



Support Underrepresented Students

Provide opportunity gap innovation grants to strengthen support services

2017-19 Strategic Action Plan Recommendation

Expand student support services for underrepresented students

Provide opportunity gap innovation grants to strengthen support services for underrepresented secondary and postsecondary students. The grants would complement general student support and target individualized and high-impact services to students. An allocation of \$1.5 million will fund grants to schools, community organizations, and higher education institutions to enhance and expand student supports and services and incentivize creative partnerships.

The Imperative

Washington's patchwork of support programs serves too few students

Washington is becoming more diverse, and reaching the state's educational attainment goals will require investments in support programs. The postsecondary participation gap between low- and high-income students is growing at a time when the majority of jobs require postsecondary training. Low-income students, ethnic minority students, homeless youth, and students in foster care have higher dropout rates, lower graduation rates, and lower rates of college enrollment and completion. Washington has a patchwork of support programs providing services to a fraction of its underrepresented students. It is imperative that we expand and employ effective models of support services to provide equitable opportunities for all students.

Quick Facts:

477,828 Washington students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch.

The high school graduation rate is 10 percentage points lower for low-income students.

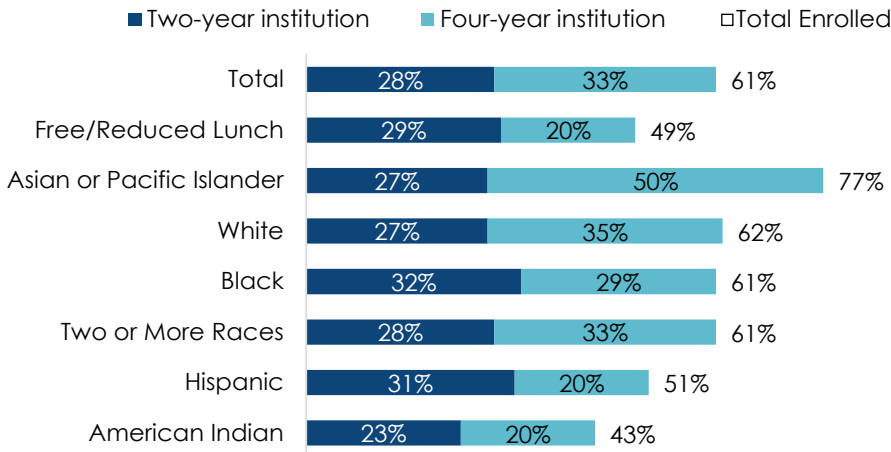
Low-income students transition directly from high school to college at a rate 12 percentage points lower than the average for all students.

Context

Washington's future workforce will be composed largely of today's underrepresented students, including those who participate in Washington's College Bound Scholarship program

Student success often relies on support services. To increase the educational attainment rate of that future workforce, the state must do more to target resources toward underrepresented students, whose academic, social, and financial success often depends on support services. Using an innovation grant approach supports projects that expand the reach of successful programs, test new methods, involve key partnerships, and commit to sustainability. Key investments are necessary to accelerate progress towards the educational attainment goals.

Postsecondary enrollment for 2014 high school graduates



Source: High School Feedback Report, Education Research and Data Center (September 2016)

Outcomes and Measures

Close academic opportunity gaps

Opportunity gap innovation grants will foster creative and diverse student services programs designed to address academic opportunity gaps among underrepresented students.