

Regional Challenge Grant: Recommendations

The following are recommendations to the Council for approval of Implementation and Partnership Formation awardees for the initial round of the Regional Challenge Grant. Pending the Council’s approval, WSAC staff will move forward with negotiations and grant agreements in January 2023. Currently, WSAC has \$5.5 million available to award for Regional Challenge Grants. The recommendations below include the maximum award that WSAC will consider, which would total \$4.6 million in grant awards. Remaining funds will be dedicated for additional Partnership Formation recommendations that WSAC staff intend to present to the Council for approval in February 2023.

Implementation Grant Recommendations Totaling \$4.35 million over a 1.5-year grant period

Lead Partner Name, County	Maximum Award
Foundation for Tacoma Students (FFTS), Pierce County	\$1,200,000
City of Seattle’s Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL), King County	\$1,250,000
LaunchNW, Spokane County	\$850,000
Chehalis School District’s Student Achievement Initiative (SAI), Lewis County	\$1,050,000

Partnership Formation Grant Recommendations Totaling \$250,000 over a 1-year grant period

Lead Partner Name, County	Maximum Award
The STEM Foundation, Benton County	\$125,000
Yakima Valley Partners for Education, Yakima County	\$125,000

Implementation Grant Narratives

Foundation for Tacoma Students (FFTS) - Partnered with more than 30 CBOs, Economic/Workforce Councils, K-12 School Districts, and Higher Education Institutions

Summer melt and financial aid completion

- Implement a coordinated community response to support students transitioning out of high school.
 - Community-based student check-in survey to collect and centralize each student’s request for support.
 - Provide earlier support in the year with postsecondary planning and extended support during the post-graduation summer.
 - Coordinated ‘Community Response Team’ to respond to each request within 48 hours.
 - Supports include mentorship, financial aid support, resume building, and connections with employers/organizations, etc.
 - Track the handoff between K-12 and postsecondary systems (whether it’s higher education, apprenticeships, the workforce, or even disengagement), to collect and analyze individual-level outcome data after young people exit.

- Launch a multidistrict campaign that is county-wide to increase FAFSA/WASFA completion rates.
 - Increase Pierce County FAFSA/WASFA submission rates with a focus on closing racial and income equity gaps.
 - Coordinated community outreach and financial aid completion events.
 - Application completion tracking at events, coupled with case management referrals for applications still in progress.
 - Technical assistance for financial aid applications to school districts and community-based organizations.
 - Campaign communications and marketing materials.
 - Champions will have access to professional development and seed funding to support completion efforts within their local schools and community.

City of Seattle’s Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) Postsecondary Success Network – Partnered with the Seattle Colleges, Seattle Public Schools, and CBOs and Economic Development Groups

A cohesive and coordinated network of support that leads to increased racial equity in postsecondary attainment

- Create a network of community- based organizations that will provide culturally specific, affinity-based mentorship to all Black, Latinx, and Indigenous Seattle high school juniors and seniors, focused on closing equity gaps.
- Provide career exploration resources, foundational career skill building, and access to paid internships for BIPOC students that align with their career interests and goals.
- Shape adult practices so that the adults (educators, school staff, guidance/mentoring staff) supporting students and families in college and career readiness use a culturally specific and responsive lens in their approach.
 - Provide professional development to high school educators and school staff focused on Culturally Specific Responsive (CSR) practices in College & Career Readiness (CCR) supports for students and families.
 - Culturally specific individual mentorship to support students’ college and career readiness, and navigation of wrap-around services in high school and postsecondary campuses.
 - Coordinated services through high school to postsecondary transitions using a team case management approach that will include outreach specialists, teachers, instructors, counselors, and retention specialists - case managed by mentors.

LaunchNW – Partnered with 15 total regional partners including CBOs, K-12 School Districts, and Higher Education Institutions

Implementation of the Coordinated Community Mentorship Program (CCMP) at six high schools across Spokane County

- Site coordinators in six high schools will bring together regional partners to provide mentorship support.
- Intentional focus on support for students experiencing homelessness and low-income, BIPOC, and English language learning (ELL) students, as well as their families.
- Models will include peer, near-peer, and parent-to-parent mentorship.

- Mentorship training programs with core curriculum will be developed and implemented with the support of cross-sector partners.
- Mentorship will emphasize career exploration, as well as support with the college-going process.
- LaunchNW will analyze data to collect individual-level baseline, participation, and outcomes data for implemented strategies.

Chehalis Student Initiative (SAI) - *Partnered with Chehalis Foundation, Centralia College, The BERCC Group*

Parent/family engagement and dual generation strategies

- Family engagement on the P-8 pathway.
 - Work directly with families from pre-kindergarten through middle school.
 - Coordinate with existing middle school staff for alignment to high school pathway.
 - Focus on reducing equity gaps among Hispanic students, low-income families, foster and homeless youth, and special education students.
- Build out metrics and early warning system for the P-12 pathway to develop college and career readiness.
 - Build on existing metrics develop in the SAI work to date.
 - Incorporate existing academic metrics used along the P-12 pathway.
 - Develop new measures to track family engagement and permit evaluation of impact of family engagement strategies.
- Test dual generation strategies to engage parents and caregivers about their own career development.
 - Work with WSAC and Centralia College to make parents aware of adult-friendly learning and training opportunities.

Partnership Formation Grant Narratives

The STEM Foundation – *Partnered with Career Connect Southeast, Kiona-Benton School District, Columbia Basin College, WSU Tri Cities, The Rural Alliance, Educational Service District 123/Tri Tech Skills Center, WorkSource/TC Futures*

- Create two-generation approach to engage students and families early on for credential attainment.
- Collaborate with partners to increase credential attainment and connect students to the local workforce.

Yakima Valley Partners – *20+ cross-sector partners committed to serving the community across cradle to career and focused on food security, digital connectivity, parent and family engagement, and health*

- Utilize a multilingual and grassroots approach that centers community voices to build momentum for high school graduation, and increase postsecondary attainment and career entry for students in the Lower Yakima Valley
- Build out community capacity where families and students can receive high school and postsecondary support, including support for decision-making

Proposed First-Round Expenditures

Proposed Expenditure	Amount
Recommended Tier 1 Partnership Formation Grants	\$250,000
Recommended Tier 2 Implementation Grants	\$4,350,000
Hold for 2023 Tier 1 Partnership Formation Grants	\$500,000
TA and other supports	\$300,000
Unallocated balance	\$100,000
Total available funds FY 2023	\$5,500,000