October 15, 2015

 University of Puget Sound

Tacoma, Washington

**MINUTES**

**Members attending:**

Marty Brown, Jeff Charbonneau, Maud Daudon, Paul Francis, Ray Lawton, Karen Lee, Gil Mendoza, Susana Reyes, Eric Pattison.

**Staff attending:**

Gene Sharratt, Aaron Wyatt, Alan Hardcastle, Becky Thompson, Betsy Hagen, Betty Lochner, Cristina Gaeta, Crystal Vaughan, Emily Persky, Gray Sterling, Karen Moton-Tate, Kristin Ritter, Lexi Shankster, Maddy Thompson, Marc Webster, Noreen Light, Rachelle Sharpe, Randy Spaulding, and Ryan Betz.

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Chair Maud Daudon.

A welcome was given by Academic Vice President, Kristine Bartanen. Ms. Bartanen shared the many exciting things happening at University of Puget Sound.

**Consent Agenda**

Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded by Council Member Gil Mendoza.

Motion carried by Council Member Paul Francis.

**August 13, 2015, Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion seconded by Council Member Paul Francis.

Motion carried by Council Member Marty Brown.

The new student representative on the, Eric Pattison was introduced, presented with a gift and welcomed to the Washington Student Achievement Council.

**Executive Update**

**Gene Sharratt, Ph.D. Executive Director**

Gene Sharratt provided members with a review of current agency work related to program administration and policy.

In Outreach and Advocacy:

* Pave the Way: WSAC staff hosted our second Pave the Way conference on October 5-6, offering multiple sessions aligned with the theme “Advancing Equity, Access, Readiness, & Support.” Gray Sterling and Cristina Gaeta gave an overview of the Pave the Way Conference. Each member of Council who attended the conference gave their thoughts of the conference as well.
* The 12th Year Campaign: The first component of the 12th Year Campaign, the American College Application Campaign, runs October 19 through November 20. We expect 80-100 participating sites, compared to 65 sites in 2014.
* FAFSA Completion Initiative: The FAFSA Completion Initiative has 60 percent of statewide school districts accessing the Portal. Staff are working with regional partners (namely Puget Sound ESD/CCER, WCAN, ESD 101, and the Rural Alliance) to expand access to this valuable tool.
* College Bound Scholarship: We have surpassed last year’s statewide College Bound Scholarship sign-up average of 89 percent (now at 91%). As mandated by recent legislation (2SSB 5851), College Bound staff and WSAC Communications are drafting a letter to CBS sophomores explaining the income qualifications to receive the scholarship when students enroll in college.

In Policy and Research:

* STEM Alliance: Representatives of the STEM Alliance continue their work on identification of progress indicators for the STEM dashboard. The dashboard, which will be introduced later this year, will complement the STEM Alliance’s annual report card to the Legislature.
* Residency: WSAC convened several training to support and facilitate implementation of new residency rules.
* Prior Learning Assessment Workgroup: The PLA Workgroup recently met to review progress on the implementation of SSB 5969, designed to award academic credit for military training.

In Program Updates:

* GEAR UP Workshop: GEAR UP’s recent workshop for 85 district staff provided a training related to fostering a growth mindset for students. Attendees also explored tools to help their students identify and pursue postsecondary scholarship opportunities.
* SFA Partner: The SFA Partner is a new, quarterly communications product designed to provide accurate information and timely updates to Financial Aid Administration professionals across Washington’s 68 institutions. The first SFA Partner was launched in October and is now available on our website.

**Roadmap Progress Data and Analysis**

* Gil Mendoza, Deputy Superintendent, OSPI
* David Prince, Director of Policy Research, SBCTC
* Paul Francis, Executive Director, COP
* Chadd Bennett, Director of Research & Outreach, ICW
* Alan Hardcastle, Director of Research, WSAC
* Randy Spaulding, Director of Academic Affairs & Policy, WSAC

The 2013 Roadmap report specified long-term participation and attainment goals for the state’s population through 2023. The report also identified specific policy and programmatic strategies endorsed by the Council to increase educational attainment. The Roadmap is updated every other year to serve as the basis for development and implementation of a Strategic Action Plan between each Roadmap cycle.

The 2015 update to the Roadmap includes core measures for Washington’s secondary and postsecondary education systems that can be used to show annual progress toward the long-term goals: high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion. Specific progress metrics were identified for each of these core measures.

For the 2015 Roadmap update, the Council agreed that the document should report on system-wide progress toward the participation and attainment goals. Council members also directed staff to examine the addition of select ‘leading indicators’ that relate to the core measures and represent areas where state policymakers can make an impact. Demographic breakdowns by age group, race/ethnicity, gender and income were also requested.

A Technical Work Group (TWG), comprising Council staff and representatives from OSPI and the two-year and four-year college systems, met four times between February and September to conduct extensive reviews of the data and design, data tables, and to review the initial results. Council staff also facilitated individual discussions and followed up with agencies and other stakeholders.

**Core Measures Findings:**

Educational Attainment for Washington’s Population

Educational attainment found high school achievement increased one percentage point to 90 percent showing gradual increases in completing a high school diploma or equivalent. Postsecondary attainment increased slightly by 1.2 percentage points to 51.2 percent.

High School Completion

High school completion rates have risen slightly over the past three years, to 77.2 percent, but are still too low to meet the state’s high school attainment by 2023.

Underrepresented groups – especially American Indian and Hispanic/Latino students, low income, and other special populations – show lower completion rates and higher drop-out rates compared to all students. Ensuring underrepresented groups succeed will boost high school completion rates and postsecondary participation.

Around 26 percent of 9th grade students fail at least one core academic course; these students have considerably lower GPAs than the average for all students. These are important early warning indicators.

Postsecondary Enrollment

Overall enrollments decreased slightly by 2.6 percent between 2011 and 2013, with two-year institutions seeing the largest overall declines in enrollment. Declines among private and for-profit intuitions were largest among all institutions. Apprenticeships, however, have increased 83 percent over the past four years. The declines, especially among students over the age of 25, suggest that more students are returning to the workforce as the economy improves.

Students that range in age from 18-24 saw slight increases at the undergraduate and graduate levels, while private for-profit institutions saw a 12-15 percent decline. Enrollment for students ages 25-39 declines by nearly 8 percent and those ages 40 and older decreased by over 12 percent.

It is encouraging that some underrepresented groups experienced enrollment gains, but not all groups saw increases. Hispanic or Latino, Two or More Races, and International enrollments grew between 2011 and 2013. These trends held across institution type and program level. American Indian, Alaskan Native, and African Americans saw declines. Changes in federal reporting for racial/ethnic categories may affect the results, and additional data is needed to confirm enrollment and completion trends among different race/ethnic groups.   Women continue to enroll in greater numbers than men. Apprenticeship growth was led by Whites, who comprised 73 percent of enrollments in 2014. Women also continue to enroll in greater numbers than men. Men accounted for 90 percent of Apprenticeship enrollments in 2014.

Signups for federal and state financial aid for postsecondary education are high and continues to grow.

Postsecondary Completion

Postsecondary awards rose 2.7 percent between 2010-11 and 2012-13, especially among students ages 18-25. Associate’s degrees led the increase, while certificates saw a 10 percent decline. Apprenticeship completions decreased 42 percent over the past four years. Declines in certificates and apprenticeship completions are associated with the shifting economy.

Hispanic or Latino, Two or More Races, and International recipients grew slightly. This trend held generally across degree type and institutions. Whites comprised 85 percent of all Apprenticeship completions in 2014. Declines in Apprenticeship completions were proportional across most race/ethnic categories.

Fall-to-fall rates for all four-year institutions remained steady at 84 percent between 2011 and 2013 (IPEDS). For all private two-year colleges, rates rose slightly to 73 percent. Public two-year colleges (non-IPEDS) saw a slight increase in students progressing toward a credential. There are still 700,000 adults that have some college, but no degree. Two-thirds of those have one year or more of college credits.

In conclusion, there needs to be higher rates of growth in high school completion, postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion to meet 2023 attainment goals.

This data will be integrated into the report and the TWG partners will review. They will present a draft of the report to the Council at the November 18 meeting. Input from the Council will be integrated and the final report will be approved at the December 10 meeting.

### GET Update

* Betty Lochner, Director of the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Program
* Ryan Betz, Associate Director for Marketing & Communications
* Betsy Hagen, Associate Director for GET Operations

Effective July 1, 2015, the Washington State Legislature passed the College Affordability Act, reducing tuitionat all public institutions of higher education in Washington. More specifically, the legislation does the following:

* Reduces tuition by 15 percent at UW and WSU (5 percent below 2014-15 levels in 2015-16, and another 10 percent below 2014-15 levels in 2016-17).
* Reduces tuition by 20 percent at CWU, EWU, WWU, and The Evergreen State College (5 percent below 2014-15 levels in 2015-16, and another 15 percent below 2014-15 levels in 2016-17).
* Reduces tuition by 5 percent in 2015-16 at community and technical colleges.
* Returns tuition-setting authority to the Legislature.
	+ Caps resident undergraduate tuition growth beginning in 2017-18 at the annual percentage growth rate of the median state wage.
	+ Provides for higher education funding enhancements to adjust for the revenue loss to the institutions from tuition reductions.

The legislation also directs the GET Committee to do the following:

* + Set the payout value at $117.82 per unit for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years.
	+ Make program adjustments it deems necessary and appropriate to ensure that the total payout value of each account is not decreased or diluted as a result of the initial application of any changes in tuition (beginning in the 2017-18 academic year).
	+ If the GET committee provides additional units as a result of E2SSB5954, the maximum number of units that can be redeemed in any year must be increased as well.
	+ Conduct a feasibility study to explore the following:
	+ Impact of tuition reductions on the funded status of the program and future unit prices.
	+ The feasibility of creating a 529 college savings program.
	+ Review alternatives of linking GET’s payout value from tuition and fees to cost of attendance.
	+ Alternatives/impacts of removing the state penalty for non-qualified withdrawals.

Since the passage of the College Affordability Act, the GET Committee has met three times and has made the following program policy decisions in order to provide GET account owners with additional protection and options as a result of lower tuition:

**1.) Updated the GET Refund Policy**

All GET customers have the choice to remain in the program, or they may request to refund all or a portion of the funds in their accounts without program refund penalties or fees, through December 15, 2016. Additionally, the two-year waiting period that typically applies to all accounts before they can be refunded will be waived. This gives customers who are concerned about the tuition policy changes the opportunity to move their savings into another investment, such as another 529 plan. Customers who refund their account(s) before December 15, 2016 will receive, at a minimum, the current unit payout value of $117.82/unit. Customers who paid more than the current payout value will receive the entire amount of their contributions.

**2.) Provided a Refund of the Amortization**

Since 2011, GET customers have paid an amortization fee as part of the unit purchase price. This fee was charged to ensure the program’s funded status recovered after the impacts of the Great Recession and years of double-digit tuition increases at state universities. The program’s funded status has already fully recovered (141 percent at last measurement), and this amortization amount is no longer needed, and will be refunded to every customer with unredeemed units purchased at $163/unit or greater. Customers entitled to an amortization refund do not need to take action in order to claim this refund. GET customers eligible for a refund will automatically be issued a check by December of 2015. Customers will receive this refund regardless of whether they choose to remain in the program or request a full refund of their account(s).

**3.) Delay the Sale of New Units for a Period up to Two Years**

Effective July 1, 2015, new enrollments and unit sales will be delayed for up to two years. This means that GET will not accept applications for new GET accounts and that current customers will not be able to purchase any new units until the restriction has been lifted. All accounts opened or contributions made after June 30, 2015, will be refunded to the account owner. One exception is that customers with existing Custom Monthly Plans may continue to make monthly payments in order to keep accruing their contracted units. The unit purchase delay protects GET customers during this transition period. GET is currently conducting a legislatively mandated feasibility study to evaluate future options for the program. It is important the program has answers to the questions in the feasibility study before it considers selling new units.

**4.) Freeze the Payout Value Indefinitely**

Effective September 2, 2015 the payout value for the GET program will remain $117.82 per unit until the time when one year of resident undergraduate tuition and state mandated fees at Washington State’s highest priced public university surpasses $11,782. GET customers will have peace of mind in knowing that they will not receive less than the current payout value for their account.

With these decisions in place, the GET Committee is left with answering the following three questions as part of the legislatively mandated feasibility study:

1.) What is the impact of tuition reductions on future unit prices?

2.) What is the feasibility of creating a 529 college savings program?

3.) What are some alternatives of linking GET’s payout value from tuition and fees to cost of attendance?

Moving forward, the GET Committee will conduct research to develop answers to these questions and will present their findings to the Legislative Fiscal and Higher Education Committees no later than December 1, 2016.

### Presentation to Marcie Maxwell

### Ms. Marcie Maxwell was presented with a plaque in recognition for her years of service to education and the students of Washington during her time as Governor Inslee’s Policy Advisor on Education. The Council and staff wish her well in her next endeavors.

### Legislative Priorities Advancing Educational Attainment

* Paul Francis, Executive Director, Council of Presidents
* Marty Brown, Executive Director, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
* Gil Mendoza, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
* Vi Boyer, President & CEO, Independent Colleges of Washington
* Maddy Thompson, Dir. of Policy & Govt. Relations, Washington Student Achievement Council

Council members representing education sectors presented their respective legislative agendas for 2016 highlighting the elements that advance the state’s Roadmap goals for educational attainment. Council members took this time to discuss opportunities for collaboration during the 2016 Legislative session. Council staff reviewed the Council’s 2016 agenda to aid this discussion.

During the 2015 Legislative session, the state’s Roadmap goals for educational attainment provided the foundation for WSAC’s Strategic Action Plan. In addition, these goals were a key component of the rationale supporting many of the policy and budget requests of education and higher education agencies and stakeholders.

At the August meeting, Council members selected strategies contained in the Strategic Action Plan to be pursued in the supplemental budget of 2016. The Council voted to request an additional $19 million in State Need Grant funding to serve more eligible students and to support the College Bound program and enhancements for activities that improve the success of participants.

WSAC recommended that the Governor and Legislature:

1. Provide an additional $19 million for State Need Grant to reduce the funding gap so an additional 4,500 students can be served. Over 27,000 students who were eligible did not receive a grant in 2014-15.
2. Maintain College Bound scholarship awards to meet the caseload forecast and provide $531,000 to enhance outcomes for College Bound Scholarship students

While the tuition reductions directed in 2015 Legislation (SB5954) will permit an investment in State Need Grant (SNG) to serve additional students due to reduced award amounts, 27,000 enrolled students who are eligible for the grant remain unserved. These students will have increased loan debt and higher rates of part-time and part-year attendance. A commitment to the state’s flagship grant program for low-income students of $19 million in 2016 would serve an additional 4,500 students with critical financial aid.

The SNG also provides the funding foundation for the College Bound Scholarship (CBS). The CBS has shown promising results as a dropout prevention and postsecondary success program. Approximately 15,690 students will be eligible for scholarship payments in 2016-17 (as of June 2015). The program has grown exponentially and the Council serves as the central administrator to ensure quality and frequent communications are provided to students, families, schools, and nonprofit organizations. Legislation enacted in 2015 (SB5851) added requirements. To meet these expectations the Council must expand administrative activities in communications, research, and data exchange to monitor scholarship eligibility.

Per Office of Financial Management direction, the Council is limiting any administrative supplemental requests to only those that constitute a non-discretionary change in legally mandated workloads or high-level priorities that support Results WA goals. Council administrative requests for 2016 are to support STEM education initiatives, increased oversight in consumer protection activities, and expenditure authority for the Aerospace Loan program.

* The Council is requesting $155,000 for the continuation of the STEM Alliance to advance STEM education initiatives and develop a web-based progress report. This work aligns with high-level policy priorities for Goal 1 in *Results WA.*
* The Council is charged with regulatory oversight providing students with consumer protection in the areas of degree authorization for out-of-state institutions doing business in Washington, monitoring of institutions participating in state financial aid programs, and oversight in the approval of Veterans Benefits. To provide resources to increase on-site technical assistance and outreach, the Council is requesting $223,000.
* The Aerospace Training Student Loan Account permits administrative expenditures from the fund but requires an appropriation. To align with the intent for the fund to eventually be self-sustaining and provide resources to administer the growing program, the agency is requesting $94,000 in expenditure authority.

**Recommended Changes to Minimum College Admission Standards for Public Baccalaureate Institutions**

* Randy Spaulding, Dir. of Academic Affairs & Policy, Washington Student Achievement Council
* Noreen Light, Associate Director, Washington Student Achievement Council

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) has the statutory authority and responsibility to “collaborate with the appropriate state agencies and stakeholders, including the state board of education, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, the workforce training and education coordinating board, and the four-year institutions of higher education to improve student transitions and success” (RCW 28B.77.020).

As part of this responsibility, the Council sets minimum college admission standards for public four-year institutions of higher education. The purpose of the minimum college admission standards is to ensure that students are well-prepared to succeed in achieving their postsecondary educational goals. The standards encourage diversity in the student population by recognizing multiple measures of college preparedness, including alternate routes to traditional admission pathways.

College admissions decisions are made by individual colleges, and vary depending on the type of institution and other factors. The Council established the minimum criteria students must meet to be eligible for admission.

Current minimum college admission standards for public four-year institutions include:

* 2.0 GPA
* Completion of College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADRs). CADRs are the minimum number of credits required in seven subject areas that a student must earn to be eligible for regular admission as a first-year student to a public baccalaureate institution in Washington:
	+ 4 credits of English
	+ 3 credits of math through Algebra II or Integrated Math III
	+ Senior Year Math-Based Quantitative Course
	+ 3 credits of social science
	+ 2 credits of lab science
	+ 2 credits of world language
	+ 1 credit of art
* Taking the SAT or ACT and having the scores sent directly to the college or university.

Staff recommended changes to the minimum college admission standards in two areas: admissions exams and college academic distribution requirements.

**Admissions Exams**

*Recommendation*

Official SAT or ACT test scores must be sent directly to the college or university to which a student is applying, unless the institution has implemented a test-optional policy. Test-optional policies must be implemented consistently and fairly and may include the use of other measures of college readiness including successful completion of dual credit coursework or exams or scores on high school exams such as the Smarter Balanced Assessment. Institutions must provide a copy of their admission exam policies to the Washington Student Achievement Council prior to implementation.

Other options considered:

Option 1: Official SAT or ACT test scores must be sent directly to the college or university to which a student is applying. (Retain current language.)

Option 2: Official SAT, ACT, or Smarter Balanced test scores must be sent to the college or university to which a student is applying.

**College Academic Distribution Requirements**

Science—Recommendation

Add a third credit in science. Does not need to be lab-based. (Effective 2021)

Senior Year Math-Based Quantitative Course—Recommendation

* Add Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science as a course which may fulfill the senior year quantitative requirement. (Effective immediately.)
* Clarify use of Bridge to College Mathematics to fulfill senior year math-based quantitative course. (Effective 2016)

Mathematics—Recommendation

No change.

Mathematics—Other Options Considered

Accept Bridge to College Mathematics as a course which may fulfill third credit of math. (Effective 2016) Note: Staff will revisit this option in 2 years when performance in college level coursework of students who took the bridge course can be adequately assessed.

English—Recommendation

Bridge to College English Language Arts fulfills one credit of literature, composition or elective English. (Effective 2016)

Arts Recommendation

No change. One credit of Arts, or substitute.

Arts—Other Options Considered

Option 1: Add a second credit of Arts, with substitution of one credit allowed to meet the student’s Personal Pathway Requirements as identified in the High School and Beyond Plan. (Effective 2021)

Option 3: Add a second credit of Arts, with substitution of up to two credits in other core areas allowed.

**Public Comment**

Nova Gattman from the Workforce Education and Coordinating Board is concerned about what’s not being considered for minimum college admission requirements.

She believes there is content in the current policy about the importance of college and career readiness, but there is nothing about encouraging students to explore actual work experience or career readiness reflected in current or the proposed change to admission requirements.

She further explained that there is a problem with the number of people who are exiting education programs at the K-12 and postsecondary level with little or no work experience or even solid thoughts about their next steps. This is a particular issue for young people ages 20-24, who have seen their unemployment rates increase from 6% to 14.3% in the last 15 years.

She said we can’t expect all students to know exactly what they want to “be when they grow up” just by virtue of wanting to go on to postsecondary education. Postsecondary institutions are limited in how much they can do in regard to career exploration and counseling. The recession forced a lot of cuts to good programs in support services, and there is still a lot of catching up to do.

Ensuring that young people have good career counseling and an opportunity to explore future options and pathways has to be a team effort with the K-12 and postsecondary system.

She suggested, the Council consider additional gaps in student success. Graduation and credential attainment aren’t the only factors which determine success.

The Workforce Board would enjoy partnering with WSAC to strongly encourage students to explore work experiences and internships prior to entering postsecondary education to help insure graduates are finding jobs in their fields, earning living wages, and are prepared to enter the workforce. Career exploration should be encouraged at all levels.

**Adult Reengagement through Innovative Program Delivery**

* Matthew Sparke, Dir. of Integrated Social Services Program, University of Washington
* Jean Floten, Chancellor, Western Governors University (WGU) Washington
* Jan Yoshiwara, Deputy Executive Dir. of Education, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

At the August meeting, Council members reiterated the importance of pursuing strategies in the Roadmap aimed at increasing the attainment of adults who do not have and who are not pursuing a postsecondary credential. During this agenda item, Council members heard from representatives of three of the state’s postsecondary education sectors about specific programs and initiatives aimed at increasing attainment of this population.

Meeting the state’s Roadmap goals will require innovative strategies and programs. Postsecondary institutions and leaders will need to draw from all possible populations and initiate a variety of strategies to improve recruitment, access, and completion. One segment of the population we need to attract to postsecondary education is adults without a postsecondary credential.

About 50 percent of Washington’s adult population, age 25-44, has a postsecondary credential. Successful recruitment and retention strategies for this population can dramatically increase individual career prospects and the economic prosperity of our state.

The community and technical college system, the Western Governors Association, regional four-year institutions and research institutions, are all educating adults and developing new and better ways of delivering programs to meet their needs and improve completions. Some of the strategies include e-learning and hybrid offerings, providing credit for prior learning, delivering education through a competency-based model, providing online support services, and mentoring, among others.

Re-engaging adults who have not completed or never accessed postsecondary education is critical for meeting the state’s education attainment goals. The Council heard three presentations on strategies to re-engage adults in postsecondary education from Matthew Sparke, Jean Floten, and Jan Yoshiwara.

Council Chair Maud Daudon adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.