

# Highlights of State of Washington Governor Jay Inslee Talk

February 27, 2019

STEM Education Innovation Alliance Meeting

Olympia, Washington

State of Washington Governor Jay Inslee mentioned that his father [Frank Inslee] was a STEM educator. He taught biology at Tenino High School, Garfield High School, and Chief Sealth International High School.

Inslee emphasized the importance of STEM education.

- Nothing more important to the dynamic, creative, innovative economy and opportunities for Washingtonians than the work that is being done by people in this room.
- Economy gives people great opportunities with new technologies that are going to come into being → everything from clean energy to curing cancer to video gaming.
- Opportunities demand that young people and not so young people be given opportunities.
- Critical to raise our expectations of what STEM opportunities we offer to people in our state.

Inslee mentioned noteworthy recent successes in Washington State:

- ✓ Rated as best place to do business in United States.
- ✓ Rated as best place to be an employee in United States.
- ✓ Result: Washington has the greatest GDP [Gross Domestic Product], wage, and job growth in the United States.

Inslee said the state is always looking for the next higher level of performance. Some recent reasons to celebrate:

- Increased number of educational scholarships available, with the eventual goal that every student who wants to get a college education can have one.
- Continue on the path of more computer science education for our students. The Computer Science Education Grant program has resulted in a 600% increase in the number of high school students who have Advanced Placement classes in computer science.
- Increased scientific education opportunities for teachers so they can share this knowledge with their students.
- Greatest increase in educator pay in state's history.

Inslee mentioned several issues in STEM education that he says we may not talk enough about in the STEM community.

- Brilliant educators may leave teaching positions for more lucrative careers at Microsoft or Amazon because they are not getting paid enough.
- We want every child, particularly those born into poverty and maybe currently living in poverty, to have an equal opportunity in STEM education and STEM careers. We are dedicated in our state to make “zip code not be a child’s destiny.”

Inslee is committed to early child education in STEM education and shared a few thoughts about this.

- Improve access to early child education (starting at 3 years of age). Break these young children out of the cycle of poverty by offering STEM education for every student, no matter zip code or income level.
- Talk with legislators to show your support for early child education and STEM education.

Inslee shared a story about a student in Washington State that shows what STEM education can do for the future of the planet and the State of Washington.

Student at Jackson High School challenged himself to make a difference in the world. He pondered what the biggest challenge in the world today is and realized it is climate change because climate change threatens everything that we hold dear - our health, national security, and economic growth. He then considered what he could actually get engaged in to defeat climate change. His research pointed to making clean renewable energy economically more efficient. He further determined that one solution would be a better battery to integrate wind and solar energy into our [electrical power] grid. He deduced that a better ionic membrane is needed so that the membrane is more efficient in a lithium ion battery. He invented a new membrane that increased the battery density and thus increased the energy capacity that will allow us to more effectively store solar and wind energy. The student was named America’s science student of the year.

It is about individual opportunity. But it is also about saving humanity which is worth doing.

“The planet Earth is going to be okay. It is just humanity that is in trouble.”

Inslee concluded with these points.

- Let’s go give STEM education to every young student.
- Let’s do Career Connect Washington so we can have apprenticeships in the trades, in a career, even without going to college.
- If we do these things, Washington is going to continue to blossom.

Inslee thanked everyone in the room for their work.