Advisory Committee Meeting | October 26, 2016
Meeting Notes

Welcome (9.00 – 9.15 AM)
The meeting opened with a welcome from Joseph Martin, Director of Education for the Muckleshoot Tribe.

Introductions (9.15 – 9.20 AM)
The Washington Student Achievement Council led the Advisory Committee members present in a round of introductions.

Meeting Goals (9.20 – 9.25 AM)
Christina Sedney then gave an overview of the meeting goals, which were: provide a project status update, present additional quantitative data, present the preliminary report, and solicit feedback on the preliminary report.

Project Status Update (9.25 – 9.30 AM)
Sedney then went on to update the group on the status of the project. She noted that the project team was collecting a bit more quantitative data to include in the final report as well as pursuing some final phone interviews.

Present Additional Quantitative Data (9.30 – 9.45 AM)
Dennis Jones then updated the group on additional quantitative data analyzed by the team since the last meeting. He began with an overview of transportation data, sharing that transportation is a barrier to access when we look at commuting patterns and that public transportation is clearly not a solution in southeast King County given the current landscape. He noted that this bolsters the case that a local option is needed for students.

Jones went on to share data on average commuting times in the area, highlighting that the vast majority of southeast King County residents commute by personal vehicle and that average commute length was over 30 minutes. He also pointed out that the small number of area residents who do use public transit of some kind face extremely long average commute times of well over an hour.

He also shared data obtained from SPEEA (the aerospace employees union) on Boeing employees from southeast King County and their commutes from their zip code of residence, noting that for the most part people tend to work closer to where they live.

Jones then shared transfer data from the area's community and technical colleges. He noted that the largest number of Green River transfer students end up at Central Washington, followed by UW Tacoma, and then UW Seattle.

For Highline Community College, Central Washington is also the leading transfer destination and UW Tacoma and UW Seattle also round out Highline's top transfer partners. Renton Technical College transfers a much smaller number of students given its different mission, however for those who do transfer the top three destinations are: Central Washington, UW Tacoma, and Eastern Washington.

Jones then compared the transfer out rates (as a percentage of FTE enrollment) of the area community and technical colleges compared to the statewide overall average, the statewide community college average and the statewide technical college average. This reveals that Highline's transfer out percentage is higher than the state average (9.7 percent compared to 7.9 percent among all state community colleges), while Green River's is below at 6.5 percent. The takeaway seems to be that since Green River is the most proximate to the study area, there may be a case to be made that since students who start at Green River transfer at less than the statewide average perhaps there is a shortage of places for Green River students to conveniently transfer. This reinforces the point that upper division postsecondary options are what are missing.

Randy Spaulding commented that the Central Washington Highline center is why Central captures so much of the transfer – and contributes to Highline's particularly high transfer out percentage.

Present Preliminary Report (9.45 AM – 10.30 AM)

Demarée Michelau then presented the preliminary report, providing an overview of the key takeaways of each section of the preliminary report (which was shared via hard copy with each meeting attendee).

Overview of Southeast King County

She began with an overview of the study area, noting that key factors were: the area's growing population and increasing diversity, the high percentage of adults without a degree, the relatively average income levels for the area, and the prevalence of lengthy car commutes which affect area residents' mobility.

Jones noted that a very high proportion of southeast King County residents commute outside the region for work and Michelau added that there are even reports of traffic jams in the small city of Enumclaw during rush hour.

Postsecondary Landscape

Michelau went on to provide an overview of the area's postsecondary landscape, noting that in terms of public two-year options the area is served by Green River College and Renton Technical College, and Highline College is fairly close by as well. On the four-year side the state's public universities all serve the area, though none are in or immediately proximate to southeast King County. These are: Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, University of Washington, The

Evergreen State College, Washington State University, and Western Washington, University. The area is also served by Western Governor's University – Washington, a private nonprofit institution that is fully online and offers bachelor's and master's degree programs. WGU – Washington serves 10,000 students in Washington and about 300 of their students pursuing bachelor's degrees live in the southeast King County area.

The region is also served by the Muckleshoot Tribal College. The Tribal College is not currently accredited but offers programs in partnership with other institutions based on the needs of the community. Currently the Muckleshoot Tribal College has partnerships with Green River, Northwest Indian College, and The Evergreen State College.

Michelau added that the report will also be reviewed by WICHE's Cooperative for Educational Technology to see if they have any additional feedback on distance education providers potentially serving the area outside of WGU – Washington.

Economic Demand and Workforce Needs
Michelau went on to discuss the key takeaways from the economic demand and workforce needs section. She noted that despite hearing anecdotally about the need for more graduates in IT and Computer Science, the data did not bear this out. Nursing however, based on both qualitative and quantitative data does appear to be a high need area. Teachers also appear to be undersupplied based on interviews – though they don't show up in Burning Glass data. However, the Burning Glass data does show a need for educational professionals at the sub-baccalaureate level. Finally, the Burning Glass data did show demand for baccalaureate-level employees in the hospitality, food, and tourism sector – but average salaries for these positions are quite low – particularly for the region.

Jones added that IT may in fact be in demand from area residents who would like high paying jobs – but that these jobs are likely located in Seattle's downtown core so don't show up in the area's workforce demands. Regan Bolli asked if that isn't a factor that should be considered though and Jones replied that it is. He further responded that it will be important to build an educational response that recognized uncertainty, with a flexible deliver model. Jones noted that *if* you can build a cohort for a program, then you can find a provider and that you should build a model based on that philosophy.

Assessment of need
Michelau then described the report's assessment of need: traditional-aged students are served by the current postsecondary offerings; there is a high population of some college, no degree adults and limited completion options for this group; and in the high-demand nursing field, there is no local, brick and mortar pathway to a BSN.

Jean Floten noted that Bellevue Community College has an RN to BSN program and Mark Lanza asked how this reflects the idea of kids who want to college but may not be able to afford it. Randy Spaulding added that Green River has an LPN program and that Renton has associate's transfer RN program, and that WGU – Washington offers RN to BSN. Lanza added that UW offers a master's program for RNs.

Michelau replied that people who get a degree at Renton may transfer later, but that this isn't captured in the data. Michael Wark noted that UW Tacoma has an RN to BSN program. Floten then asked for the what actual number is associated with the number of some college, no degree folks in southeast King County – rather than just a percentage. Michelau replied that not including this in the report was an oversight on the part of the project team and that they would add this into the next iteration of the report.

Joseph Martin then asked, in relation to the economic demand and workforce needs presented, if these all refer to jobs that would provide family sustaining wages. Bolli noted that in the Covington City Council meeting the previous evening that a representative of MultiCare was surprised to hear that the project team's interview with MutltiCare's leadership suggested that there was a demand for nurses with sub-baccalaureate credentials and that as far as the MultiCare representative at the council knew, MutltiCare's demand was for nurses with BSNs and this had been confirmed by a conversation with a MultiCare Vice President. Bolli added that Valley medical's demand was also for nurses with BSNs.

Randy Spaulding noted that WSAC has done a great deal of analysis assigning educational levels to occupations, and that at times the lowest level of educational attainment required in a job posting is not actually indicative of the educational levels of those who are actually hired – that they are more of a baseline. He added that for nursing in particular, national statistics such as the Bureau of Labor analyses link demand for RNs to Associate's Degrees as that is the baseline level of education required – but most employers are still looking for BSNs. To correct for this, WSAC uses Census projections to additionally inform their analyses.

Earl Gibbons noted that the Institute of Medicine's Future of Nursing report established a goal of hospitals having 80 percent of nurses with a BSN, but that there is currently a shortage across levels. Jones replied that there is probably a likelihood of hiring BSN nurses in the region since many may already live in Covington and would shift to work there when the new hospital opens. Spaulding responded that job opening might not necessarily be the best indicator of demand, since there may be demand for currently employed nurses to pursue continuing education. Also, this could be the case with teachers as well.

Jean Floten asked how many hospitals even place electronic ads for their nursing needs. Jones noted that there does seem to be a need for a BSN program. Floten replied that WGU-Washington offers an RN to BSN program, which serves 1,080 people statewide and 137 in King County. Michael Wark mentioned that perhaps the issue is securing externships for these programs. Jones responded that most RN to BSN programs do not require clinical experience as entrants already have this from obtaining their RN. Wark replied that UW Tacoma's RN to BSN program does require this.

Options for Consideration (10.30 – 10.45 AM)

Michelau then reviewed the principles guiding the recommendation: demand is for provision of service, not a new institution; local response needs to be driven by local demand, not institutional supply; solution must be able to respond to changing workforce demands; and travel considerations make local access important.

Next Michelau reviewed the desired features of a higher education offering: a flexible solution; distance/hybrid options should be considered; adult students are likely to be primary audience; not limited to one provider (however, one provider per program); and provision of appropriate support services will be key to success.

Floten asked for clarification on the "one provider per program" stipulation and Michelau responded that this referred specifically to offerings housed at a specific location (if implemented) – so that providers at a local center would not be competing for the same students.

Feedback on Preliminary Report (10.45 – 11.45 AM)

Spaulding asked to clarify whether the discussion was centered on some sort of physical space. Jones confirmed that this was correct, since there are already online providers serving the area. Cody Eccles added that the assumption is that this entity would serve adult learner. Gibbons asked that since this is the target audience, if the project team had looked at what other efforts were ongoing in the region as he had heard that the Tahoma School District was implementing some sort of adult-serving learning center in collaboration with Renton Technical College. Bolli replied that Angel Reyna might be able to provide some additional clarity on that.

Myers Twitchell noted that perhaps one of the options should be to support adults in their online learning. Jones replied that this was possible, since in what we know about serving this population a high touch component is important to success – you can't just connect to an online provider with no supports.

Michelau then asked the Advisory Committee to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of a center staffed by multiple providers versus a single provider. Spaulding responded that accountability is different when there are multiple providers, existing multi-institutional would say that bringing multiple programs to the

table is a challenge and that there is a fine line to walk between accountability and stability. Jones asked if the coordinating might be easier if the coordinating entity was a two-year institution. Spaulding replied that he might not quite go there but that this is a challenge that needs to be acknowledged.

Gibbons noted that the Everett site started with Everett Community College and switched to Washington State University (WSU) and when the legislature turned it over WSU really had to work to build trust. At the time there were eight four-years operating in the building and WSU couldn't compel anyone to do anything in a particular way, they had to work hard to build consensus and some institutions did leave. Spaulding pointed out that WSU might not have been willing to deliver programs if someone else was in charge – such as their engineering program.

Eccles asked what would need to happen to make this feasible – is there a minimum cohort size that is needed for this to be feasible? Floten noted that the Highline Center already exists and that it gets hard to sustain cohorts in a regional area – you might be better off with a community college and baccalaureate partnership.

Bolli noted that Green River is interested in being the site manager and the administrator, but need a four-year partner. Another committee member added that nursing programs are hugely expensive to implement and there is probably not a way at the pre-licensure level that makes sense.

Floten mentioned that WGU – Washington is already serving 1,000 adults in IT, teaching, and healthcare in south King County and that we need to look really deeply at just who these some college, no degree folks are and if they need a physical location. Antonio Sanchez added that for a program like a BSN you need physical space for labs and that no university would make such an investment without guaranteed support. Floten replied that for RN to BSN there is no clinical requirement. She added that for teacher education WGU – Washington offers all the coursework online and then works with local school districts to place students in student teaching placements. The key is that the supply of students must be regular.

Bolli asked if for a two-year program you need clinical placements and if that can be cost prohibitive. Sanchez replied that there are challenges in obtaining faculty for these programs and that the process an be expensive and difficult so there would have to be incentives for a university to participate. Gibbons added that the Peninsula project was really driven by an economic development alliance, and was a jobs play since there was a need for meaningful employment in the region due to geographic constraints and the onus was on employers.

Wark noted there is a lot of research on retention and that hybrid options are becoming increasingly popular. The question is how big a cohort are we talking

about. The second district did a study in Federal Way to look at need. If we can develop a model where cohorts are connected with Federal Way, Graham, and maybe Covington, perhaps something could be applicable statewide.

Spaulding noted that one could argue either side of the single versus multiple providers questions and that the question is what is the 20-30 year vision of such a project? If the vision is that it will develop into something larger than a center than a single provider would be best since then there would be no need to untangle existing relationships. Eccles suggested that the question is not will it grow larger given the size of the area but how applicable this model might be for similarly situated communities and to what it extent it can be applied across contexts since none of Washington's institutions have the capacity to do everything for everybody.

Spaulding noted that he might lean towards a multiple provider scenario since this will allow for a variety of programs since this results in less risk for those involved. Wark replied that this raises the question – is there a backbone organization that specializes in making these types of educational center opportunities available that could perhaps also provide student services. Gibbons responded that for this purpose everyone favors community colleges.

Floten asked for clarification on the law that allowed the creation of university centers as a solution to address the needs of students not served by traditional four-year campuses, as she recalled that this had been based on best practices from other states. Spaulding responded that the model is for FTE money to flow through community colleges and that this attracts campuses to the site – this is how Everett was jumpstarted.

Catherine Calvert noted that a weak area to partnerships is student services. While partners say they will support students at an offsite location there is a challenge getting these needs fulfilled. Jones added that this could lead to a self-interested student services perspective that would steer students towards a particular provider. Bolli asked if it was possible to have multiple institutions that didn't compete and Jones replied that this doesn't really work in practice. He has seen multiple provider models be most successful where the host is a community college since they don't "have a dog in the fight" and that they typically already have relationship with students. Ultimately, an inability to populate a cohort would be evidence that there is not demand for specific programs.

Eccles noted that Highline has one institutional partner and that if we are talking about building on a two-year institution, how does the Tribal College work with partners? If we're looking at supporting smaller communities, we need to pursue models that are low cost or supported by employers so that they can be sustainable

in a more rural area – and ultimately this might be valuable for communities across the state.

Denise Bill of the Muckleshoot Tribal College noted that their partnership model evolved over time from one room 17 years ago to the current structure and that they have to pursue partnerships due to their accreditation status. She elaborated that Antioch University graduated 35 tribal members through their partnership and once they had met the community's need the partnership concluded Calvert added that programs are open to both tribal and non-tribal members.

Bill added that they leverage funds to put these on – such as the federally funded MOST program. She further noted that the Muckleshoot Tribe has made it a point to invest in programs such as behavioral health services, recovery centers, health and wellness, and early childhood. She added that the Northwest Indian College has satellite sites around the state, and that their programs are not limited to tribal members. She concluded by saying that the Tribe has had a hard time getting folks interested in high-demand programs such as nursing – with interest focusing more on IT and jobs related to the casino industry. They are also hoping to attract more members into educational professions – though this is hindered by their relatively low wages.

Cody Eccles asked how the business model works for the college partnerships. Calvert replied that the Tribe is able to cover the cost of attendance for tribal members – though non-tribal members can attend programs if they are able to cover the costs and there are many scholarship resources available. Jones asked if the Muckleshoot tribe provides space to partners pro bono? Calvert and Bill replied that they do, the tuition revenue covers the partner's costs and they provide the rest (space, IT support, etc.)

Joseph Martin added that the programs brought in correspond to strategic planning by tribal leadership. For example, they created the partnership with Antioch for teacher training when they were expanding their K-12 system. Jones asked if they first built an interested cohort – then identified a partners and Martin replied that yes, that is what they do. He further clarified that they conduct a tribal needs assessment— typically using mechanisms like community surveys—since the Muckleshoot Tribe is a sovereign nation and they can create their own jobs to a certain extent. Jones asked if the Antioch program was discontinued due to the demand being met and Calvert confirmed this was the case, adding that they are now working on building their early childhood workforce and are partnering with Green River for this.

Bolli mentioned that he would assume Green River would bring in a cohort – for example, if they move a nursing program – and that they need a four-year partner for an RN to BSN offering. Calvert noted that with Green River, they bring in the

instructor and that's it – the Tribe provides all the cohort building and student support services. Floten asked how you might handle working adults that aren't "cohort material" with their need for more schedule flexibility. Calvert replied that in the case of the Tribal College, they will advise folks to attend other institutions if the offered model is not a fit. Floten replied that she was thinking of how this might impact the financial model for a university partner. Bill added that 90 percent of their cohorts complete. Floten noted that brokering among institutions makes sense – as does partnering with an institution at their location where a student has completion options that are different from that of a cohort. Eccles noted that the work of the Tribal Colleges was amazing, but it's clear that they do a tremendous amount of work on the back end in terms of providing space, services, brokering programs, and coordinating community needs. Calvert replied that this is because in their case they are nation building, so it worth this significant investment of resources.

Jones said that if you go back to the WSU model in place at Everett, the real question is, how do you pay for it and how does the money continue to flow through? That kind of support must come from someplace, teaching costs should be covered by tuition but how do you pay for everything else?

Gibbons replied that the legislature provide FTE money directly to WSU with the intent to subsidize programs (it formerly went through Everett Community College – who only took three percent in overhead costs, while WSU takes slightly more than this in overhead fees). In fact, students pay lower tuition than they would in a conventional program because the state appropriation makes up the difference in costs to institutions for offering programs off-site. Also, facilities have already been paid for. In Everett and Poulsbo there are permanent employees on site providing student services, though they contract with the local community college for special services such as disability services.

Myers Twitchell asked if it was possible to track students by program at Green River and see if they completed or transferred to determine if there is a natural cohort. Jones responded that you can look at data and say there is a set of folks that ought to be interested but the question is, would they ever show up. Myers Twitchell replied that you could do qualitative work at Green River to see who might be interested.

Calvert responded that the Muckleshoot Tribal College could be a site, they are 16 miles from Covington and are familiar with a cohort-based multiple provider model – and she'd like to put this option out as a discussion piece.

Wark noted that the host institutions, if there is one, must be honest and provide access to all partner institutions, adding that the honest broker function is really key.

Michelau replied that we need to know if there is an interest in moving forward. Jones added that a low-risk strategy could be implemented and then built on. For example, if Green River is the host institution they would need to see if they can build a cohort before beginning to offer programming. Jones continued that he is not convinced that a big solution is sustainable based on the area's population size.

Murray asked what the money from the money from the legislature was for at Everett. Gibbons replied that Everett tried to do this for a number of years and couldn't get it off the ground. It was only about ten to twelve years ago, when the FTE money came through legislature that Everett Community College was able to "buy" programs and this changed things. Jones responded that we need to know what program to buy – Everett's employers made that more obvious. Gibbons replied that there was no questions that the state FTE money made it easier to incentivize institutions to offer programs at Everett. Myers Twitchell replied that the need appears to be for nursing. Michelau noted that partnerships with employers can't be an afterthought, repairing disconnects between employers and education is a must. Sanchez added that he believes Evergreen must be at the table. Spaulding agreed, saying that understanding the educational needs of the some college, no degree population is more general (not necessarily aligned to job openings).

Gibbons added that the availability of nursing instructors will be key limiter to a nursing program as there is an undersupply of nursing faculty. Floten noted that she has been approached about starting a pre-licensure program and they are looking into this, as 50 percent of clinics can be done through SEM labs, however she is not sure if it would be approved. Wark noted that UW – Tacoma has had a nursing faculty program to assist with this – and that any host should be prepared to do "warm hand offs." Michelau responded that a concierge type role wouldn't necessarily be an employee of any one program.

Gibbons replied that Everett did this with their University Center and Floten added that a student navigator has potential. Wark noted that each institution could pay a component of the salary of this person – and added that if you do create a model there should be an evaluation of the program. Further, the model at Joint Base Lewis-McChord was a good example of a multi-institutional model.

Jones noted paying for fixed costs are not an FTE-based calculation, and the cost of the host doing the things that Calvert does at the Muckleshoot Tribal College is a fixed cost and the driving question is how that is paid for, especially, when you don't know what scale will look like. Spaulding noted that in Jefferson, there was a budget allocation through WSAC, but there were not FTE pass through funds.

Gibbons noted that the Committee has talked a lot about Green River without them, there. They must want to be the champion and this should come from the president

since that is who makes the approach and makes the promises. The local community college is the community's provider, and they likely need to come up with a "basket of resources" out of their own pocket to incentivize participation from partners. Spaulding replied that in Jefferson it was the community groups and a legislator who really played this function.

Floten noted that if you're on a campus to start with there is space - although perhaps Covington has space? The funding is just required for an administrator – Floten can imagine this in stages, with modest startup costs as the initial need is ascertained, then it could be built out over time. Also, there may be some opportunity in the mental health area as the state is considering investing in this. A series of mental health focused programs could meet a huge need.

Michelau asked if there were any other potential sources of local support. Covington representatives replied that the city's conversation was more conceptual, and that it is not clear there are sources of local support. Myers Twitchell said she imagined there would be local foundations that would be interested in public private partnerships.

Spaulding replied that we're probably not talking about building a building here, and Bolli responded that this could be a part of the civic center Covington plans to build. Murray added that there could be a lease agreement with Green River if they are the tenant, and the plan would be to work with the developer on this. Bolli added that his conversations suggest that Green River is interested in moving forward with this arrangement. Jones noted that the group needs to check in with Green River.

Spaulding asked if the plan would be for the Covington developer to offer a market rate lease to an educational entity and Bolli replied that yes, this would be the case. Eccles asked what skin is in the game for Covington and if they are just looking to identify an anchor tenant. Bolli replied that he would like to see what other cities are doing. Eccles asked if there is a way to incentivize people to go to a Covington center. Bolli replied that they would likely pursue state support. Eccles notes that the cost of education at branch campuses and university centers is higher not lower. He asked if students are prepared to pay higher tuition, since most university centers do not get state money. Eccles added that if you can figure out a rural model, there will a model for the state and not so many need studies. Bolli noted that Covington doesn't have these answers and Lanza noted that it has been a learning process, as far as what the city wants to bring in – they aren't sure yet – part of the process is figuring this out, they are willing to bring something to the table but not sure what.

Eccles asked what it takes to attract someone – what kind of cohort does it take? Could you think more creatively – for example building a recruiting center? Floten replied that is she was the president of Green River she'd see what continuing education options where needed and craft a business plan to meet these needs.

Sanchez asked if it would be possible to simple replicate Green River's Kent Campus and Bolli replied that this was the initial plan.

Myers Twitchell noted there is a lot politically going on at Green River, and they need data to put into their own budgeting and planning. Sanchez responded that if you have that, the articulation piece is already there. There may be learnings to glean from Green River's experiences in other areas – for example the Enumclaw campus closed for a while.

Wark noted that what's motivating Federal Way is the two centers and Spaulding noted that if Running Start is offered this could change scale of what's offered very significantly. Also, having a general ed curriculum at a campus if it serves adults is critical, they need these options.

Next Steps (11.50 AM – 12.00 PM)

Lastly Sedney shared important upcoming dates for the project, including the submission of the preliminary report to WSAC staff on November 1 and a presentation to the Student Achievement Council on November 9. She added that the report would also be shared with the Advisory Committee for feedback and that the project team would work to incorporate all feedback in to the draft final report to be submitted on December 1. Finally, Sedney reminded committee members that the group's final meeting would be held in Covington on November 18.