WASHINGTON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
EDUCATION · OPPORTUNITY · RESULTS

Strategic Action Plan 21-23
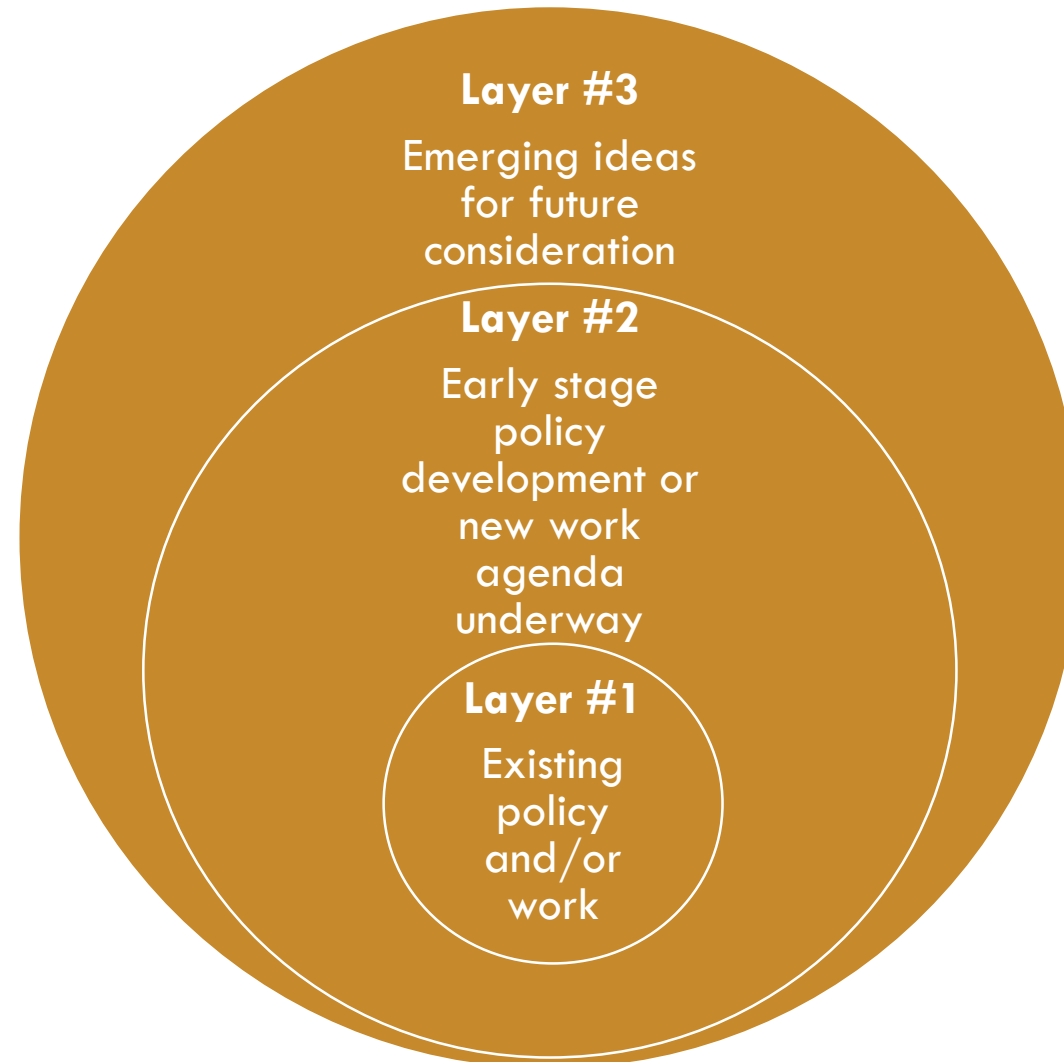
Council Meeting 8/19/20

The SAP answers 6 key questions

1. What does an environment that supports college-going look like to current and potential students?

2. How do we improve the current environment to increase educational attainment and close racial disparities?

3. What formal state policies (statutes, regulations and budgets) are needed to support a college-going environment?

4. How can the state support local practice that builds a supportive environment on the ground?

5. How do we measure success over time?

6. What is the role of WSAC, both as Council and agency, in this work?

Approach to the Strategic Action Plan

Layer #3

Emerging ideas for future consideration

Layer #2

Early stage policy development or new work agenda underway

Layer #1

Existing policy and/or work

Guiding Questions for Today

Consider Washington's current major investments, policies, programs, etc. that support Affordability\Enrollment\Completion\Student Supports.

Does Washington already have a state policy agenda on Affordability/ Enrollment/ Completion/ Student Supports?
- If yes, what gaps may exist?
- If no, what should it look like for Washington to have a policy agenda for the cluster?

In consideration of the indicators showing racial disparities within your cluster, is there a particular goal or set of goals that the cluster should focus on?

Based on the long-term policy agenda for Washington, what specific work can WSAC do over the next two years to support the high-level components?

What is Washington doing to support the state policy agenda? What gaps exist to successfully implement the policy (i.e., funding, readily available data, practice at state and local level)?
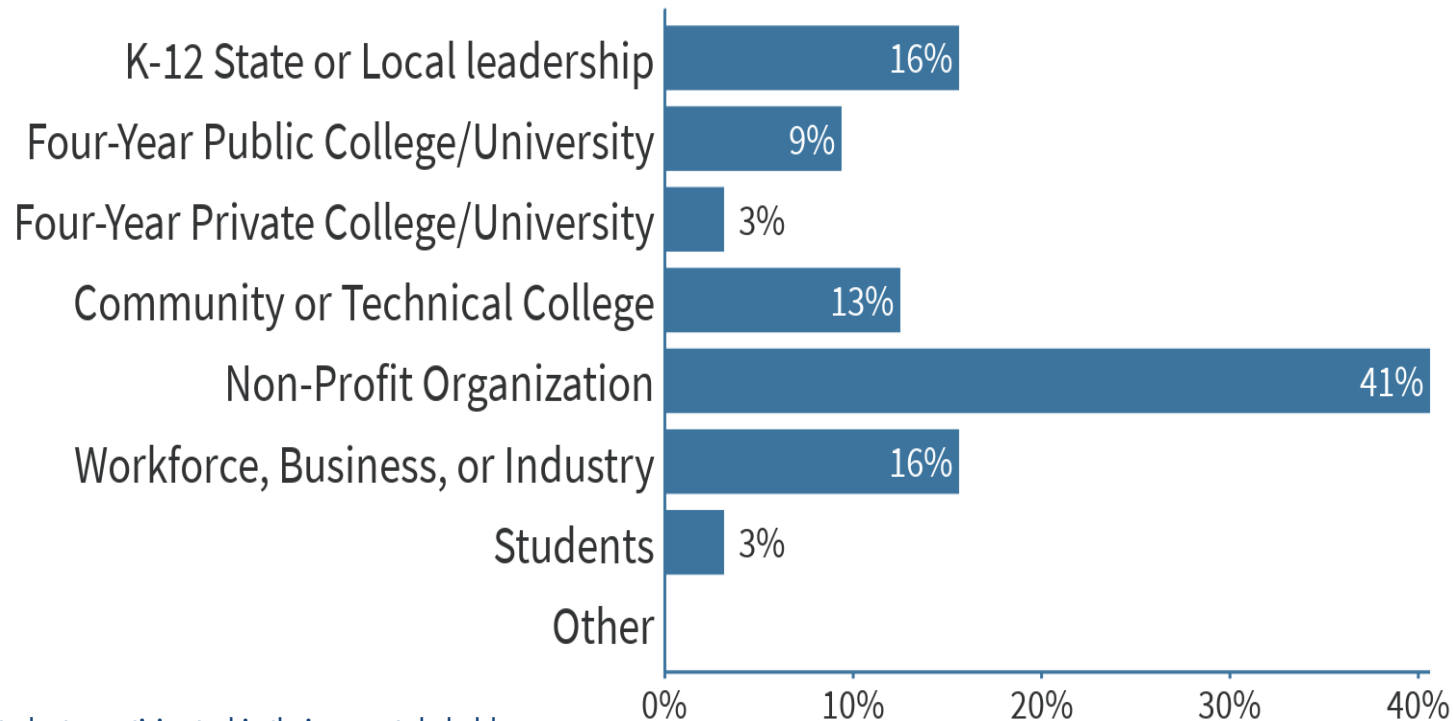
Feedback From Interested Stakeholders

Stakeholders We Listened To

Broad Stakeholder Engagement with 60+ attendees

- K-12 State or Local leadership: 16%
- Four-Year Public College/University: 9%
- Four-Year Private College/University: 3%
- Community or Technical College: 13%
- Non-Profit Organization: 41%
- Workforce, Business, or Industry: 16%
- Students: 3%
- Other

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- Western Washington University
- Washington State University - Tri Cities
- Bellingham Technical College
- Green River College
- Shoreline Community College
- Big Bend Community College
- University of Washington
- Heritage University

*Students participated in their own stakeholder meeting and are therefore were not part of the live poll showing type of stakeholders engaged.

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Stakeholder Survey results (40+ respondents)

- Respondents stressed the importance of engaging with appropriate stakeholders, specifically students, in developing and implementing activities

- Respondents demonstrated support for the following strategies to support students of color:
  - Peer mentorship for financial aid assistance and College Bound students
  - Targeted enrollment outreach
  - Guided pathways
  - Recruiting and retaining educators of color

- The following was seen as most feasible:
  - Conducting a landscape analysis of institutions' equity efforts
  - Convening stakeholders to explore policies to support students' basic needs
  - Implementing an auto-enrollment process for CBS
  - Expanding the functionality of College and Career Compass

- The main obstacles for all proposed strategies included cost, staff capacity, and general concern around COVID-19

- Non-academic student support programs and strategies were seen as important, but many respondents thought that other priorities would take precedent.

Affordability

Affordability: What did we hear from Students?

- **Many students had never heard of FAFSA/WASFA** until either senior year or even until they started college, particularly for WASFA. Awareness must start much earlier, in middle school.

- **Auto-enrollment in College Bound Scholarship** is a promising idea, but it must be combined with early interventions and outreach.

Affordability: What did we hear from stakeholders?

- **Washington College Grant** is critically important, now more than ever, as a consistent funding support students can count on.

- **FAFSA/WASFA** supports must go beyond the school building to include families and leverage partnerships with CBOs, local business, and community leaders. The responsibility cannot be all on the schools.

- **Auto-enrollment in College Bound Scholarship** is a promising idea; needs to be combined with early interventions.

- **Structural Racism** is the central Affordability issue. Implicit and explicit racial bias causes students of color to have less access to opportunity and resources. If we are not intentional about fundamentally changing the racist structure our current educational system is built on, all the strategies we come up with will not move the needle for students of color.

Example of the three layers in Affordability

	Layer 1: Existing	Layer 2: Early Stage	Layer 3: Future Consideration
State Policy	No comprehensive statement of policy but significant building blocks in place: • Financial aid programs (WCG, CBS) • Tuition and Financial Aid levels linked • Policy that retains tuition limits • Policy and financial aid to support undocumented students	College Bound auto-enrollment	• Adopt a comprehensive statement of policy, with focus on students of color based on indicators • Connect household incomes to definition of affordability
Work	• 12th Year Campaign and other TA to support financial aid utilization • Otterbot and other direct-to-student outreach • Campus institutional aid • Community-based nonprofits (CSF, etc)	Train the Trainer initiative for volunteers to help with FAFSA/WASFA apps	• Enhanced student engagement (peer to peer mentoring) for WASFA/FAFSA • Engage local CBO/NFP's that work with target populations • Engage students and families in shaping outreach and communications • Focus on supporting students of color, based on indicators

Enrollment

Enrollment: What did we hear from Students?

- **Marketing & advertising** the postsecondary opportunities that exist in a way that uses inclusive language and that speaks to all students is critical.

- **Showing up and engaging with students** on a personal level about why they should go to college and how they can get there is important.

- **Volunteers and mentors** should be from the communities they seek to serve

Enrollment: What did we hear from Stakeholders?

- **Include parents, students, families**, community-based organizations, college access providers, employers in the work.

- **Consistent and quality messaging must reach educators, families and supporters;** despite the myriad of high-quality pathways in Washington, the system is complex and myths abound.

- **Engage with students earlier-** in elementary and middle school - to begin college and career readiness, and develop pathways.

- **Strengthen alignment throughout K12 and postsecondary**, building on existing efforts to align the multiple pathways for a more seamless & student-friendly postsecondary transition.

Example of the three layers in Enrollment

	Layer 1: Existing	Layer 2: Early Stage	Layer 3: Future Consideration
State Policy	No comprehensive statement of policy. Some building blocks in place: • K12 System working to integrate college and career readiness • 4yr and 2yr IHE's trend to adopt student-centered policies with alternative placement and admissions practices • Significant investment in dual credit programs	Dual Credit Task Force	• Adopt comprehensive statement of policy with focus on students of color, based on indicators • Support classroom teachers, parents and other influencers • Statewide volunteer student success coaching program • Close equity participation gaps in dual credit & improve credential pathways with student accumulation of meaningful, transferable college credits through dual credit programs
Work	• College and Career Compass to re-engage working-age adults • 12th Year Campaign and nonprofit groups such as the College Success Foundation support college readiness	Strengthen the Compass tool to include labor market information	• Engage students and families in shaping outreach and communications • Focus on students of color, based on indicators • Provide individualized guidance to returning adults with significant barriers

Student Supports

Student Supports: What did we hear from Students?

- **Centralized resource locations** on campus for comprehensive advising is needed, especially for English language learners.

- **Investments need to be made for in-person support/interventions,** to compliment tech solutions that can offer coaching/advising for basic info.

- **The barriers for students to access public benefits are significant,** i.e. the 20hr work requirement for students prevents students from accessing SNAP

Student Supports: What did we hear from stakeholders?

- **Expand student supports scope to include** childcare, mental healthcare, and supporting students with documented disabilities

- **Do student supports connect with advising?** Some programs like TRIO have integrated supports, could state funding be connected to that kind of comprehensive and preventative/proactive work?

- **Equity centered approach to service and resources, embedded within systems –** Washington must recognize and address how existing systems exclude post-traditional (students not directly from K12) and traditionally marginalized students

- **Campuses need to connect siloed services** and create spaces on campus where all services can be accessed.

- **Evaluate current support systems** to learn which systems work best to expand the capability to serve more students.

- **Relationship building** is key to addressing non-academic supports for students

- **Stigma, stereotype threat, and fear of public charge are real barriers** that need to be addressed.

Example of the three layers in Student Supports

	Layer 1: Existing	Layer 2: Early Stage	Layer 3: Future Consideration
State Policy	No policy statement; limited building blocks in place: • Recent modest investments in the 2-year institutions to address costs beyond tuition and fees established under 2S HB 1893		Adopt a comprehensive statement of policy with focus on supporting students of color, based on indicators • Establish baseline data to identify postsecondary students' basic needs • Eliminate work requirements and degree limitations for students to access to child care
Work	• Pilots (2SSB 5800) to address needs of college students experiencing homelessness or "aged out" of foster care in 2yr/4yr IHE • Partnerships between WSAC, DSHS and SBCTC, (2S HB 1893), to expand postsecondary student access to food • Build learning network with colleges and community based organizations	Conduct targeted communications to encourage co-enrollment in postsecondary education and public benefits	• Coordinate statewide assessment of postsecondary student basic needs • Focus on students of color • Research preventative strategies or programs in other states to proactively address students' needs • Expand scope to include childcare and mental healthcare

Completion

Completion: What did we hear from Students?

- **Awareness of financial aid and college going culture** needs to begin earlier, middle school, and be more like military recruiters. The High School and Beyond Plan, alone, does not accomplish this.

- **Campus advisors/staff/faculty need to invest in relationships with students** and create an environment that is welcoming and supportive to students.

- **Centralized resource locations** on campus for comprehensive advising is needed, especially for English language learners.

- **Currently enrolled first-gen students** could serve as paid, college-going mentors to K12 students.

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Completion: What did we hear from stakeholders?

- **Statewide systemic approaches must put students first and provide consistent support** through all transitions from K12, to college enrollment, to employment. The student experience needs to be looked at longitudinally across sectors and institutions.

- **Students need to be at the table to inform policy decisions.**

- **Math pathways is a complex issue and is a barrier for many reasons,** more research and sector wide exploration is needed to understand the various factors and barriers to making changes

- **Consistent and transparent communication** in all areas, especially as it relates to transfer, transition from K12 to college, financial aid, and math pathways.

- **Counseling and wraparound services,** as well as college success programs for specific students, like TRIO, need to be expanded and funded to support all students

- **Collecting data needs to be tied to action,** based on the findings and data needs to be gathered in real-time to address student needs faster.

- **Campus staff and faculty need training** to be prepared to help and support a diverse student body

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Example of the three layers in Completion

	Layer 1: Existing	Layer 2: Early Stage	Layer 3: Future Consideration
State Policy	No policy statement, but some building blocks in place: • Significant investments to support CTC implementation of Guided Pathways at 2-year institutions • Washington Transfer Degree to support students transferability between 2-year and 4-year institutions		• Adopt a comprehensive statement of policy with focus on students of color, based on indicators • Establish peer to peer mentoring program with first-gen students
Work	Pave the Way convening stakeholders focused on building network for increasing postsecondary attainment for students of color	• Convene stakeholders to gain consensus around multiple math pathways policies and practice • Conduct data analytics to track, monitor and analyze completions data, disaggregated by race and ethnicity	Conduct a landscape analysis of individual institutional equity efforts and learn from other States that have similar demographics that have had success

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