



## 2025 State Policy and Budget Priorities

### Ensuring a prosperous Washington

The Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW) are vital allies in our state's efforts to build and sustain a vibrant way of life for all residents. With expertise in critical fields such as business, computer science, education, and health care, our graduates help to create and sustain thriving, healthy communities across the state. ICW member campuses engage with public and private partners across the state in supporting Washingtonians and we encourage the state policymakers to see us as partners.

#### **Priority: Help Washington achieve its postsecondary attainment goal.<sup>1</sup>**

- Extend the Washington College Grant to a maximum award for students from families living on 70% MFI and make the Bridge Grant for students with the greatest need permanent.
- Index the Washington College Grant maximum award for state residents who choose to attend a not-for-profit, private college or university; re-link in statute the maximum award level for these students to have access to the award levels of those who choose to attend the state's public research universities.
- Inform high school students of all of their postsecondary options.
- Boost financial aid application (FAFSA/WASFA) completion rates (in consultation with K-12, postsecondary, and community based organizational partners).
- Ensure Washington students attending not-for-profit, independent colleges remain eligible for existing state student aid programs as well as new or enhanced programs of assistance or support that provide funding for college enrollment and completion.
- Support basic needs and behavioral health care for all post-secondary students.

#### **Priority: Ensure that Washington businesses have a prepared and ready workforce.**

- Leverage the capacity at ICW member campuses to provide postsecondary engagement opportunities for Washington high school students, particularly those living in rural and/or high-needs communities.
- Re-engage adult learners to help Washington meet its workforce needs through degree completion and credential programs.
- Enhance overall funding levels for State Work Study (SWS) funds so more Washington employers and students can participate; expand eligibility to students from other states and countries to help them build connections to Washington companies and organizations, widening the talent pipeline.
- Support graduate education programs at independent not-for-profit, four-year institutions, especially in high-demand areas such as behavioral health, computer science, education, and health care.

#### **Priority: Support community-focused capital investments.**

- Model on existing programs in other states to invest in communities served by ICW campuses to support renovation and construction projects that provide jobs and spur economic activity.
- Support projects to increase housing targeted towards students with the greatest need, comply with Washington State's Clean Buildings law and regulations, and meet other local needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Both the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and the Washington Roundtable have set a 70% postsecondary credential attainment goal. WSAC's goal is for adults aged 25-44 to earn a credential; WA Roundtable's goal is for students graduating high school. More information, see: <https://wsac.wa.gov/strategic-action-plan> and <https://www.waroundtable.com>.