

Title	Executive Update
Staff lead	Gene Sharratt
Position	Executive Director
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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/Discussion <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

Roadmap Communications – Media Outreach

Council Action

Review only.

Description

As identified in the Roadmap communications plan, the Council’s communications team will continue to support media outreach campaigns related to the 2015 Roadmap. Common areas of support include the following:

1. Columns/Op-eds – We will look for opportunities to promote columns related to the Roadmap and Strategic Action Plan priorities’.
2. Editorial Boards – Communications staff will support editorial board appointments beginning in December and continuing through the legislative session.
3. Media Inquiries – Communications will use the agency communications protocols to provide prompt and accurate information to reporters as requested.

Successful execution of our editorial board appointments will require participation from the following:

1. *Communications*: Responsible for contacting papers and securing a general commitment to host an editorial board meeting.
2. *Communications and Government Relations*: Responsible for updating talking points for the meeting. Directors may attend meetings as needed.
3. *Executive Assistant’s Team*: Responsible for coordinating schedules with the newspaper, the ED, and attending Council members to secure dates/times that will work.
4. *Gene and Council members*: Responsible for attending meetings when schedules allow. Council members may also need to capitalize on existing relationships with media to secure editorial board appointments.

Our objective is two columns and three editorial board visits. The obstacles to success include the following:

1. Limited resources. Budget, personnel, and printing constraints at our regional papers.
2. Legislative Session: High volume of competing demands.
3. Topic: Education is priority number one, but the topic already gets top bill in many outlets.

Background

The media outreach plan is one component of the comprehensive Roadmap & Strategic Action Plan Communications Plan.

The Council previously engaged in editorial board outreach upon release of the 2014 Strategic Action Plan. As part of the tour, Council members solicited opportunities to visit with regional editorial boards including, but not limited to, the following:

1. The Wenatchee World
2. The Olympian
3. The Everett Herald
4. The Columbian
5. The Daily News
6. The News Tribune
7. The Spokesman Review
8. The Yakima Herald
9. The Seattle Times
10. The Columbia Basin Herald

Those engagements resulted in two editorial board meetings:

1. The Wenatchee World on December 19
2. The Olympian on January 21

During the 2015 Legislative Session, regional media released several columns in support of the attainment goals and the Strategic Action Plan priorities. A highlight of those articles is below:

Date	Paper	Article title (subject)
01/12/15	Seattle Times	Opinion: State lawmakers have to get it right on funding education by Mary Jean Ryan [Fund State Need Grant]
01/29/15	Seattle Times	Editorial: 3 ways the Legislature can help community-college students [#1: Fund State Need Grant]
02/18/15	Tacoma News Tribune	Bill would make dual-credit high school/college courses more affordable for families
03/01/15	Seattle Times	Keep higher education healthy and affordable [Protect maintenance funding, State Need Grant]
03/29/15	Spokesman Review	Jeff Charbonneau: Legislature should allow all students equal access to dual credit
04/02/15	Seattle Times	Freeze or cut college tuition, but make up for lost revenue [Protect maintenance funding, affordability model]



November ED Update

Gene Sharratt, Ph.D. | Washington Student Achievement Council



Dr. Gil Mendoza - Council member

WSAC Staff -

Weiya Liang

Dr. Rachelle Sharpe

Maddy Thompson

Sarah Weiss

Washington D.C. - October

Two-Month Review

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.

The Executive Director Update handout is available in the meeting materials packet.

Agency Update Two-Month Executive Summary

Project	Recent Work
Outreach and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Financial Aid: Student Financial Aid staff have had a busy fall attending multiple conferences and providing trainings. Recent events include the Washington Financial Aid Association fall conference (Tacoma), the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (Washington D.C.), the “Reach Higher - FAFSA Completion” convening (Washington D.C.), the 2015 Blueprint for Success Conference (Los Angeles), and legislative workgroup sessions on higher education affordability and governance (Maryland). • Academic Affairs: Academic Affairs staff travelled across the state to present updates on WSAC activities and listen for what might be on the radar as concerns from stakeholder groups. Recent events include meetings with the Intercollegiate Relations Commission, the Advising and Counseling Council (ACC) of the CTCs, the Annual Statewide PLA Conference (at Central Washington University), and the Dual Credit Workshop at Big Bend Community College. • GEAR UP: Washington State GEAR UP partnered with directors and staff of eight western state GEAR UP programs to convene the 9th annual GEAR UP West regional conference in Boise, Idaho in late October.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roadmap: The 2015 Roadmap Update will assess the state’s progress towards meeting the educational attainment goals, and will explore potential policies and programs of impact. • The Affordability Symposium: The Symposium will engage stakeholders in the development of a Washington Affordability Framework. • Financial Aid Authorization: WSAC staff have continued their commitment to education reform and student protection, working closely to support students earning their degree at a time when the state budget is closing (Interface (Spokane)).
research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residency: WSAC staff is working on the annual college survey of new HB 1079 presumed undocumented student affidavit submissions. • Prior Learning Data: Data from all campuses on the number of students receiving PLA credit and the number of credits awarded for PLA is currently being collected for use in the annual PLA Report to the Legislature. • Dual Credit: The U.S. Department of Education is inviting postsecondary institutions, in partnership with public secondary schools or local education agencies, to apply to participate in an experiment to allow use of federal Pell grants to fund dual credit courses for low-income students.

Recent Highlights



Outreach & Advocacy

SFA and PPR conferences and events;
GEAR UP West

Programs

GET; 12th Year; FAFSA; CBS

Policy & Research

Affordability Symposium; Policy work; 2015
Roadmap Update; 2016 Leg Session

Roadmap 2015 Update - Communications Support



Packet Items

1. Roadmap Communications Plan
2. Media Outreach Overview
3. Agency Engagement

2016 Legislative Session

- Processes and Protocols Discussion



Gene Sharratt, Ph.D.
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**Agency Update
Two-Month Executive Summary**

Project	Recent Work
Outreach and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Student Financial Aid</u>: Student Financial Aid staff have had a busy fall, attending multiple conferences and providing trainings. Recent events include the Washington Financial Aid Association fall conference (Tacoma), the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (Washington D.C.), the Reach Higher - FAFSA Completion convening (Washington D.C.), the 2015 Blueprint for Success Conference (Los Angeles), and legislative workgroup sessions on higher education affordability and governance (Maryland). ● <u>Academic Affairs</u>: Academic Affairs staff travelled across the state to present updates on WSAC activities and listen for what might be on the radar as concerns from stakeholder groups. Recent events include meetings with the Intercollege Relations Commission, the Advising and Counseling Council (ACC) of the CTCs, the Annual Statewide PLA Conference (at Central Washington University), and the Dual Credit Workshop at Big Bend Community College. ● <u>GEAR UP</u>: Washington State GEAR UP partnered with directors and staff of eight western state GEAR UP programs to convene the 9th annual GEAR UP West regional conference in Boise, Idaho in late October.
Policy and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>The Roadmap</u>: The 2015 Roadmap Update will assess the state's progress towards meeting the educational attainment goals, and will explore potential policies and programs of impact. ● <u>The Affordability Symposium</u>: The Symposium will engage stakeholders in the development of a Washington Affordability Framework. ● <u>Degree Authorization</u>: WSAC staff have continued their commitment to education consumer protection, working closely to support students earning their degree at a college that is closing (Interface College - Spokane). ● <u>Prior Learning Data</u>: Data from all campuses on the number of students receiving PLA credit and the number of credits awarded for PLA is currently being collected for use in the annual PLA Report to the Legislature.
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>GET</u>: The GET Committee will meet December 3 to continue to explore the implications of adopting a state 529 plan. On November 19, Committee members will provide a presentation to the GET Legislative Advisory Committee and the Senate Higher Education Committee. ● <u>The 12th Year Campaign</u>: The 12th Year Campaign includes the American College Application Campaign and College Goal Washington. As of November 1, we have a 17 percent growth in 12th Year Campaign sites.

- The FAFSA Completion Initiative: As of November 1, 77 percent of the districts in the state have returned an agreement to gain access to the FAFSA portal.
- College Bound Scholarship: WSAC staff worked with the office of Governor Inslee to honor (via letter/award) the 110 top CBS sign up districts.

Roadmap & Strategic Action Plan

- Communications Plan -

Aaron Wyatt
Communications Director

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I. Challenges

- With a recurring publication requirement, staff must also develop a comprehensive system of review and revision to ensure that future reports are delivered by deadlines.
- Delivery of the plan is but the first step. To affect change, successive work, outreach, and collaboration will be required.

II. Goals and Objectives

Agency Goal: The Council will produce both a Strategic Action Plan and Roadmap report. Both products align with the agency's mission:

We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. In pursuit of our mission, the Washington Student Achievement Council:

- *Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.*
- *Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.*
- *Advocates for the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education*

In support of that goal, communications has identified two primary objectives:

1. The reports will be submitted by deadline.
2. The Council will develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships to support the implementation of recommendations within the Strategic Action Plan.

III. Internal Audit

The Council

Established as a cabinet-level state agency in July 2012, the Washington Student Achievement Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington. The Council proposes improvements and innovations needed to adapt the State's educational institutions to evolving needs and advocates for increased financial support and civic commitment for public education in recognition of the economic, social, and civic benefits it provides.

The nine-member Council includes five citizens, a current student, and one representative from each of the state's four major educational sectors. Agency staff supports the work of the Council, performing assigned functions and managing student financial aid programs.

Strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy responsibilities:

- Propose goals and recommend resources to increase educational attainment by means of a ten-year Roadmap and a short-term Strategic Action Plan.
- Propose improvements and innovations needed to address the state's evolving educational needs.

- Advocate for higher education and educate the public on the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education.
- Connect and align work of educational programs, schools, and institutions to support student transitions from secondary and postsecondary education to the workforce.
- Facilitate analysis and research to increase educational attainment and system development.
- Assess the need for additional degrees and programs throughout the state.
- Improve student success by setting minimum college admission standards and by supporting students' transitions through all phases of education.
- Protect education consumers by authorizing out-of-state institutions to operate in Washington and by monitoring program quality and finances.
- Represent the broad public interest above the interests of the individual institutions of higher education.

Program administration responsibilities:

- Ensure the quality of state financial aid programs and services that support educational access and affordability.
- Provide college savings opportunities through the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program.
- Prepare underrepresented middle and high school students for postsecondary education through early outreach and success programs such as College Bound and GEAR UP.

Partnerships: Per RCW 28b.77, the Student Achievement Council closely collaborates with the following agencies and organizations:

- Four-year Institutions (The Council of Presidents)
- The Independent Colleges of Washington
- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges
- The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- The Washington State Board of Education
- Washington Stem

Council - Mission

We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. In pursuit of our mission, the Washington Student Achievement Council:

- Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.
- Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.
- Advocates for the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education.

Key communications staff pertinent to the work

Communications Director: The Communications Director, a member of the agency's executive leadership team, is charged with developing and implementing a comprehensive and strategic communication program to support agency and Council goals and objectives. The director helps the Council and senior managers, including the executive and deputy directors, in the identification of communications objectives and strategies in support of the agency's mission, vision, and internal plan goals. The director also oversees execution of communications tactics and identifies evaluation measures.

The director is responsible for the coordination of communications products for the agency's executive office, and the divisions of government affairs, policy and academic affairs, research and planning, access and support, and student financial assistance. The director also works closely with the marketing team for GET.

Management of staff is a crucial component of this position. The director must be able to employ staff resources with maximum effectiveness. To this end, the director must be committed to staff development and the use of effective leadership practices.

Communications Program Manager: The Council Communications Program Manager serves as the lead media point of contact for the agency. She is also responsible for stakeholder management, project management, and the drafting and publication of media and web content.

Communications Program Manager (2): The Council Communications Manager also assists the Communications Director in the development and implementation of communications plans. The communications manager oversees communications deliverables related to the Access and Support Division and serves the primary web content manager for ReadySet.Grad.org.

Senior Communications & Projects Consultant: The Council's Senior Communications and Projects Consultant plays an integral role in the implementation of communications deliverables, from reports to publications to web and graphic content. The consultant takes a lead role on many internal communications deliverables.

Policy statements, protocols, statutes, and rules related to the work

Among its many duties, the Council has the primary assignment to prepare a Ten-Year Roadmap to increase Washington's educational attainment level (RCW 28B.77.020). In support of this plan, the Council will also provide a short-term Strategic Action Plan every two years. The Strategic Action Plan should be delivered to the Governor and Legislature by December 1 in odd numbered years.

IV. Situational Analysis

Key Publics - Annotated

Key publics represent target audiences who need to know, need to support, or need to take action in the successful implementation of a communications plan.

Public	Annotation
Council Members	Council members are the lead agents in the development of the Roadmap and the Strategic Action Plan. Council members will actively promote the reports' priorities beyond regularly scheduled Council meetings.
Committee Members	Committees will work to identify policies and programs in support of the Roadmap. The committees will also be instrumental in informing the Strategic Action Plan. The Council must be deliberate in maintaining and strengthening communications with committee members.
Council Staff	Council staff will take the lead on the development of the Roadmap and Strategic Action Plan content, disseminating the report to various key publics. The Communications team will take a direct role in facilitating staff's role in this process.
Governor's Office	The Governor is a crucial partner, one necessary for the successful implementation of the reports' recommendations. The Governor's office should be made aware of the recommendations early enough for possible inclusion in the Governor's proposed budget.
Legislators	Legislators, including representatives of all education committees, the Joint select committee, and fiscal leadership, will have the power to advance the reports' recommendations. Their willingness to support the proposals will hinge on clear and compelling communications.
Media	Media will need easy access to information related to and in support of the reports' recommendations. In addition to active media outreach strategies via advisories and web and social media content, Council staff will also ensure that the information hosted on the website is accurate and timely. Effective answers to media enquiries should also follow suit.
Two- and Four-Year Public Colleges, Private Colleges, and Universities and Agencies	Postsecondary institutions and agencies could be key supporters of Roadmap and Strategic Action Plan. Prioritized actions, outlined in the report, might also be called out in separate and independent media designed for postsecondary audiences.
Postsecondary Institutions (Private, Workforce Training, etc.) and agencies	

Public	Annotation
P-12 Educators Administrators	The Roadmap and Strategic Action plan may include priorities pertinent to the P-12 community. Using Council Conversations, web media, social media, and direct outreach, communications will ensure that these stakeholders have access to accurate and timely information.
P-12 schools, agencies, and organizations	Agencies such as the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the Washington State School Directors Association, the Association of Washington School Principals, the Washington Education Association, the Washington Parent Teacher Association, the Washington Association of School Administrators, the Association of Educational Service Districts, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, among others, will be valued stakeholders to the work of improving education for Washington’s students. Positive relationships with and effective communications to these stakeholders will create potential for greater support.
Students (multi-level)	As students will be affected by the recommendations of both reports, Council staff will work with the student representative to solicit student feedback.
Underserved Communities	Many different groups fall within this ‘hard-to-reach’ constituency. Though we will continue to maintain deliberate electronic outreach, our most effective connections with underserved communities will likely manifest in face-to-face outreach.
Education Advocacy Groups	Education advocacy groups, such as the Excellent Schools Now Coalition, build and allocate political capital in support of projects that they feel will benefit schools in Washington. While most priorities are directed at P-12, the Council should still look for opportunities for mutual engagement. Council staff should therefore ensure that regular and accurate communications related to Roadmap work is available.
Business Communities	Increased educational attainment for Washington students is a direct benefit for Washington businesses. Staff will facilitate engagement opportunities so that representatives from the business communities have the opportunity to provide input on the reports’ priorities.

Media Analysis – Editorials / News Analysis

Date	Paper	Article title (subject)
01/12/15	Seattle Times	Opinion: State lawmakers have to get it right on funding education by Mary Jean Ryan [Fund State Need Grant]
01/29/15	Seattle Times	Editorial: 3 ways the Legislature can help community-college students [#1: Fund State Need Grant]
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V. Communication Targets

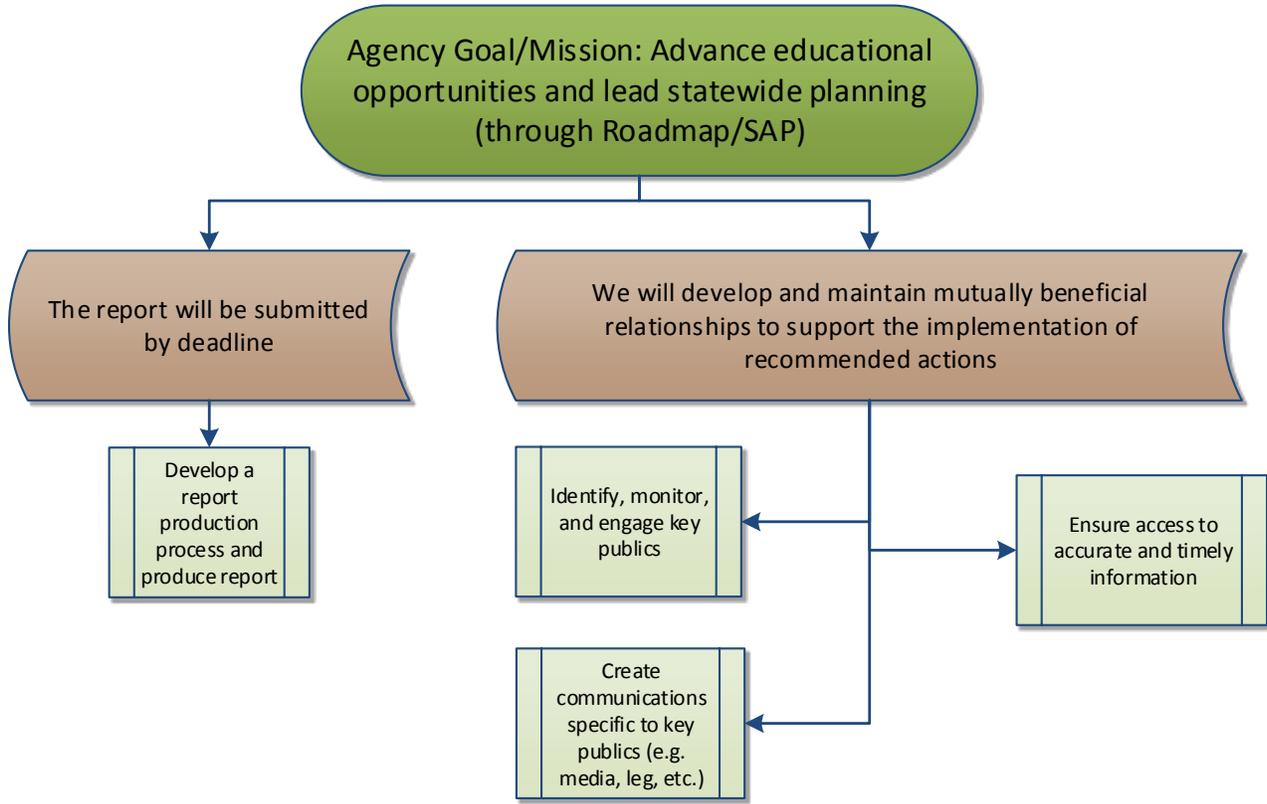
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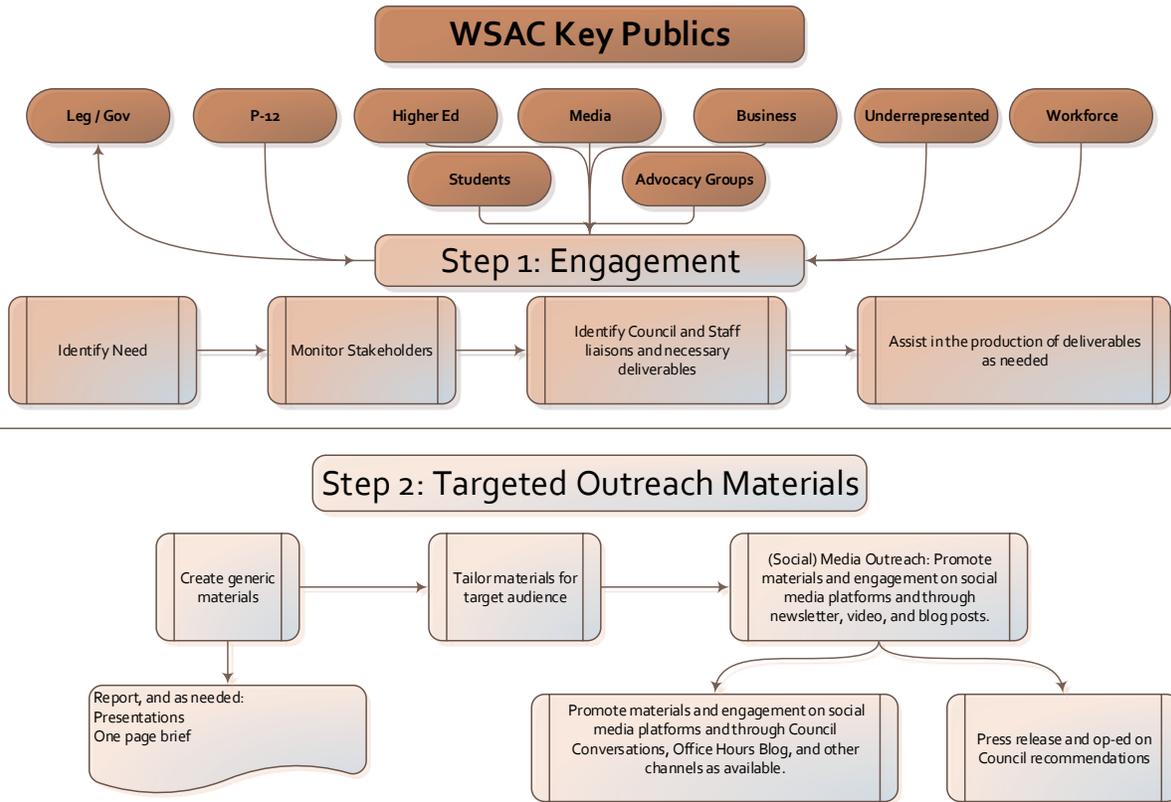
- *Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.*
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In support of that goal, communications has identified two primary objectives:

1. The reports will be submitted by deadline.
2. The Council will develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships to support the implementation of recommendations within the Strategic Action Plan.



VI. Communications Tactics - Diagram



VII. Communications Strategies and Tactics - Table

Objective: Action – The Strategic Action Plan will be submitted by deadline		
Strategies	Tactics	Evaluation
Develop a Strategic Action Plan production process and produce report	Develop and monitor timeline for the production process, including key dates for the development and Council Approval	March
	Confirm printing options and anticipated delivery windows	November
	Revise word templates	
	Develop an outline, identifying key components of writing sections	August
	Develop a branding theme board for the final report (colors, typography, sections)	June
	Transfer all charts from the word version into final form	November
	Finalize report	November
Objective: Action: Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships		
Strategies	Tactics	Evaluation
Identify, monitor, and engage key publics	Coordinate agency outreach through strategic engagement and distribution of messages	Ongoing
	Develop and maintain a media database	Ongoing
	Monitor key publics communications channels	Daily
	Alert staff to communications items of interest or opportunities for engagement	Weekly
	Coordinate communications support for staff outreach related to the report	As needed
	Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Ongoing
	Create a clearinghouse of third-party materials pertinent to the work of the Roadmap	Ongoing
	Implement social media campaign related to the reports	Weekly
	Publish report- related pieces in partner newsletters	First Quarter
	Publish media advisory announcing release of report plan	December
	Produce an op-ed (as needed)	TBD
	Engage editorial Boards (where appropriate)	TBD
	Ensure access to accurate and timely information	Ensure all materials are placed appropriate on the website in a timely manner
Utilize recurring social media messaging (consistent with branding)		Ongoing
Respond to stakeholder requests to information promptly, same day turnaround		Ongoing
Review website materials for accuracy		By schedule

Create communications specific to the Legislature	Update distribution lists for the Legislature	December
	Send the report electronically with a cover sheet to Legislature and Governor	December
	Provide support for materials (presentations, handouts) for assembly days)	November
	Develop a PowerPoint in support of the report	November
	Produce two report-related entries for the Council blog – send link to key legislators	First Quarter
	Include at least one report--related piece in Council Conversations – send to Leg	First Quarter
	Provide support for legislative testimony, correspondence, and materials.	Ongoing
	Create a Legislative Leave Behind document, that provides both an overview of the Council and a closer look at the Strategic Action Plan	December

VIII. Tasks Timeline

	2015						2016					
Strategies	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Develop a Strategic Action Plan production process and produce report	Develop timeline for production process	Develop outline of report			Confirm printing options Develop branding theme Finalize report							
Identify, monitor, and engage key publics	Develop and maintain stakeholder database	Develop and maintain media database (Evernote)	Monitor stakeholder communications channels	Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Alert staff to communications items of interest and engagement opportunities	Produce media advisory announcing release of report	Coordinate communications support for staff outreach	Media: Op eds / Editorial Boards / Partner Communications Channels	Create a clearinghouse of third-party materials pertinent to the work of the Roadmap, via Evernote	→		
Ensure access to accurate and timely information	Ensure materials are posted on website	Utilize recurring social media messaging consistent with Council branding	Respond to stakeholder inquiries promptly	Review website materials for accuracy	→							

Strategies	2014						2015					
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Create communications specific to the Legislature	Provide support for legislative testimony, correspondence, and materials											

Agency Engagement

The Washington Student Achievement Council engages with our key publics through internal and external channels. These engagement opportunities ensure that our stakeholders:

- Stay abreast of Council work.
- Have opportunities to provide meaningful feedback.
- Have opportunities to partner with the Council on projects of mutual interest.

Key Publics	Legislators Governor, and staff	Legislators Governor, and staff	Early Learning & K-12	Early Learning & K-12	Higher Education	Higher Education	Under represented communities	Under represented communities	Business	Business	Students	Students	State Education Agencies	State Education Agencies	Education advocacy groups	Education advocacy groups	Media
Internal Channels																	
Workgroups	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	
Committees	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	
Conferences	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	
Outreach	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
External Channels																	
Meetings	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			
Workgroups	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow			
Conferences			Green	Yellow									Green	Yellow			
Outreach							Green	Yellow					Green	Yellow			

KEY:

Green: Receives updates on agency work.

Yellow: Solicited for feedback and provided opportunities for engagement in the Council’s work.

Orange: An active partner in the work.

Channels

The agency employs multiple communications channels to maintain and foster collaborative partnerships with our key publics. Our internal communications channels include the following:

- **Workgroups:** The Disability Task Force, the ISLS Coalition, and the NGA STEM project.
- **Committees:** The Committee for Student Support, the Committee for Funding and Affordability, and the Committee for Academic Affairs and Policy.
- **Conferences:** Pave the Way Conference.
- **Outreach:** Agency representatives engage in outreach across the state and to multiple groups. Agency communications provides supporting materials for these engagements. Further, agency communications employs several electronic channels (websites, social media, email, listservs, etc.) to foster relationships with key publics.

Agency partners also provide opportunities for engagement. External communications channels examples include:

- **Meetings:** State agency recurring meetings, cabinet meetings.
- **Workgroups:** The Achievement and Accountability Workgroup (SBE), Seattle Chamber of Commerce Business Roundtable.
- **Conferences:** PTW; WSSDA/AWSP Educators’ Conference, OSPI Summer Counselors’ Institute.

- Outreach: Our partners can use their own communications vehicles to amplify opportunities for engagement. Examples include external social media channels, newsletters, and print materials.