation will require an unprecedented level of collaboration and cooperation among various agencies. We look forward to that shared effort. The requests outlined in this Call for Action are summarized below.

Challenge Area	Planning Activity	Lead Partners	Time Frame
Student Readiness	Assess how the needs of the Pre-K population have implications on K-20 learning, and advise the Council on how higher education could contribute to addressing this barrier.	COP, ICW, SBCTC	May 2013
	Prepare an integrated strategy for sustaining and expanding effective outreach and support programs.	OSPI, COP, ICW, SBCTC	April 2013
	Determine the actions needed to fully align high school graduation and college admission requirements and identify what will be needed to sustain on-going alignment.	OSPI SBCTC COP	February 2013
	Advise the Council on how full funding of Basic Education will result in less need for remedial postsecondary education.	OSPI SBE	March 2013
Affordability	The Council will review the current model of financial aid and examine new options to address affordability. The Council will explore feasible strategies to reduce the amount or cost of course credits students need to purchase at the institution at which they will graduate by honoring course credits earned in high school, on-line, or through work experience.	COP ICW SBCTC	June 2013
Institutional Capacity and Student Success	Investigate the development of measurable targets and milestone dates for meeting the challenge of increased demand for postsecondary education; including greater participation of adults and how prior and concurrent learning credit should be recognized by the higher education institutions. Advise the Council on how the higher education institutions assess the skills, knowledge, and experience students will need to succeed after graduation.	COP ICW SBCTC	September 2013
Capturing the Potential of Technology	Discuss the feasibility of and requirements for fully integrating online learning opportunities into each institution's instructional program. This assessment should include an analysis of the extent that this model can lower the students' cost of attendance and expand system capacity	SBCTC COP ICW	August 2013
Stable and Accountable Funding	Developing a public higher education plan of financing. This plan should address sustainable funding sources and defensible funding benchmarks	SBCTC COP	July 2013

## The “Call for Action” Summary

In this Call for Action, we have identified five key challenges that we must begin to address *if we are serious about raising the educational attainment level of Washington students*. The Student Achievement Council *is* serious and is committed to working with all sectors of the educational community, the Legislature, the business community, civic society and others to meet this goal.

Our task ahead will not be easy. It will require the courage to explore new approaches to delivering and funding education and meeting the challenges our students and their families face in reaching success. We have many strengths to build on, but this effort will require an unprecedented level of collaboration, integration, and accountability.

The Council believes this can be done and we must begin. We, in fact, start our work with a shared vision: *that every child and adult will be able to succeed in his and her education; that our state’s employers will have confidence in the availability of a well-trained and qualified workforce; and that our state’s policy-makers and taxpayers will have confidence in our plan and use of scarce resources*.

## Appendix A – The Education Landscape

A wide variety of state, regional, and local agencies, boards, councils, and associations are involved in governance, administration and policy development for Washington’s schools, colleges and universities.

Following is a list of these organizations and their principal missions. The Council is charged with facilitating collaboration among these organizations and supporting research and innovation that leads to greater levels of student and institutional success.

Official Entities with Oversight of Education Activities in Washington: Key Responsibilities		
Department of Early Learning (DEL)	Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)	State Board of Education (SBE)
<p>Oversee the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).</p> <p>Set policy for child care subsidy programs.</p> <p>Oversee the state professional development system to help ensure that for those who care for and teach young children continue to increase their skills and education levels.</p> <p>Work to boost the quality of early learning programs around the state and share information with families about quality through our state.</p>	<p>OSPI is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington state.</p> <p>OSPI works with the state’s 295 school districts to administer basic education programs and implement education reform on behalf of more than one million public school students.</p> <p>Key Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and student information</li> <li>• Career and college readiness</li> <li>• Certification</li> <li>• Child nutrition</li> <li>• Communications and community outreach</li> <li>• District and school improvement and accountability</li> <li>• School facilities and organization</li> <li>• Secondary education</li> <li>• Special programs and federal</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Student support</li> </ul>	<p>The SBE consists of 16 statutory members. The purpose of the Washington State Board of Education is to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy and strategic oversight of public education</li> <li>• A standards-based accountability system to improve student academic achievement</li> <li>• Leadership in creating a system that personalizes education for each student and respects diverse cultures, abilities, and learning styles</li> <li>• Promote achievement of the Basic Education Act goals</li> <li>• Establish high school graduation requirements</li> <li>• Approve K-12 private schools</li> <li>• K-12 accountability</li> </ul>

<b>Official Entities with Oversight of Education Activities in Washington: Key Responsibilities</b>		
<b>Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)</b>	<b>Local Education Agencies (295 School Districts)</b>	<b>Educational Service Districts (ESDs)</b>
<p>The PESB is an 11-member statutory board.</p> <p>Establish policies and requirements for the preparation and certification of education professionals, ensuring they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are competent in the professional knowledge and practice for which they are certified.</li> <li>• Have a foundation of skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to help students with diverse needs, abilities, cultural experiences, and learning styles meet or exceed the state learning goals.</li> <li>• Are committed to research-based practice and career-long professional development.</li> </ul> <p>The PESB also serves as an advisory body to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on issues related to educator recruitment, hiring, mentoring and support, professional growth, retention, evaluation, and revocation and suspension of licensure.</p>	<p>Washington state has 295 school districts, responsible for educating more than one million students.</p> <p>These districts are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision of school staff and teachers.</li> <li>• Professional development and evaluation of school staff and programs.</li> <li>• Approval and monitoring of budgets and education plans.</li> <li>• Management of schools' operations, finances, and human resources.</li> </ul>	<p>Educational Service Districts are statutory entities. There are the nine ESDs, each governed by a board of directors elected by the local school districts they serve.</p> <p>Each of the nine boards employs a superintendent and staff who work with the school districts in their region to provide requested services.</p> <p>The specific statutory duties of the ESDs are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide cooperative and informational services to local school districts.</li> <li>• Assist the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education in the performance of their respective statutory or constitutional duties.</li> <li>• Provide services to school districts and to the Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss and the School for the Blind to assure equal educational opportunities.</li> </ul>

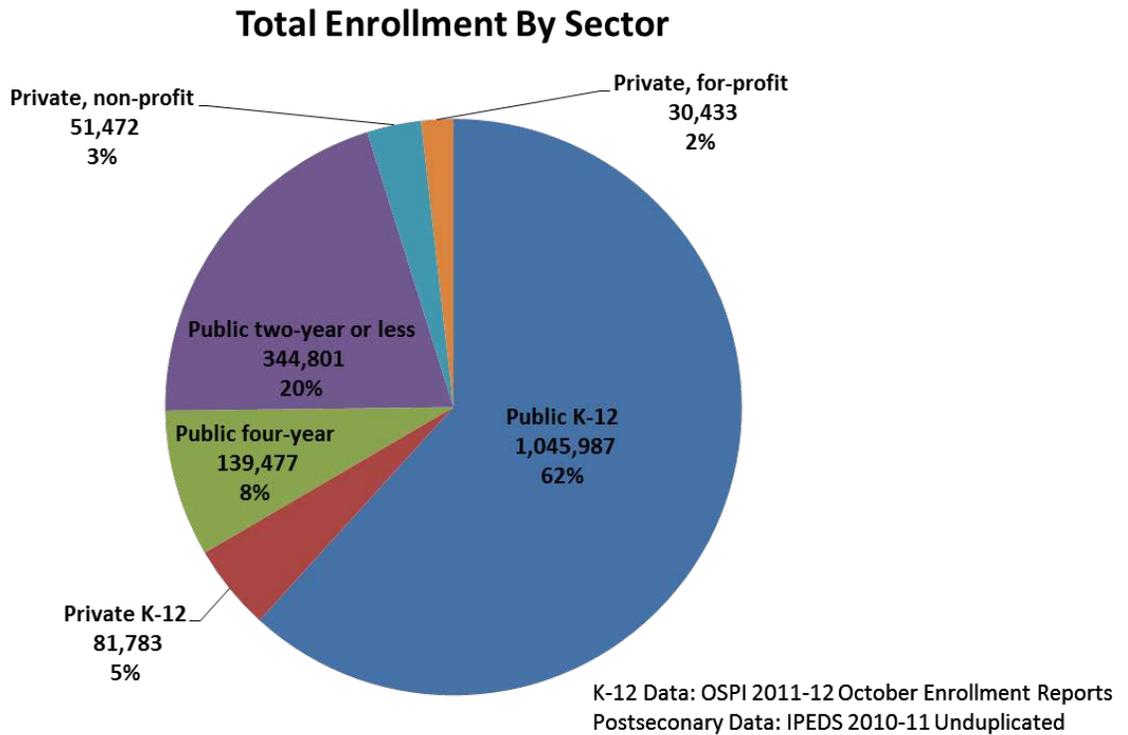
<b>Official Entities with Oversight of Education Activities in Washington: Key Responsibilities</b>		
<b>State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)</b>	<b>Education Research and Data Center (ERDC)</b>	<b>Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB)</b>
<p>The SBCTC is the state-level governing board of the state's 34 community and technical colleges, each of which is governed by a Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Primary duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request and disburse capital and operating funds to the college districts.</li> <li>• Ensure that each college maintains an open door policy and offers the educational, training, and service programs specified by law.</li> <li>• Administer criteria for establishment of new colleges' and for the modification of district boundary lines.</li> <li>• Establish minimum standards for the colleges' personnel qualifications, budgeting, accounting, auditing, curriculum content, degree requirements, admission policies, and the eligibility of courses for state support.</li> <li>• Provide research and analysis to support statewide policy development.</li> <li>• Administer adult education and literacy programs, GED testing, and adult high school completion programs.</li> </ul>	<p>The ERDC is a division of the Governor's Office of Financial Management.</p> <p>Principal duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with other state education agencies to compile and analyze education data.</li> <li>• Make recommendations to the Legislature regarding data collection and improvement.</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate the education data collection systems of education organizations and agencies.</li> <li>• Track enrollment and outcomes through the public centralized higher education enrollment system.</li> <li>• Provide research that focuses on student transitions within and among the early learning, K-12, and higher education sectors in the P-20 system.</li> </ul>	<p>The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) is a Governor-appointed body representing a partnership of nine voting members from business, labor, and government.</p> <p>Its mission is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise the Governor and Legislature on workforce development policy.</li> <li>• Promote a system of workforce development that responds to the lifelong learning needs of the current and future workforce.</li> <li>• Advocate for the non-baccalaureate training and education needs of workers and employers.</li> <li>• Facilitate innovations in workforce development policy and practices.</li> <li>• Ensure system quality and accountability by evaluating results and supporting high standards and continuous improvement.</li> </ul>

<b>Official Entities with Oversight of Education Activities in Washington: Key Responsibilities</b>		
<b>Washington Student Achievement Council</b>	<b>Public Baccalaureate Boards of Regents and Trustees</b>	<b>Education Partners</b>
<p>The Washington Student Achievement Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher overall levels of educational attainment in Washington state.</p> <p>The Council consists of nine members. Principal duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing a Ten-Year Roadmap focused on increasing educational attainment. The Roadmap must encompass all sectors of higher education, including secondary to postsecondary transitions.</li> <li>• Submitting a Strategic Action Plan to the Governor and Legislature every two years focused on strategies and resources needed to implement the Roadmap.</li> <li>• Identifying budget priorities and levels of funding for higher education.</li> <li>• Ensuring the quality of state financial aid programs and services that support educational access and affordability.</li> <li>• Providing college savings opportunities through the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program.</li> <li>• Setting minimum college admission standards.</li> <li>• Preparing under-represented middle and high school students for postsecondary education through early outreach programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Regents and Trustees are the governing bodies of the state's baccalaureate institutions. They establish the policies and priorities needed to carry-out the institution's role and mission.</p> <p>The Regents and Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propose, adopt and recommend institutional budget proposals to the Legislature and the Governor.</li> <li>• Allocate funds as appropriated.</li> <li>• Set tuition rates for resident and nonresident undergraduate and graduate students.</li> <li>• Employ and oversee institution's president, faculty, and staff.</li> <li>• Provide for the care and custody of the institution's real property.</li> <li>• Establish the colleges, schools, and departments within the institution.</li> <li>• Accept, sell, lease, exchange, invest, and expend gifts, grants, bequests, fees, rents, profits, and incomes.</li> </ul>	<p>In addition to official state entities with oversight authority there are many organizations that contribute to P-20 learning and advocacy.</p> <p>Two important postsecondary sectors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Independent Colleges of Washington</li> <li>- Private Proprietary Colleges</li> </ul> <p>Other entities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFT Washington</li> <li>• League of Education Voters</li> <li>• College Success Foundation</li> <li>• Washington School Principals Association</li> <li>• Washington Association of School Administrators</li> <li>• Washington State School Directors Association</li> <li>• Washington Council for High School-College Relations</li> <li>• Washington Education Association</li> <li>• Washington State PTA</li> <li>• Community Center for Education Results</li> <li>• Washington Student Association</li> <li>• UW Graduate Professional Student Senate</li> <li>• Northwest Career Colleges Federation, Washington</li> <li>• Prosperity Partnership</li> <li>• Washington Roundtable</li> <li>• Partnership for Learning</li> <li>• United Faculty of Washington State</li> <li>• College Spark</li> <li>• Gates Foundation</li> <li>• Washington State Apprentice and Training Council</li> </ul>

## Appendix B – Student Enrollment and Demographics

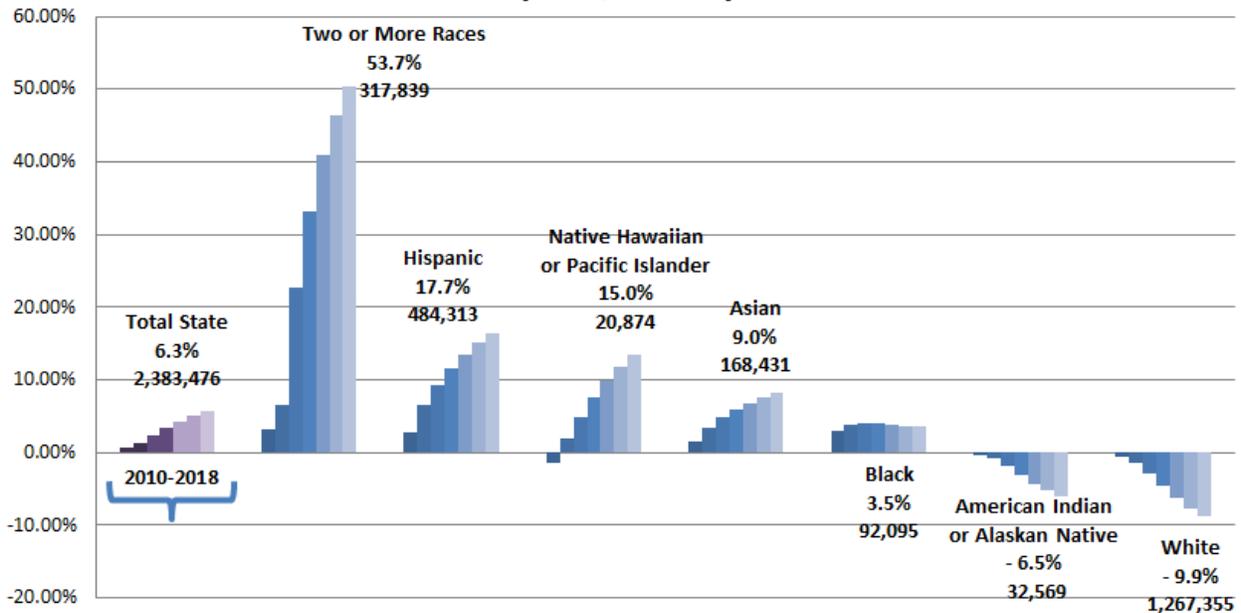
Altogether, more than 1.65 million Washingtonians are being served in the state’s education system. The pie chart below illustrates how these enrollments are distributed among the education sectors. The second chart illustrates the racial and ethnic composition of Washington’s student population, which has been growing more diverse in recent decades and is expected to continue to do so in the future.

### Washington K-20 Enrollment



# Percentage of under-represented students growing rapidly

Projected change in school-age demographic by race/ethnicity: 2010-2018



2018 Population estimate shown for Age 0-24. Growth is percent change from 2010 to 2018.  
 Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 2012.3

