

Title	Executive Update
Staff lead:	Gene Sharratt
Position	Executive Director
Email:	genes@wsac.wa.gov
Phone:	360.753.7800
Synopsis:	The Executive Update will provide members with a review of current agency work related to program administration and policy. The Executive Director will provide this synopsis at the beginning of each Council meeting.
Guiding questions:	Do the activities of the agency align with our statutory mission?
Possible council action:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Adopt <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Documents and attachments:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brief/Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint <input type="checkbox"/> Third-party materials <input type="checkbox"/> Other



Executive Director Update

Council Meeting
Dr. Gene Sharratt, Executive Director
February 11, 2015



WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
EDUCATION · OPPORTUNITY · RESULTS



The Executive Director update will highlight the agency’s efforts related to our statutory mission and program administration.

The two-month summary chart provides a synopsis of agency efforts since the last Council meeting.

Agency Update
Two-Month Executive Summary

Project	Recent Work
Outreach and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Early Financial Aid Commitment Summit: The State Early Financial Aid Commitment Summit provided an opportunity for attendees to discuss best practices in the implementation of early commitment programs (e.g., College Bound). FAFSA Completion Initiative: The Washington FAFSA Completion Initiative will empower district leaders to identify and assist students who have not completed the FAFSA form. College Goal Washington: Over 75 high schools, colleges, and universities will be hosting College Goal events in January and February. Test Fees: WSAC will shortly sign an agreement with College Board whereby all free and reduced eligible students in Washington will receive free PSAT and SAT assessments (waivers are currently available but hard to access)
Policy and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISLS: The work of the ISLS will likely extend beyond the grant cycle (ending in June 2015). Dual Credit: The WSAC Dual Credit Workgroup will reconvene in March to begin work on policy recommendations relating to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge programs. SBAC: Washington was identified by U.S. Department of Education as a leading state in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the new tests, and alignment with college placement. ABLE - Federal Legislation: The ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Act of 2014 allows families and individuals to save through a tax-advantaged account for future qualified expenses associated with the care of a person with a disability. Veterans: Over 23,000 veterans, service and family members enrolled in degree granting institutions and receiving GI Bill benefits in Washington
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SFA Trainings: The student financial aid division is working with institutions to ensure compliance with state aid program requirements using data to provide focused training. SFA Reports: Over 250 students enrolled in short-term training programs received loans in 2013-14 (Aerospace Report). WASFA Launch: The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) went "live" for the 2015-16 academic year on January 1. GET: In the first two months, customers opened 1,607 new accounts (up 10 percent over last year), and participants have added 185,071 units to their accounts (up 20 percent over this time last year). Affordability Model: Rachelle Sharpe co-presented with Jim Fridley at Oxford to a symposium on the financing of education in early December regarding the Affordability Interactive Model at Oxford.
Legislative work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations: WSAC has provided several legislative presentations on Strategic Action Plan items. Advocacy: WSAC staff and members continue to meet with legislators to understand their priorities and communicate the importance of higher education. Partnerships: WSAC staff collaborate weekly with the Governor's office, OFM analysts, and our partners during session.

Recent Highlights



Category	Activity
Outreach and Advocacy	State Early Financial Aid Commitment Summit; FAFSA Completion Initiative; College Goal Washington; Test Fees.
Policy and Research	Improving Student Learning at Scale; Dual Credit Workgroup; U.S. Department of Education (SBAC) meeting; ABLE legislation; Veterans update.
Programs	SFA trainings; SFA reports; WASFA launch; GET update; Affordability model presentation (Oxford); Marketing and communications awards.
Legislative Work	Presentations; advocacy; partnerships.



Gene Sharratt, Ph.D.
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GeneS@wsac.wa.gov

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Legislative Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations: WSAC has provided several legislative presentations on Strategic Action Plan items. • Advocacy: WSAC staff and members continue to meet with legislators to understand their priorities and communicate the importance of higher education. • Partnerships: WSAC staff collaborate weekly with the Governor’s office, OFM analysts, and our partners during session.