

Council Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2023

9:00am

Saint Martin's University (Lacey)

Members Attending (alphabetical by last name):

Jeff Charbonneau, Paul Francis, Ruben Flores, Tathagata Pal, Mustapha Samateh, Terri Standish-Kuon, Chris Reykdal, and Jeff Vincent

Staff Attending (alphabetical by last name):

Joel Anderson, Joel Bentley, Abby Chien, KC Deane, Crystal Hall, Kimberly Hetrick, Heather Hudson, Isaac Kwakye, Emma Lacalli, Kara Larson, Hannah Lodwick, Ami Magisos, Michael Meotti, Lucas Minor, Grace Nelson, Inez Olive, Daniel Oliver, Abbey Roth, Rathi Sudhakara, Becky Thompson, and Christina Winstead

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Consent of the Agenda

Motion made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion made to approve the November Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

Welcome from Dr. Heynderickx, Saint Martin's University (SMU)

- Thank you to Washington College Grant and College Bound Scholarships for providing financial opportunities for SMU students. Highlighting the importance of Passport to Careers program that is essential to students on campus.
- Nursing Grants that have supported the nursing simulation lab equipment has been important to the nursing major students on campus.
- Dr. Heynderickx explains, in recent data, how 72% of jobs in Washington State will require post-secondary training credentials by 2031 and is concerned over the 64, 000 students predicted to not enroll. He hopes WSAC is thinking about how to actively re-engage adults in postsecondary education and applauds the work they have done.
- At SMU they are poised to help educated Washington residents to meet workforce needs, and desire to be part of the solution for post-secondary attainment in Washington State.

Welcome from Dr. Carmichael, The Evergreen State College

- Proud of the education system in Washington State and higher education and shared a positive view from the Roundtable report which is the timeliest view of enrollment in the State.

- Although enrollment is down across the state compared to pre-COVID times, student enrollment rate has increased in the Baccalaureate system.
 - Evergreen's enrollment rate rises every year. Currently the enrollment rate for students of color has risen more than 29%. Evergreen represents 1% of the state's higher education enrollment and roughly 1% of the state's investment in higher education.
 - Thank you to the Council for aiding in post-secondary attainment at this critical moment as there is national uncertainty for higher education policy.
 - One of the strengths in the state system of higher education is the allowance and encouragement of diverse institutions.
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Executive Director Update

Presenter: Michael Meotti

- US Department of Education asked Micheal Meotti to join in a rulemaking subcommittee when the department changes Federal regulations. They are working on various sets of issues and will be joining the TRIO programs, a long time federally funded program. TRIO programs have both pathway to college and college success for enrolled students. The Biden administration has proposed expanding the eligibility for TRIO programs to include undocumented students. There is a concern this will bring TRIO programs into a political swirl. WSAC's financial aid programs include pathways for some but not all undocumented students. Micheal was proud to support and lend a voice so that these programs can serve students at the community level.

Update 1- SNAP Bill

- Budget proposals were voted on in August by the Council. Those proposals have now been evaluated and are in the Governor's budget.
- There are two issues: First, the idea of creating eligibility for Washington College Grant if you are in a SNAP household. Second, is aligning our States with Washington College Grant rules on the duration of eligibility with Federal rules. WSAC will keep everyone posted as things develop.

Update 2- Looking at FAFSA filing and completion, and enrollment rates.

Filing and Completion:

- Explained the assumptions around families who do or do not complete the FAFSA. Students file the FAFSA for various reasons, it is a serious misconception to look at the total FAFSA filling rates and think that it is influenced by financial aid policies.
- For the first time we are looking into how to measure FAFSA filing. The results are eligible high school populations have gained 6% in FAFSA filing, where 40% of high school seniors are most likely eligible.
- WSAC's Research team will be looking into statewide FAFSA filing data going forward, putting less emphasis on the global filing number.

Enrollment Rates

- WSAC looked at enrollment patterns based on the financial aid status for Public 4 year and 2-year Community Technical Colleges. Over the last three years, there is a significant difference in enrollment patterns based on applicant's financial aid status. When looking at the two-year side there has been more significant enrollment decline across the country. The rate of decline is

drastically different when comparing students who receive financial aid. WSAC has some small grant programs that have varying degrees of connection to our education attainment agenda.

- Some examples include:
 - Career Launch Programs: Managed some grants for startup costs for current launch programs in data analytics at WSU Pullman and a teacher preparation program at WSU Tri-Cities. As well as a pending program in development at Central WA University.
 - Dual Enrollment Scholarship Pilot
 - Law School for Victim Services.

Updates around cluster work:

- **Affordability:** Student loan program to focus on Graduate programs in high need areas. There will be an RFP coming seeking consultants to help design and manage the program.
- **Completion:** Alongside Complete College America they launched an accelerator initiative. WSAC's in partnership with Central Washington University, Wenatchee Valley College, and Walla Walla Community College, each with varying launch dates.
- **Student Supports:** Continue to work with our sister agency DSHS using data to better support lower income students. We have guidance from the Security of Education, encouraging all intuitions and State agencies to share data to help students. Been in partnership with campuses to figure out a way that they can target outreach to students and families that are eligible for those programs but are not enrolled.

Lastly, Washington College Grant officially was ranked number one financial aid program in the nation.

Comment:

Looking at the workforce development in our states, colleges, and universities, particularly in the financial aid offices. There are challenges with recruitment and retention. With the new FAFSA out it feels overwhelming for non-fully staffed offices. Encourages the Council to have interim conversations with financial aid leaders across the state, to ensure there is enough administrative staffing.

Chair Report

Presenter: Jeff Vincent

- **Strategic Priorities:** One of our priorities for this year is to continue to develop and nurture the Regional Challenge Grant program, to achieve WSAC's 70% post-secondary attainment goal. Form a cluster around partnerships, with a Council member being assigned to work with staff in between Council meetings. Developing comprehensive policy proposals to increase enrollment and to support students in sustaining in-demand credentials.
- Two bills we're currently focusing on:
 - SNAP -Guaranteeing financial aid for those students with greatest need.
 - Initial Bill- Attempting to align State Financial aid with Federal financial aid, so that students will know the length of time they will have financial aid.
- Working on how WSAC is tracking postsecondary credential attainment.
- Working on a way to bring forward a comprehensive communication strategy around the benefits of education in the State.

Council has requested:

- Receive a draft agenda 3-4 weeks prior to the next Council meeting.
 - Reserve 15 minutes for an Executive Director update.
 - Holding fewer, but longer, quarterly meetings. Suggestion of four plus a retreat.
 - Establish a more formal onboarding process for new Members.
 - Create more transparency with the Executive Committee.
 - One day retreat in 2024. The retreat will have key topic/agenda, potentially addressing the topic of how AI is going to impact K-12 and post-secondary education moving forward.
 - Currently have an August virtual meeting, potentially could turn this meeting into in-person and add an extra day for the retreat. This could also be done in November. Question is would Council Members like to add it onto a Council meeting or have it as a standalone meeting?
 - Consensus is to have a special date for the retreat.
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Increasing Postsecondary Enrollment**Material:** [Washington State Admission Standards](#)**Video reference:** [46:34-1:54:26](#)**Washington State Minimum Admissions Standards Overview****Presenter:** Ruben Flores**Objectives:**

- Provide background and context for Washington's minimum admissions standard, including eligibility for freshmen and transfer students.
- Increase awareness of the state's minimum admissions standards.

History:

- Prior to 1985: Legislative and budgetary based on enrollment shaped admission policies at the public, baccalaureate institutions.
- 1985: Public baccalaureate institutions adopted minimum admission requirements effective in fall 1988.
- 1987: The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) develops Washington Master Plan for Higher Education.
- 1988: HECB adopts minimum requirements for regular admission
- 1991-1994: High school course approval process to meet the core course requirements is established, modified, and eliminated.
- 2001-present- Series of reviews and revisions to minimum admissions standards to clarify language, implement changes passed by the Legislature, and align with changes in admissions practices and policies of Washington's public baccalaureate institutions.

Summary of Minimum Admission Standards

- Holds a 50-state comparison on how Washington ranks to all the states who have an established a system of minimum admissions standards. Course requirements per category, courses, and GPA and establishes minimum admission requirements for undergraduate and graduate students.

- Minimum admission requirements only apply to Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions. This is not the same requirement for independent colleges, community, and technical colleges.
- Completion of CADRS (College Academic Distribution Requirements).
- Important to delve deeper into what each of the categories mean and how they impact our state and what is being reflected across the nation.

Where We Are

- July 2022: Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions held a session with key stakeholders to identify potential revisions.
- September 2022-January 2023: Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions met to draft proposed revisions.
- January 2023: Council of Presidents shared draft proposed revisions with WSAC.
- February 2023: WSAC convened a kick-off meeting with key stakeholders where the proposed revisions were shared.
- July 2023: Council of Presidents sent a letter to WSAC inquiring about a timeline to receive feedback shared with WSAC.
- December 2023: Council of Presidents received feedback.

Where We are Going

- February 2024: Council of Presidents will convene with the public baccalaureate institutions to review the feedback received and discuss further revisions to the proposed revisions to the standards.
- March 2024: Council of Presidents will finalize this work and provide and revisions to WSAC to share with key stakeholders.
- There have been recent changes to the standards such as Institutions going completely test optional. There is an excitement with continuing the collaborative work with partners, receiving feedback, and establishing understanding, and meeting important timelines for our sector to adopt/ incorporate into student catalogs.
- CADRS is something not frequently talked about; however, this is an opportunity for Council members to begin thinking, ask questions, and reflect with an understanding of the background context discussed today.

Questions/Comments

- **Q:** What is the why behind the baccalaureates seeking to change the CADRS?
A: Clarity is the main reason ‘why’. Administrators, teachers, K-12, and higher Ed are all seeking clarity with CADERS because of the ambiguity around it. The goal is to expand the criteria for what courses can meet certain standards and more specifically the senior year math based quantitative courses. The changes are seeking to broaden the language around the requirements and increasing understanding.
- **Q:** Has there been a 40 year look on whether this plays any statistically significant role in the volume of students that do or do not choose a baccalaureate institution?
A: Will need to investigate this data further. We do have some history from the appendix documentation, more research needs to be conducted.

Comments:

- Pushing for an alignment between the high school graduation requirement and the minimum requirements with the public. A student should be given full information about the pathway they are on, whether it meets the college readiness pathway or the career pathway.
- It would help the Council see where the high school graduation requirements line up to CADRS. There are some nuances where colleges, universities, do not make it an admission, requirement and vice versa.
- There is a concern it is difficult to keep up with the high school requirements. Looking at the number of bills this year alone. There is a lot of alignment between them already. There is a need for more conversations as there are constant bills and legislative changes to high school graduation requirements.
- This is a good conversation in the big goals of what is trying to be achieved. We are trying to increase enrollment patterns in higher education in the State. We want more students enrolling however, the need for students' readiness for college rises.
- There is also a demographic, economic, and social change that has created more pressures on college readiness and there is a bigger conversation around this goal.
- We are not moving that 70% target, because of barriers like affordability, which the Council does an excellent job elevating and working towards. However, our public universities are under a high tuition aid model. For families the sticker price of tuition is 70% of what families see and believe college is unaffordable.
- In our state, 50% of all high school graduates are not going to college. Community and technical colleges do take students who would like to build confidence in their education and transfer into a public 4-year institution. A system is built within our State to help those students achieve their goals in higher education and get us to 70%, the needed goal for an educated workforce.

WA Grant Guaranteed Pilots

Presenter: Micheal Meotti

- WSAC under the RCW's implements Washington College Grant to share the opportunity with institutions could obtain the possibility of pilots. This would allow Washington College Grant to be awarded based on a student's participation in SNAP.
- WSAC looking for more than a financial process change and seeks a partnership between institutions/high schools to increase students, particularly students on the margins, see a pathway to enrollment.
- There are several emerging pilots around the state that may move forward into the planning phase over the next 12 months that would target known institutions. Which coincides with a national incentive from the Lumina Foundation, supporting educational attainment goals.
- WSAC is in continuous conversations with the Lumina Foundation with the possibility of partnering, this would enable us to bring in outside resources to help understand the process from the eyes of the students' and families' we are trying to reach.
- WSAC will anchor this with university and community college partnerships around the State.
- This information is not definitive, regardless of the Lumina involvement we hope to know within 60 days the continual conversation work. The targeted dated is January 2025 to have a more detailed plan with items such as engagement population, the message, who is the messenger, whose voice we want to hear from.

Community Discussion**Presenter:** Heather Hudson**Materials:** [Discussion Resources](#)**Video Reference:** [2:14:23-3:19:07](#)**Evergreen/Shelton Promise****Discussion Participants:**

- John Carmichael, President, The Evergreen State College
- Sandra Kaiser, Director of Government Relations, The Evergreen State College

Highlights:

- Local community work in the Olympia Region.
- Governor's budget included some funding for the Shelton Promise and if approved would bring another local regional promise to Washington State.

Summary of Discussion:

- The issue is about affordability and how we can target selected communities to further aid post-secondary attainment. Many families get lost in the translation of applying to college and seeking financial aid, especially first-generation families.
- Focused on the Shelton school district, 31 % of High school students are enrolled in post-secondary education. Almost 70% are not.
- Evergreen College has an Upward Bound TRIO Grant that puts counselors and tutors in the Shelton schools. However legislative support is needed to help cover the cost for students including those who families who are partially eligible for the Pell Grant. Marketing is needed to get the correct message across in the right language, therefore additional counseling will be required.
- Through the guaranteed admissions program Evergreen College has been able to successfully clear some ambiguity for students. We can now say, "When you apply, you will be admitted, you qualify and tuition will be covered", this is the Shelton Promise, if it is funded.
- The Shelton Class of 2025 would be the first group of students offered this Promise if passed.

Questions/Comments:

- **Q:** What is the biggest hold back? Is it purely money? Why Evergreen?
A: The cost is not offsetting for people. We view this as a pilot, and we are sure this will produce results. Trying it out at Evergreen will provide data for other institutions to learn from.

Dual Credit Pathway to Associate of Arts: Yelm and SPSCC**Discussion Participants:**

- Dr. Lisa Cadero-Smith, Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Education, Yelm
- Neha Guarente, Educational and Career Planner, South Puget Sound Community College

Highlights:

- Last year the State made an investment to cover the costs of college and high schools, including Running Start.
- Over the past few years there has been an interest and innovative leadership from K-12 asking how we can encourage high school students to earn an AA alongside their High School Diploma.
- Dr. Lisa and Neha have been invited to talk about the changes around implementing colleges and high schools in this pathway, what is being learned, and how are they achieving it.

Summary of Discussion:

- The focus being addressed was a group of students who were interested in earning a college degree but for various reasons, running start was not accessible to them. The idea was to fill in the gap and we reached out to South Puget Sound Community College to start a partnership.
- House Bill passed where ninth grade courses could start counting as college credit.
- The idea for the communities in Yelm, which are not as close to campus, was to make it feasible for our high schoolers to finish their high school career simultaneously with their college degree.
- Enrollment has increased. Statistically, South Puget Sound Community College has seen an 18% increase in enrollment. 76% of students, that is about 1,722 students who are enrolled in one or more college courses while in high school, versus the 58% that was reported last year.
- Changes that have been made include adding more personnel in terms of navigation support, and a more robust parent outreach engagement with the student application process.

Questions/ Comments:

- **Q:** How can SPSCC track data for student credit and courses?
A: SPSCC is a perfect case study due to size, and the data that will be received three to five years from now. Which will be effective towards achieving the goal of post-secondary attainment.
A: We can track the data. All the courses we are offering through South Puget and Central are highly transferable. A challenge presents itself however when students want to study in other States. In these instances, students are told to reach out to their college of choice ahead of time and be intentional about their courses. Also highlighting the Direct Transfer Agreement which will transfer all 90 credits if students have completed the full DTA.
- One current challenge we are facing is not enough training for high school principals, and counselors on navigation and outreach.

United Way of Thurston County**Discussion Participant:**

- Chris Wells, Executive Director, United Way of Thurston County

Highlights:

- Non-profit also focusing on postsecondary education.
- Providing help to students beyond the cost of tuition with navigation complexity of college such as applications, timelines, and additional supportive services.
- Completion is key because many students enroll but do not complete college.

Summary of the Discussion:

- United Way has three priority areas of focus: health, education, and economic mobility. Envisioning a community where all people can thrive.
- There is a United Way research study that is being conducted across the country, known as “ALICE” which is an acronym for Asset, Limited, Income, Constrained, Employed. United Way is attempting to measure and better quantify real poverty in the United States and in the communities they serve.
- There has been an inadequate representation of poverty data for the last 60 years, ALICE shows us how flawed those calculations are. This data is not adjusted by region for example, what is considered poverty level in Washington is also considered poverty level in Kentucky.
- One of the solutions piloted is the Navigator program. Career and resource Navigators were implemented in North Thurston and Yelm schools to work directly with students, build trust, and help support the goal of connecting them to the resources they need.
- This program has expanded to Olympia School District; a fourth position has been hired and has been funded with money from the Tumwater School District.
- The measures that will be used over the next several years are the FAFSA completion data, postsecondary enrollment, fall-to-fall retention, and the completion of postsecondary credential. A partnership with industry and workforce development will be needed to be intentional about identifying or establishing those education pathways.
- Those existing and emerging sectors of opportunity are going to shape the economy of Washington State for the next 50 years and help students get on those pathways, into those sectors and into those careers that are going to ultimately lift households out of the ALICE threshold.

Questions/Comments:

- **Q:** How are you messaging this? What are you saying to students? What are you saying to families and what have you learned around those messages in terms of what works?
A: Colleges are competing with the real-world market. Part of the message is not just for the individual, it is for the family, and the commitment they are making for themselves. In doing this work many partnerships are needed, to get this initiative funded. It is not only offer for students, but also overcoming prejudices against post-secondary education.
- **Q:** Regarding the AA program at Yelm High School, has this led to an increase in counseling/advising. How have you had to build that up?
A: We have had to build that up and to some degree in parallel to our counseling staff. Yelm High School had to allocate some additional human resources to support this change.
- **Q:** How can the Council help get the word out?
A: Since 2019 we have been working on ensuring that there is a Navigator in every high school in Thurston County, funding has been an issue. Applied for first round of college grants and are in the process of applying for the second round. There is also a need to rethink early childhood education, birth to five, and enormous deficit. The next steps for Yelm Community schools are offering a more robust set of courses to students, specifically in the Career and Technical Education Dual Credit Courses.
- **Q:** If the Yelm community schools experiment were to grow into other school districts around neighboring areas, how do you see your strategy being shifted?

A: Students receiving an AA may look towards transferring and we are strategic with advising, including supporting high school counselors. We hope to see other districts grow; we are seeing the benefit at South Puget Community College in our enrollment numbers. Ultimately, if we are going to sustain the energy over the next 5 to 15 years, to achieve these goals we need to work with all our partners like, College Promise Coalition, Washington Round Table. This is the opportunity to have policy makers understand what worked in the past is not going to work in the future. This is complex work.

- **Q:** Hypothetically in a year from now what will you have done to help increase post-secondary education and close equity gaps?

A: **Saint Martin's** hopes to have more graduates and will be able to tell the story of an increasingly more robust work site, learning opportunities for students. **Tumwater School District** hopes to have navigators in every single high school for students. **United Way of Thurston** goal is to have a model for free high-quality year-round early childhood education, with at least one program that serves families that do not qualify for the childcare subsidy in Washington State. **The Evergreen State College** wants to continue to develop and grow the enrollment rates to increase post-secondary attainment. For the Shelton Promise, if funded by next year all the seniors and juniors will be receiving the good news about paid tuition.

Aligned Efforts to Increase Postsecondary Attainment

Presenter: Heather Hudson

Materials: [Aligned Partner Resources](#)

Video Reference: [3:22:17-4:26:54](#)

The College Promise Coalition

Aligned Partner Participant:

- Bill Lyne, Professor, and President of United Faculty of Washington State

Highlights:

- WSU and UW brought this coalition together in 2008. This has taken off in the last 5-6 years. Thanks to the Gates Foundation for funding the Coalition the last few years.
- The goal is 70% completion rate by 2030 and is focused on increasing enrolment and completion of all post-secondary credentials.
- Interested in SNAP bill from WSAC, Promise Bills, and MFI Bill from the Washington Student Association.

Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB)

Aligned Partner Participant:

- Jane Broom, Co-Chair, Senior Director, Microsoft Philanthropies

Highlights:

- Fund was created in partnership with the Legislature to focus on workforce education and ensure that students are directed when pursuing degrees most aligned with the jobs projected across Washington State.

- There are four principles the Board is driving towards and recommend positions to the Legislature about how that fund should get spent and prioritized:
 1. Focused on 70% goal on having more students attend college or degree programs.
 2. Creating the right support and wraparound services, particularly for first-generation students, perusing their education.
 3. Target funds to those degree and credential programs that are most aligned to where the business growth and the job growth in the State. Currently prioritizing computer science, engineering, trade work.
 4. This is a fund that can be used to drive best practices and fuel things that are working across the State.
- Focused on AI and the role in education for students and teachers. How do we help navigate a very complicated system and use AI itself to help drive FAFSA/WASFA completion.

The Washington Student Association

Aligned Partner Participant:

- Nancy Canales Montiel, Executive Director

Highlights:

- Washington Student Association is a student led and run coalition of student governments from across the State that represent over 200,000 students statewide.
- Legislative agenda is comprised of input of these students drafted every six months. Student governments run school, state, and university wide surveys to gather feedback on our agenda.
- Mission is to make our campuses more accessible through legislative advocacy, encouraging students to have their voice represented.
- Biggest interest this session is the extension of eligibility for the Washington College Grant to the 70% MFI mark. The second priority is fully funding our Basic Needs Provision, which during the last session did not receive enough funding.
- WSA believes with the changing demographics on our campuses the needs of students are changing as well, ensuring first-generation and marginalized students can obtain college degrees. Working towards making Washington's workforce more accessible. There will be a few Bills going through the Legislature including one that would make certifications accessible through the registration of an item instead of a Social Security number. This would allow undocumented students to obtain a degree but also the certification to be able to create their own small business and work legally in the State.
- Preparing students to understand AI and its resources in a positive way that will help them complete their studies effectively therefore completing great research for us to use.

Gates Foundation

Aligned Partner Participant:

- Angela Jones, Director of Washington State Initiative (WSI)

Highlights:

- Focused on the transition space between high school and post-secondary education to achieve the goal of 70%.

- The current target is trying to connect the work happening in the State, and a strategy is being created. Time has been spent talking with Micheal Meotti and his team, specifically looking at regional grants.
- Working to support ERDC with their efforts around modernization and are having conversations with OSPI to understand their challenges because they are a big source of information.
- The Gates Foundation is working around FAFSA completion. This is an indicator they are trying to understand, in partnership with WSAC, how they can best support this initiative.
- Gates Foundation seeks to diversify vendors and having equitable access to resources.
- The United States Gates Foundation focus population is Black, Latino, and students experiencing poverty. Within Washington two other populations have been added, indigenous and rural to determine needs. Also working with Asian and Pacific Islanders and their coalition. This work is seeking to understand the priorities and long-term vision and how the Gates Foundation can connect that work.

The Washington Roundtable

Aligned Partner Participant:

- Neil Strege, Vice President

Highlights:

- Washington Roundtable is a nonprofit business group comprised of senior executives from Washington's largest employers including the most active/largest members Microsoft.
- Over the last 10 years Washington is top 10 in GDP growth, when looking at the output of education we are at the bottom. Washington cannot be a high job growth state and a low higher education state.
- Roundtable set the goal of 70% of students in Washington will receive a post-secondary education by the age of 26.
- Looking at the data, in the last 15 years, high school graduations have gone up, post-secondary education has increased, but enrollment as a percentage of students has decreased. The real focus is on enrollment as the highest leverage opportunity to make progress towards the 70% credential attainment goal.
- Roundtable has a vision of a more inclusive higher education system that invites students to participate. Looking at the 2024 agenda the round table is supporting two bills, one is WSAC SNAP Bill and the Washington College Grant Guaranteed Emissions Program.
- Guaranteed Admissions Program was created by the Council of Presidents and came up with a standard by which students can attend at least one campus of every public institution in the state. The bill would make it mandatory for school districts to participate therefore expanding the pool of students the Roundtable can reach.

Questions/ Comments:

- **Q:** How can WSAC work better with your organizations, not just now but in the future to get that goal of attainment to 70%?
A: Outreaching more to the public and making them aware of these bills will be effective at moving our attainment goal forwards. Next' steps are having better communication to support everything that is happening in the State, getting accurate information from our partners to avoid a duplicating effort. The top issue every year is not policy in education and was not reflected in this year's poll in the Seattle Times, there is a disconnect with voter across the State

of Washington. One big person that is missing is the legislature. They need to listen to these conversations, be at the table, because it effects their constituents.

- **Q:** Is there a way to yield to a unified ask as we think about the College Promise Coalition with the new Governor and a new biennium around student access and success?
A: Politically is where the engagement needs to happen, an investment in higher education, and funding.

Comments:

- The utilization of AI to help further advance student support in post-secondary attainment.
- Effective legislative advocacy needs to do a better job of creating a lesson plan by relying on our teachers we currently have in the system and college faculty members, to help us develop a successful plan by utilizing AI.
- Advocacy of college in high schools is working and there is data that reflects this progress.

Regional Challenge Grant: Existing and New Partnerships

Presenter: Abbey Roth

Materials: [RCG](#)

Video Reference: [4:27:51-4:58:03](#)

Regional Challenge Grant Guided Principles

- Strong relationships with current and future partners are critical to our understanding of how partnerships grow and evolve in communities.
- Learning what works alongside a community takes time.
- The opportunity for this investment should be accessible to communities across the State.
- Our processes must continuously improve, and our awards must reflect the community needs, as well as resources available to WSAC and our partners.

Direction in 2024

- Engage current partnerships in negotiations to continue work through June 2025.
- Only in the first academic year of implementation, each partnership will look different, intention is to learn from this work, created a set of criteria.
- Continue to sow the seeds of evaluation research to quantify the impact of regional work with current partnerships. Both short-term outcomes and long-term population-wide work.
- Invite additional partnerships to complete a Letter of Interest. Recommendations will be made in the May Council meeting.

Sustaining Investments with Existing Partnerships

- The partnership is making progress toward their goals alongside their local community and based on their ongoing learning.
- The partnership's approach to their work is aligned with the vision of WSAC's Regional Challenge Grant. The partnership is spending funds as approved and outlined in the grant agreement, making sure that the work is progressing.
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New Partnerships and the 2024 Request for Letters of Interests

- Interested applicants may submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) between now and February 16.
- The full LOI, application instructions, information sessions, and Frequently Asked Questions (continually updated) are available at: wsac.wa.gov/challenge-grants
- Recommended award levels will be responsive to the needs, capacity, and proposed strategies of the applicants.
- WSAC may recommend up to 6 partnerships.

Priorities in the 2024 Request for Letters of Interest

- In the full request for letters of interest, the theory of change with Regional Challenge Grant and the connected priorities based on theory of change is outlined.
- In response to what RCG sees in areas of WSAC's work, RCG commits to continue to grow with the cohort of partnerships that they are supporting.
- Regional and community-centered emerging and forming partnerships.
- Wide range of place-based proposed activities.
- Adult learners or credential completion of communities served.

Request for Letters of Interest Information Resources

The following are available at <https://wsac.wa.gov/challenge-grants>

- Request for Letters of Interest document
- Downloadable LOI template
- Living FAQ document
- Two Information Sessions and Recordings
- Additional questions can be sent to RegionalChallengeGrant@wsac.wa.gov

Questions/Comments:

- **Q:** How do these different regional partnerships all coordinate and are they overlapping?
A: There is two pieces to that, how the partnerships are talking to one another and how we are talking to one another, and both are important. Some of the opportunities of partner engagement are led by WSAC, Gates Foundation, and by other groups.

Comments:

- As a part of focusing on adult learners this will allow more support services to flourish because adults have many different challenges with coming back to school.
- FAFSA preparation works has piggybacked on top of a national effort to help lower income families get the EIC, called Vista Sites.
- Relationship building takes time and continued conversations that include showing up, being present, not just in zoom settings.
- RCG is committed to sustain these investments in these relationships with our partners, even though it is only the first-year trust is being built.

Council Announcements:

- Next Council meeting is May 14, 2024 and will be held in the Yakima, WA area as part of WSAC's commitment to engaging in our partnership communities.
 - We will include a day of community outreach. Any comments on community outreach ideas or agenda items for the Council meeting in May can be shared with Heather Hudson or Jeff Vincent.
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Public Comments:

- One of the things that was added to legislation was that WSAC should be an advocate for higher education and under Micheal Meotti's leadership WSAC has embraced this role and I hope WSAC continues to be daring.
- No public comments from the online community.

Motion made to Adjourn Meeting.

Motion Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:58PM

Appendix A

[TVW meeting recording 01-23-2024](#)

Appendix B

Meeting chat record from Zoom:

01:39:12: Joel Bentley: Hi everyone, I'm Joel Bentley, Communications Program Manager at WSAC.

01:39:35: Emma Lacalli: Good morning! Emma Lacalli, WSAC Research

01:40:25: Tiffany Jones Assoc. Dir-EWU Assessment: Hi everyone. I am the Associate Director of Assessment with Eastern Washington University. Thank you for having me.

01:40:31: Madyson Frank: Hi all! Madyson Frank, Government Relations & Program Associate at ICW! Filling in for Terri until she joins in person around 10AM.

01:40:57: Abby Chien she/her | WSAC: Good Morning, Abby Chien, Strategy & Partnerships team

01:41:57: Ami Magisos: Hello, Ami Magisos, WSAC Strategy & Partnerships team.

01:44:17: Tiffany Jones Assoc. Dir-EWU Assessment: It sounds like the mic Jeff and Michael have is not turned on.

01:45:39: Executive Office: Thank you Tiffany, I just swapped their mic for another one :-)

01:45:46: Tiffany Jones Assoc. Dir-EWU Assessment: Reacted to "Thank you Tiffany, I..." with 🎉

01:45:55: Joel Bentley: Reacted to "Thank you Tiffany, I..." with 🎉

01:51:52: Executive Office: Reacted to "Hi all! Madyson Fran..." with ❤️

01:59:41: Executive Office: Welcome everyone! If you are just joining us, please use the chat feature to introduce yourself.

02:48:33: Executive Office: Meeting materials are available online at: www.wsac.wa.gov/2024-meetings

02:53:03: Kimberly Hetrick WSAC: Hello! Kimberly Hetrick, WSAC WA Jobs Initiative and Career Connect WA

03:34:12: Executive Office: We're taking a quick break. Be back online at 11:15. Thank you!

03:54:24: Executive Office: To our online audience, are you able to hear us OK?

03:55:04: J. Lee Schultz: Replying to "To our online audien..." Yes, thank you

03:55:18: Abby Chien she/her | WSAC: Reacted to "To our online audien..." with 👍

03:56:29: Joel Bentley: Reacted to "To our online audien..." with 👍

03:59:32: Executive Office: Reacted to "Yes, thank you" with 👍

04:45:54: Kimberly Hetrick WSAC: This is an excellent panel! I wholeheartedly agree with all the comments and am so grateful to see the intentional focus on HSBP, navigators, wrap around services-

especially childcare, CTE Dual Credit and cradle to career. This all aligns so well with Career Connect WA! Thank you to everyone on the panel!

06:20:21: Maddy Thompson: 2013 - the goal was put in place by the Washington Student Achievement Council

06:22:43: Brian Jeffries: Replying to "2013 - the goal was ..." The Washington Roundtable adopted its complementary 70% goal in 2016

07:17:14: Maddy Thompson: Really appreciate these comments around adult learners and removing barriers when people may not have had a good educational experience in K-12. And...how do we ensure we are helping all K12 students to feel / be successful and engaged in their learning while at K12 so they do not end up years later as an adult who has bad memories of school.

07:18:15: Abby Chien she/her | WSAC: Here on Zoom 😊

07:26:21: Kimberly Hetrick WSAC: Reacted to "Really appreciate th..." with 👍