

<b>Title</b>	<b>Strategic Action Plan – Council Approval of Recommendations</b>
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<b>Synopsis:</b>	<p>The Ten-Year Roadmap plan is complemented with a short-term Strategic Action Plan, submitted in December of even-numbered years, establishing budget and legislative priorities necessary to implement the strategies identified in the Ten-Year Roadmap.</p> <p>The Strategic Action Plan will address the needs of high-priority Roadmap action items as well as needs related to other action items expected to emerge during the next biennium.</p> <p>During the October meeting the Council will amend and approve the recommendations before adopting the final 2014 Strategic Action Plan at the November Council meeting. The Strategic Action Plan is due to the Governor and Legislature by December 2014.</p>
<b>Guiding questions:</b>	Is anything missing from the introduction or the recommendations? What does the Council want to emphasize in the transmittal letter? What data or information would best make the case for each recommendation?
<b>Possible council action:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Adopt <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<b>Documents and attachments:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brief/Report <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint <input type="checkbox"/> Third-party materials <input type="checkbox"/> Other

# Washington State's two educational attainment goals for 2023:

1. All adults in Washington, ages 25-44, will have a high school diploma or equivalent.
2. At least 70 percent of Washington adults, ages 25-44, will have a postsecondary credential.



# **Strategic Action Plan**

## October 2014 Draft

## STATE INVESTMENT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FY 2015-17

Policy	Maintenance Level Request	FY Cost (millions)		
		2016	2017	Total
<b>Fulfill caseload requirements for College Bound Scholarship.</b>	<p><b>Maintain the commitment to students.</b></p> <p>Washington made a commitment to low-income middle school students beginning in 2007. By offering an early promise of a financial aid to students before they enrolled in high school, the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) sought to improve academic preparation as well as aspirations of thousands of students. The program shows early indicators of success with increased high school graduation and college enrollment rates. College Bound has become more than just a scholarship—it is a key component of Washington’s efforts to increase high school graduation rates and increase college participation and completion.</p>	\$10	\$15	\$25
<b>Protect maintenance level funding for public two- and four-year institutions.</b>	<p><b>Continue to invest in public higher education.</b></p> <p>Expanding opportunities for students can only be successful if there are adequately-funded institutions ready to support those students through to completion. Cuts during the last recession reduced student support. Protecting higher education funding allows the state to get more out of its investment in K-12, and helps us reach our postsecondary attainment goals. The legislature made critical reinvestments in the 2013-15 biennium. We cannot lose that momentum.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a

Policy	Policy Recommendations	FY Cost (millions)		
		2016	2017	Total
<b>Develop affordability framework.</b>	<p><b>Policy-driven investment to make higher education more affordable for all students.</b></p> <p>Washington needs an affordability framework to coordinate funding streams (state, federal, institutional, tuition) and clarify roles to reduce the volatility in tuition increases, help ameliorate student debt, and increase total state appropriations for postsecondary education.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Enhance service in State Need Grant.</b>	<p><b>Commit to fully fund the State Need Grant program.</b></p> <p>By strategically investing an additional \$16 million each year through 2023, the state can close the SNG funding gap and fulfill its commitment to our lowest-income students. Each annual increase would serve an additional 4,000 students who depend on financial assistance to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education.</p>	\$16	\$32	\$48
<b>Support under-represented students.</b>	<p><b>Leverage the state’s investment through student support services.</b></p> <p>Students in secondary and postsecondary education who are from low-income families, are the first generation in their family to attend college, and who are from backgrounds underrepresented in degree attainment are more likely to succeed with focused support services. To optimize the return on the state’s investment in College Bound, the Council proposes coordination of individualized support services for underrepresented students in K-12 and on campuses, together with the organization of collective impact coalitions to improve educational attainment.</p>	\$5	\$5	\$10
<b>Reinvest in State Work Study.</b>	<p><b>Provide greater access to work-based learning opportunities.</b></p> <p>Expand work-based learning and earning opportunities to 3,000 additional low and middle income students through strategic reinvestments in the State Work Study (SWS) program. Begin restoring funding and service levels to reach the 2009 investment level by 2023 starting with an additional \$5 million in 2015-16.</p>	\$5	\$5	\$10

Policy	Policy Recommendations	FY Cost (millions)		
		2016	2017	Total
<b>Expand the reach of dual-credit opportunities.</b>	<p>Build bridges from high school to college and careers through dual-credit programs.</p> <p>Students who earn college credit in high school are more likely to complete high school, enroll in college, and earn a college degree. Expanding dual-enrollment options for all Washington high school students by reducing costs and other barriers will improve student participation and increase educational attainment. The Council's recommended policy changes will provide funding to eliminate tuition in the college in the high school program, expand eligibility for college in the high school to academically prepared 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, provide opportunities for both academic and technical education courses, and provide flexibility in the academic acceleration incentive program to assist students with transportation and book expenses associated with the running start program.</p>	\$15.5	\$15.5	<b>\$31</b>

## INTRODUCTION

The Roadmap outlined ambitious ten-year educational attainment goals for Washington. These goals, that all adults age 25-44 would hold a high school diploma or equivalent, and 70 percent would complete a postsecondary certificate or degree, are among the highest in the nation and reflect Washington's position as a leading innovation state and a key player in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. By adopting these goals, Washington committed itself to increasing overall attainment at a time when demographic trends suggest a leveling off or decline in postsecondary participation and completion. Now, it is incumbent on all of us to translate that vision into tangible benefits for all Washingtonians.

The challenges this state faces over the next ten years are daunting, and we cannot wish our way to broader, more equal attainment. Instead, we need to commit to doing the hard work in aligning our K-12 and postsecondary education systems to make them work for all students regardless of economic circumstances or racial/ethnic background. In addition, we need a system that is responsive to the needs of returning adults who need new or enhanced skills to compete in the global economy.

The starting point to realizing this vision is affordability. The Council is committed to increased support for low-income students, improved funding for our postsecondary institutions, and perhaps most importantly a funding framework to inform system growth. In addition, the Council has identified investments in strategies that will support increased student attainment. These include improved support services for students—particularly first generation and low income students—and options to reduce barriers for students participating in dual-credit programs.

The 2014 Strategic Action Plan outlines the Washington Student Achievement Council's priorities for the 2015 session. These are the steps Washington needs to take now to meet our goals. Changing demographics are resulting in an urgent need to create a college-going culture in parts of our state that haven't had one before. We know of existing tools that have proven helpful in clearing a path to college and a career, and now we need to provide these tools to educators, students, and communities through Washington State.

Tools like the College Bound Scholarship, which several communities have leveraged to help historically underserved secondary students get to graduation. Or the State Need Grant, which provides need-based aid to low-income students in every community, from high school graduates to working adults. Tools like dual-credit programs, enabling students to earn college credit in high school.

What these tools have in common is that their utility stretches beyond any one sector of our education system. A financial aid program isn't just for postsecondary affordability—it's a commitment that helps low-income middle and high school students envision a pathway to college. Dual credit isn't just about high-achieving high school students, it can be a tool to reduce the total cost of a postsecondary credential. Work study isn't just financial aid—it's helping students gain real-world work experience in their field of study.

We cannot rely on population growth to reach our attainment goals. The number of high school graduates will rise slowly over the next ten years, and those graduates will be more diverse than ever. If the opportunity gap remains as wide as it is today, we will fail. Other factors, like location, also impact access to postsecondary education and careers. Thus, Washington needs solutions that work for rural

communities as well as urban ones, and we need to provide consistent messaging so students and their families know how to navigate the system.

Washington isn't lacking in good ideas, or great programs—we just have uneven access to them. Some students may receive a State Need Grant award and therefore take on less student loan debt. Other students, who may have the same income and attend the same institution, may not receive State Need Grant. Instead, they must take on additional debt in order to achieve their educational goals. Two students in a high school course may get identical grades, but one receives college credit for his effort because he was able to pay the fees associated with the course, while the other student did not pay for the course and therefore did not receive credit. It's time to make the system work for all students.

The proposals in this plan can help move the needle on educational attainment. They were developed with input from stakeholders across the sectors, including K-12, community and technical colleges, and public and private baccalaureate institutions. More importantly, they are designed to complement and build off the state's investments in K-12 as part of the McCleary settlement. As districts have more resources—like more counselors—they can help students see a pathway to college, from dual credit to College Bound. Our recommendations can help the state maximize the return on its investment in K-12, and utilize that investment to help students navigate a more seamless, a more affordable, and a more effective postsecondary education system.

If we do succeed, everyone benefits. A better educated workforce attracts new firms and investment in existing ones. Prosperity rises across the state, not just in isolated pockets. A more diverse economy is nimble in the face of recessions, and an aligned postsecondary education system can adapt more quickly to economic changes.

We recognize these recommendations are only a first step. Defining attainment goals and the steps we need to take to reach them is a critical part of our agency's mission. The recommendations in this plan prioritize access and affordability, and lay the groundwork for further work between now and 2023. These strategies must be coupled with continuing efforts to implement the complete package of Roadmap action items. From bringing returning adults back to the postsecondary education system to leveraging technology for student retention and success, more work will be needed in the future. But we need to start now. The 2015 session is critical for Washington's future.

## COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARSHIP

*Ensure cost is not a barrier for low-income students.*

### Recommendation: Maintain the commitment to students.

Washington made a commitment to low-income middle school students beginning in 2007. By offering an early promise of a financial aid to students before they enrolled in high school, the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) sought to improve academic preparation as well as aspirations of thousands of students. The program shows early indicators of success with increased high school graduation and college enrollment rates. College Bound has become more than just a scholarship—it is a key component of Washington’s efforts to increase high school graduation rates, college participation, and completion.

### Imperative: A vital step to sustainable funding.

Eligible middle school students sign a pledge to graduate from high school as well as to prepare and apply for college admission and financial aid. Students who meet income and other requirements are eligible for tuition (at public rates) and a small book stipend. While the State Need Grant covers most of the award, the CBS covers the balance. As two more cohorts enter college, the state must fulfill its commitment. That promise of aid is one of the key factors that has helped improve graduation rates among participants and preparation and admission to higher education.

### Context: College Bound is a key strategy to increase attainment.

Participants are low-income by definition, and are more diverse than the overall K-12 population. The first two cohorts of CBS students showed high school graduation rates at or above the statewide average, narrowing the education opportunity gap. While the graduation rate for other low-income students was 60 percent in 2012 and 2013, CBS students’ four-year graduation rate was at or above the statewide average of 76 percent. These results are due to a number of factors, including the efforts of local communities, non-profits, and schools that have made the program a focal point for their work with historically underserved students.

For the program to continue to succeed, we must keep our promise to these students. As this program continues to narrow the opportunity gap, and more CBS students attend college, this will be an incredibly important investment in Washington’s future. The 2015-16 fiscal year will be the first year that four cohorts are in the postsecondary pipeline at the same time, and as a result, the rate of increase for needed funding will stabilize.

### Outcomes and Measures: College Bound supports access and persistence.

Fulfilling our commitment to students will allow an additional 4,000 students to attend college in FY 16. The scholarship funding will support improved persistence and reenrollment rates.

- In 2012-13, College Bound Scholarship students had a four-year high school graduation rate of 76 percent, while other low-income students had a 60 percent graduation rate.
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- 69 percent of CBS students are attending college, above the rate for all students in the high school class of 2012. Only 50 percent of the other low-income students attended college.
- CBS students were more likely to attend a college in Washington, and were more likely to attend a four-year school than other low-income students.
- The first cohort's retention rate in college was high – 92 percent at UW/WSU, 85 percent at the regional institutions, and 73 percent at the community and technical colleges.

## Quick Facts

- Over 185,000 students have signed up for College Bound.
- In 2015-16, four cohorts of College Bound students will have entered the postsecondary pipeline. Over 13,000 students are projected to receive the scholarship in that year.
- The Caseload Forecast Council projects College Bound applicants and postsecondary enrollments eligible for the scholarship for budgeting purposes.

## AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK

*Make college affordable.*

**Recommendation: Develop an affordability framework for higher education budgeting.**

Washington needs an affordability framework to coordinate funding streams (state, federal, institutional, tuition) and clarify roles to reduce the volatility in tuition increases, help ameliorate student debt and increase total state appropriations for postsecondary education.

**Imperative: Reinvest in postsecondary education.**

Washington needs a new framework to guide policy makers. Higher education's share of the budget has shrunk over the past two decades, shifting cost to families and increasing student debt. We can do better. We need to define what "affordability" means and build a funding system focused on that definition. By linking policy and budget changes to affordability, we can make the case for increased funding for higher education.

**Context: Policy-driven investment to support all students.**

Higher education appropriations in Washington are essentially block grants, largely divorced from enrollment or outputs. While appropriations will always be vulnerable to cuts in recessionary periods, this lack of connection to the tangible benefits they provide the state and students has not served the system well. The disinvestment between 2009 and 2013 was a profound change in how the state paid for its postsecondary education and training system. We still do not fully understand what that change meant to students and families navigating the system.

Without a framework guiding appropriations decisions, and intentionally linking them to need-based aid and tuition policies, Washington will continue to focus on pieces of the overall higher education funding puzzle. With a framework, we can clearly delineate the responsibility of the student, the school and the state, and thus target state appropriations to make the system more affordable.

**Outcomes and Measures: Improve affordability through improved coordination.**

Clarifying the impact of funding decisions on affordability can help policy makers decide how to reinvest. The framework helps identify affordability issues for all students regardless of income and can provide useful information to policy makers investigating other funding models, such as performance-based funding. It would also provide guidelines or parameters for tuition-setting authority discussions. An affordability framework can help define reasonable levels for debt, work, and students' savings to ensure the system is affordable for all students.

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## Quick Facts

- State funding per student FTE for the four-year institutions has fallen from \$12,020 in 1991 to \$4,924 in 2013 in inflation-adjusted dollars.
- Including financial aid, higher education made up 9.2 percent of the near-General Fund budget in the 2013-15 biennium. In 2003-05, higher education was 11.6 percent of the general fund budget, and in 1983-85, it made up 16 percent.
- Despite recent reinvestment, state support for the two- and four-year institutions in fiscal year 2015 remains lower than it was in 2002.
- A student starting at the University of Washington in 2001 faced a total tuition price of \$18,593 for four years of study. A student starting in 2005 needed to pay \$24,362, and a student who started in 2009 needed \$39,122.

## STATE NEED GRANT

*Ensure cost is not a barrier for low-income students.*

**Recommendation: Fully fund the State Need Grant program.**

By strategically investing an additional \$16 million each year through 2023, the state can close the SNG funding gap and fulfill its commitment to our lowest-income students. Each annual increase would serve an additional 4,000 students who depend on financial assistance to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education.

**Imperative: Eligible students without funding face additional barriers.**

Despite the state's long-standing commitment to providing need-based aid to low-income students, roughly one out of every three SNG-eligible students currently does not receive a grant due to lack of funds. This trend has continued even as the economy has improved, with over 33,000 students not receiving funding in 2013-14. Students not receiving SNG have higher student loan debt, are more likely to attend part-time, and are more likely to work full-time, which can adversely affect academic progress and success. They are also less likely to enroll and more likely to drop out if they cannot pay for their expenses.

**Context: Aid supports student access.**

The State Need Grant program has provided tuition assistance to students from low-income families for 43 years. Washington's history of providing funding increases tied to tuition levels has led the state to be nationally recognized for its commitment to providing opportunities for low-income students, even during periods of economic downturn. It's also the funding foundation for the College Bound Scholarship.

While tuition costs can be a barrier for many students, those from low-income families are the most vulnerable. In 2014, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) evaluated student outcomes and found that, for students with the lowest family incomes, receipt of an SNG award was directly associated with higher re-enrollment and completion rates. National studies have shown that need-based grants increase the likelihood of enrollment, support campus engagement and full-time attendance, and improve retention and completion.

**Outcomes and Measures: Increased access to postsecondary education.**

The investment of SNG funds will increase the percentage of eligible students served from 68 percent in fiscal year (FY) 2014, to 71 percent in FY 16, and 75 percent in FY 17. Fully funding SNG reduces the participation gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers. Average student debt levels for eligible students would decline, while persistence and completion rates for all students, including returning adults, would increase.

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## Quick Facts

- In 2013-14, over 70,100 students received approximately \$303 million in State Need Grant funding; however, nearly 34,500 additional eligible students were unserved due to lack of funds.
- 2014-15 maximum award values for full-time enrollment range from \$2,823 to \$10,868, depending on the type of institution attended.
- Currently, 68 public and private higher education institutions participate in SNG.
- Over 60 percent of SNG recipients were financially independent, with an average income of \$14,000 in 2013.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

*Increase support for all current and prospective students.*

**Recommendation: Leverage the state’s investment through student support services.**

The Council proposes strengthening and coordinating statewide individualized student support services to ensure the state’s commitment to College Bound students will have greater investment returns. Providing support in middle school, high school, and college to increase high school graduation and postsecondary completion rates for under-represented students is critical to reaching the state’s attainment goals. WSAC will:

- Provide support services to College Bound students, including tutoring, mentoring, and campus experiences, through collaborative efforts with schools and partners.
- Expand the reach of federal and other on-campus support services to improve retention and academic success of underrepresented students.
- Develop collective impact coalitions within and among communities to improve educational attainment across the state.

**Imperative: Support services are crucial for the success of under-represented students.**

Students in secondary and postsecondary education who are from low-income families, are first-generation college, and/or are from backgrounds under-represented in degree attainment are far more likely to succeed with support services. Students need academic, social and financial support throughout their education. Reaching the state’s attainment goals requires a coordinated effort from all sectors of the education system that support student success, especially for those students who are less likely to graduate from high school and enroll in and complete postsecondary education.

**Context: Demographic changes prompt the need for coordinated services.**

Projected demographic changes in Washington indicate that under-represented students, including those who participate in the College Bound Scholarship program, will be the state’s future labor force.<sup>1</sup> Investing now to improve their academic success and educational attainment is critical to ensure the state retains its leading position in innovation, providing for future economic prosperity and an improved return on the state’s investment in the College Bound Scholarship program.

The proposed strategies are based on national research and evidence-based practices in student support and college access programming. The proposal leverages and expands existing proven practices and develops a statewide support structure to provide effective services.

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<sup>1</sup> WICHE, Knocking at the college door: Projections of high school graduates by state and race/ethnicity, 1992-2022. 2008, Boulder, CO: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Public Policy and Research.

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WSAC's oversight and administration of GEAR UP, College Bound Scholarship, theWashBoard.org, Passport to College Promise Scholarship, American College Application Campaigns, College Goal Washington, ReadySetGrad.org, and other student support initiatives - as well as its role in policy development to increase educational attainment - positions the agency to coordinate student support service delivery.

Washington students receive some support services through programs that are funded by federal, state and other non-profit or community based organizations. They vary by breadth and intensity and are "patchwork," with various levels of service by regions, sectors, schools or institutions.

In 2013-14, 86 percent of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch signed up for the College Bound Scholarship. While there has been a statewide emphasis to promote sign-up activities, no coordinated effort ensures every student participates in activities to plan, prepare, and pay for college.

A coordinated statewide effort would ensure that College Bound students visit college campuses, navigate the college application and financial aid process accurately and on time, and are successful in their transitions from middle school to high school, and from high school to college.

The Council will provide comprehensive information to the thousands of phone calls and inquiries from students and families seeking assistance to understand admissions requirements, the financial aid application process, and scholarship requirements.

The Council will expand support services to 220 high-poverty districts that do not have GEAR UP services from the current 75 across the state.

A state expansion of campus student support programs would avoid duplication of services; leverage federal, private, and institutional funding through a competitive grant process; and ensure that more students who are at risk of not achieving postsecondary academic success receive the tutoring, mentoring, and support needed to reach their educational and career goals.

The Council will coordinate and establish collective impact partnership networks throughout the state, taking into account the unique needs, characteristics and culture of geographic regions. Important work is being done at several existing regional networks, and statewide coordination and expansion will enhance student attainment outcomes from additional regions.

## Outcomes and Measures

In support of the state's educational attainment goals, this proposal will:

- Ensure the state's investment in the College Bound Scholarship receives improved returns.
- Support, expand and coordinate a statewide infrastructure of student support services.

- Increase support for all current and prospective under-represented students on campuses.
- Increase the rate of students earning a postsecondary credential, including adult students.

### Quick Facts

- 185,000 low-income students signed up for College Bound Scholarship.
  - GEAR UP currently serves 75 school districts statewide, serving 34,000 students.
  - 22 campuses have federal Student Support Services programs.
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## STATE WORK STUDY

*Provide greater access to work-based learning opportunities.*

### Recommendation: Reinvest in State Work Study

Expand work-based learning and earning opportunities to 3,000 additional low and middle income students through strategic reinvestments in the State Work Study (SWS) program. Begin restoring funding and service levels to reach the 2009 investment level by 2023 starting with an additional \$5 million in 2015-16.

### Imperative: Support students and employers.

Employers increasingly point to challenges identifying Washingtonians who possess the skills necessary to fill jobs required for economic growth. Rising college costs force most students to work while in school, but often in jobs that decrease academic and graduation performance. SWS reinvestment helps counter both trends by providing career-focused, flexible part-time work opportunities that improve persistence and post-graduation employment outcomes.

### Context: A long-standing program with proven success.

For 40 years, SWS has provided opportunities for low- and middle-income undergraduate and graduate students to earn money for college while gaining valuable work experience in jobs related to their academic and career goals. Students work less than 20 hours per week, earning an average of nearly \$3,000 to offset college costs and reduce debt. Research indicates work study experiences enhance student engagement and improve academic, persistence, completion, and post-graduation employment outcomes.<sup>2, 3</sup>

SWS experiences distinguish graduates in an increasingly competitive job market, leveraging on-the-job training in school to develop the skills employers need, closing the state's job skills gaps<sup>4</sup>. SWS reinvestment would improve college affordability, enhance post-graduation employability, and help lay the foundation for future economic growth.

### Outcomes and Measures: More students will be served and employer contributions leveraged.

Sustained incremental reinvestment in SWS, following reductions of 65 percent since 2009, will gradually restore the program's historical student service levels and employer participation rates by providing a platform for expanded work-based learning opportunities across the state. Over the 2015-17 biennium, a \$5 million increase in annual SWS funding is projected to provide work opportunities and reduce borrowing for nearly 3,000 additional needy students per year,

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<sup>2</sup> Pike, G.R., Kuh, G. D., & Massa-McKinley, R. (2008). First-year student's employment, engagement, and academic achievement: Untangling the relationship between work and grades. *NASPA Journal*, 45, 560-582.

<sup>3</sup> The Boston Consulting Group and the Washington Roundtable (2013). *Great Jobs within Our Reach, Solving the problem of Washington State's growing job skills gap.*

<sup>4</sup> The Boston Consulting Group and the Washington Roundtable (2013). *Great Jobs within Our Reach, Solving the problem of Washington State's growing job skills gap.*

generate more than \$3 million in additional annual employer matching contributions, and improve the program's student service ratio from 1 in 35 eligible students currently served to about 1 in 20 eligible students served.

### Quick Facts

- Research indicates work-study experiences enhance student engagement and improve academic, persistence, completion, and post-graduation employment outcomes.
  - Partnering with nearly 1,000 employers, about 4,800 students at 56 public and private non-profit institutions earned approximately \$13.5 million in 2012-13.
  - Employer matching contributions, totaling nearly \$5.4 million in 2012-13 and representing a 40 percent return on program appropriations, help the state leverage limited resources to reach a greater number of eligible students.
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## DUAL CREDIT

*Streamline and expand dual-credit and dual-enrollment programs.*

**Recommendation:** Build bridges from high school to college and careers through dual-credit programs.

Washington needs to increase opportunities for academically prepared high school students to earn college credits through dual-credit programs, and reduce disparities in access to, and completion of, these programs. The Council's recommended policy changes will provide funding to eliminate tuition in the college in the high school program, expand eligibility for college in the high school to academically prepared 9th and 10th graders, provide opportunities for both academic and technical education courses, and provide flexibility in the academic acceleration incentive program to assist students with transportation and book expenses associated with the Running Start program.

The Council will make further recommendations to mitigate financial and other barriers for students enrolled in the Running Start program, and barriers in dual credit programs based on standardized exams by December of 2015.

**Imperative:** Barriers prevent full participation by all students.

In the College in the High School program, credit is awarded based on successful course completion and ability to pay tuition and fees. Under the current college in the high school system, some students may successfully complete the course but not receive credit because they are unable to pay.

Students in the Running Start program face a different challenge: they do not receive funding for books and transportation costs. These financial barriers decrease opportunities for lower income students to benefit from dual-credit programs.

**Context:** Washington must continue to innovate if we are to continue to lead.

Washington has been a national leader in dual-credit innovation through the establishment of Running Start and College in the High School. We have continued to expand student choices in dual-credit programs. A range of dual-credit or dual-enrollment programs is available to students. Dual-credit programs, such as Running Start, College in the High School, and Tech Prep (course completion options), and Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Cambridge (standardized exam options) offer academically prepared students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. Students who participate in these programs achieve graduate from high school at higher rates and are more likely to continue on to college and complete a degree. In addition, dual-credit and dual-enrollment programs support student's individual college and career pathways.

Through the development and implementation of the 2013 Roadmap, the Council has identified key barriers that limit access to dual-credit programs, particularly for low-income students. Removing these barriers is a critical step toward achieving the state educational attainment goals outlined in the Roadmap.

The decision to enroll in a dual-credit program should be made by the student and his or her parents or guardians, in consultation with counselors, and based on the academic, cultural, and developmental needs and college and career goals of the student. A student's dual-credit options should not be limited by family financial circumstances.

The Council convened a statewide dual-credit workgroup composed of experts and practitioners from the K-12 and postsecondary sectors. The recommendations included above are the starting point of a more comprehensive effort to streamline and expand dual credit in Washington.

## Outcomes and Measures: Introduce a new generation of students to college.

An investment of \$30 million over the next biennium would fund College in the High School course tuition for more than 85,000 courses and serve more than 20,000 students. The investment would also result in:

- Increased program choices and opportunities for students by expanding eligibility to all college-ready high school students.
- Increased equity by ensuring that program choices are based on student preparedness, not financial status.
- Increased high school graduation rates.
- Increased college enrollment rates.
- Decreased time to degree – saving students, families and taxpayers money.

## Quick Facts

- In 2013, 373,960 Washington state students enrolled in dual-credit programs.
  - Low-income students and students of color, particularly Hispanic students, are under-represented in dual-credit programs.
  - Advanced Placement continues to be the largest dual-credit program, with growth of 13.1 percent over the past 3 years. *The most significant expansion has been ninth grade participation, up 98.8 percent since 2011.*
  - More than 17,000 students enrolled in College in the High School courses in 2013-14.
  - Low-income students are under-represented in dual-credit programs. 26 percent of College in the High School students are eligible for free and reduced price meals compared to 43 percent of all high school students.
  - Students pay between \$200 and \$350 to receive credit for College in the High School courses.
-