

Memo

To: Council Members

From: Sector Members: Marty Brown, Paul Francis, Ray Lawton and Gil Mendoza

Date: November 16, 2015

Re: Support and Outreach Communication Campaign

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For some time now, the Student Achievement Council, education leaders, teachers, social workers, employers, and elected leaders have stated that for the state of Washington to achieve the increased educational attainment goals, a new level of collaboration and outreach at all levels will be necessary.

### **Proposal Purpose**

The purpose of the following proposal is to create a **sustainable program** to reach all of those who are in and/or could be in the educational system. In particular, the following groups need to be reached, connected with, and have their needs addressed:

1. High achieving K-12 students from poor families
2. All students in 6-7-8 grades to inform them about choices and opportunities
3. Low performing 6-7-8 graders
4. High school students, making choices for their future
5. Middle income families with students who qualify for secondary education, but don't qualify for aid or scholarship
6. Adults in the workplace with some college credits

The Sectors, through this proposal, will have the opportunity to reach out to each of the groups, in a creative approach, that has not been attempted in many parts of the State before. This approach would leverage the use of methods from other states, and programs already used in Washington (particular districts or areas). It will rely on the Sectors to create this approach, and make use of 2015 and future technology, to reach each of the above audiences and others who might be identified.

The Sectors recognize that many parents/teachers/students in our state do not understand the rich diversity of choices available to all the people in the state: rich, poor, first in family to attend a college of any type, or those who want a degree in a particular specialty, etc.

The end result of this portion of work by the Sectors will be:

1. Inform students in grades 6-7, and their parents, that college is a possibility for them. Graphically show them what needs to be done to prepare.
2. Inform those who have some college credits, but not a credential or a degree, that there are opportunities and possibilities for them.
3. To show those parents and their children who live near or at poverty level, that there are ways for each child to attend college.
4. Inform those students from middle income families, without spectacular grades, that they can attend college, graduate, and do it without overwhelming debt.

5. Ensure that all citizens of Washington will understand that the higher education system of the state, in its entirety, has the ability to satisfy the needs of practically any major.

### **Collaborative Multifaceted Approach**

What is needed is a more focused, intentional, and **collaborative effort** to make sure everyone is informed about the opportunities offered by colleges and universities and how it is possible for anyone to attend.

Through all forms of media - the internet, print, radio, and television - social workers, all levels of counselors, principals, superintendents, college presidents, elected leaders, leaders of industry, and very possibly notable personalities in the state need to deliver this coordinated message. In a way, we need an army of “college coaches” who are dedicated to make sure that every student and family has had the chance to fully consider what attending college may mean for their future, and are truly helped to find a way to attend if they wish.

The Sectors will have a complete and thorough understanding of the successful innovative programs to make sure each school district or community in the state has several options of what to implement in their particular area with the Sectors help. Examples of presentations include:

1. The Western Washington University Model
2. The Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Paper: Expanding College Opportunities for High Achieving, Low Income Students
3. The Rainer Scholars Program
4. Community Center for Educational Results

This type of coordinated messaging will take time and money. When it comes to money, **all sectors need to be part of the solution**. This is the kind of initiative that will help move the attainment level significantly along with the other work being done.

### **Necessary Resources**

The ideal would be to raise approximately \$15,000,000 over the next 6-7.5 years to provide all the services anticipated being needed to accomplish the Sector’s goal successfully and make this kind of outreach a normal part of the system.

The Sectors will be approaching the following entities, and others like them, to fund what will become a model in the United States for reaching out and supporting families and students in the educational system:

- Lumina Foundation - “...goal is to increase the higher education attainment rate...”
- Kreske Foundation - “...focus on expanding student access to higher education...”
- The Gates Foundation - “...strengthening collaborations to close opportunity gaps for low income communities and communities of color.”
- The Walmart Foundation - “...creating opportunities so people can live better.”
- College Spark of Washington - “...projects that focuses on the successful transition to college...”
- Paul G Allen family foundation- “To create meaningful change in the community we care deeply about”
- Starbucks Foundation – “...created as part of our commitment to strengthen communities”.
- Blue Mountain Foundation - “...Make grants in area communities that address the needs of education...”
- The Glaser Progress Foundation – “...aims to build a more just, sustainable and humane world.”
- M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust- “...to enrich the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest by providing grants and enrichment programs to organizations seeking to strengthen the region’s educational, spiritual, and cultural base in creative and sustainable ways...”

## **Improve Retention, Work the Pipeline, Provide Opportunity for All**

### Improve Retention K-20

By 4<sup>th</sup> grade there is sufficient knowledge available on each student to know which students need help catching up with his/her classmates. We assume that because of the McCleary decision by the Supreme Court, K-4 education funding will look much different in the future and results will be much more positive.

And by 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students, parents, counselors need to have a thorough grasp on the decisions that need to be made concerning educational outcomes. *Ready, Set, Grad* web site, and other sources of information are retention tools from the standpoint of helping those parents, students, counselors start to identify what the student aspires to do or dream about doing, and thus what education strengths the student must possess to enter that field.

Every college would like to improve upon retention numbers. Often "life gets in the way" of students that are enrolled in two year institutions. Often they drop out before seeking any counseling. For four year students, often they are in the wrong major, money is an issue, they don't seek alternative answers, and sometimes leave having incurred debt.

Non Traditional populations drop out at higher rate than traditional. Often they fall through the cracks before they ever contact anyone for help.

### Work the Pipeline

"Work the pipeline" speaks to the heightened awareness that current students in the K-12 system and their parents need to get the most out of the educational experience. Many tools are being used across the state very successfully that created heightened awareness, but are certainly not used universally in all communities in the state.

*Ready, Set, Grad* website and others, are recognized as great tools, but lack readership. Many are only presented in English. Currently there is not a strong website tool that addresses the concerns of those that have some college credit but not a certificate or degree.

College Bound and Gear Up were highly praised, but also lack the penetration or depth of supports necessary to positively affect all those that qualify.

### Opportunity for All

The Education Community has to reach out to all. Everyone needs to feel like they can participate.

The Education Community has to communicate its effectiveness in delivering the quality product it does, and not allow outside noise create doubts.

The two year, four year public and private institutions need to share data on students that have moved on without graduating so another part of the state can possibly recapture that person into the system. We need to create a system that is truly student centered.

## Suggested System Solutions

Improving retention, working the pipeline, and providing opportunity for all will always be a work in process. We will continually be learning from communities in the state, understanding better practices from other states, and understanding the whole dynamic of collective impacts on a population. But this is a start on being a more effective educational community as far as outreach and support is concerned.

1. When money is available, the Sectors should provide Innovation grants to 2 yr. public, 4 yr. public and 4 yr. private institutions that show a willingness to accelerate a program to innovatively bring back those adults with some credits or work experience that will be able to count for college credit, but have no certificate or degree.
2. The Sectors will initiate an informational campaign in multiple languages to communicate the tools available for successful education experience in the state of Washington. Promoting the system (2 yr. public, 4 yr. public, 4 yr. private) as one of the best/unique in the world – “You can get it all here”.
3. Work with WSAC to make *Ready, Set, Grad* a universally known tool for parents, counselors, and students. Prepare it in multiple languages. Work with the K-12 system/and/or communities to inject the site into their regular curriculum and/or information system for counseling/guiding students.
4. Prepare public service announcements in multiple languages promoting the virtue of education, what means for lifelong decision to get an adequate education.
5. Provide a grant to any 2 yr. public, 4 yr. public, and 4 yr. private institutions that will begin or expand a private coaching/mentoring/counseling program for incoming students of low income/underrepresented/English as second language or any data driven group that is identified problem for an institution.
6. Target support for College Bound K-12 students, help expand services on campuses where possible.