

2022 Legislative Summary

This Legislative session saw an increase of 8.6% in total State spending with an increase of 2.5% for higher education (excluding a one-time investment for a student loan program). A quick summary of bills and investments made toward higher education trended toward policies that:

- Cover the cost of postsecondary education through WCG expansion, cover costs above and beyond tuition and fees, and create new loan options for students
- Seek to increase access to financial aid and increase postsecondary enrollment
- Target certain career pathways to respond to industry growth and demand
- Address students' basic needs like housing and mental healthcare

Below is a non-exhaustive list that broadly describes some of the key pieces of legislation that passed and related investments made in the budget as it relates to the Council's Strategic Framework.

Affordability

Expansion of Washington College Grant (Rep. Slatter – 1659: \$34.3m)

- Increased Aid Amounts – WCG max award amounts are expanded to students whose families are in the 0-60% of MFI for 2022-23 only.
- Bridge Grants - \$500 for students who receive maximum WCG and no CBS only for the year 2022-23. Provides supplementary financial support to low-income students to cover higher education expenses.

Student Loan Program (Rep. Sullivan – 1736: \$150m)

- WSAC must design a student loan program in consultation with the State Treasurer and State Investment Board and submit a report by Dec. 2022 determining the feasibility. WSAC may award loans beginning 2024-25.

Enrollment

College & Career Pathways Innovations Challenge Program (Sen. Randall – 5789: \$6m)

- Competitive grants to partnerships between CBOs, K-12, and IHE that increase postsecondary enrollment, close equity gaps, expand use of integrated work-based learning, provide financial support beyond tuition, and include matching funds.
- No significant changes made to the original bill draft aside from needing WSAC to consult with 10 agencies, commissions, and organizations to design and administer the grants and removal of the phrase 'career connected learning'.
- WSAC must submit report on implementation of grants and efficacy of partnerships by Sep. 1, 2022, and submit a report in September of each year following detailing impact.

SBCTC Financial Aid Outreach (Budget Proviso: \$2.72m)

- Funds provided to each community and technical college for fiscal year 2023 to contract with a CBO to increase financial aid access and support in communities.

FAFSA/WASFA Completion (Rep. Hansen – 1835: \$3.2m)

- WSAC shall conduct a statewide advertising campaign to increase awareness of WCG.
- SBCTC will administer pilot program and award grants to CTCs to provide outreach specialists to boost FAFSA and WASFA completion rates.
- State library will administer a grant pilot program to increase FAFSA/WASFA filing rates.
- WSAC will collaborate and share data with DSHS to increase awareness and usage of WCG.

Dual Credit – Running Start (Budget Proviso: \$3m)

- OSPI to use grant funding to support running start and high school students who have fewer than 15 credits to obtain an AA; funds can be used by students to pay CTC fees to obtain the 15 credits during summer after high-school graduation.

Completion**Career Launch Grants** (Budget Proviso: \$1m)

- WSAC to administer grants to public four-years to expand and strengthen CCL partnership and programs.

Nurse Educator Loan Repayment (Rep. Slatter – 2007: \$3m)

- WSAC administrates the Washington Health Corps where health care professionals are encouraged to work in underserved communities in exchange for assistance with loan repayment or conditional scholarships. Nurse educator loan repayment program for nurse educators teaching for approved nursing programs is now added under this umbrella.
- WSAC shall establish a planning committee to assist in developing criteria for selection of participants for the Washington Health Corps program.

Student Supports**Homeless/ Foster College Students Support Pilot Expansion** (Budget Proviso: \$3.1m)

- Funds provided to SBCTC for fiscal year 2023 to expand the homeless student assistance pilot program to all 34 CTCs.
- Funds provided to WSAC for fiscal year 2023 to expand the homeless student assistance pilot to two more public 4 years.

Health Care Coverage Supports (Budget Proviso: \$160k)

- SBCTC must provide health insurance information to students in up to two CTCs and WSAC in cooperation with COP must do the same for up to two four-year colleges.
- OFM must conduct a comprehensive study on student access to health care at PBIs.