

**Partnership Name:** Centralia College, Centralia School District 401, Chehalis School District 302, and  
Lewis County Transit

**Application Point of Contact:** Mathew Potter

**Fiscal Agent:** Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County

**Why are the partner organizations that are or will be included in this work the ones that came together to address educational attainment through place-based work in your region?**

At the Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County, we are dedicated to guiding all young people, especially those in greatest need, towards achieving their utmost as productive, caring, and responsible community members. Our focus is on delivering hands-on, innovative programs that are grounded in our three foundational pillars: Academic Success, Character & Leadership, and Healthy Lifestyles. These programs serve as a cornerstone for extended learning opportunities that transcend the conventional educational framework. We proudly operate a standalone site in Chehalis and run a comprehensive program through the 21st Century Grant at Jefferson Lincoln Elementary, ensuring a broad reach across Lewis County. Our facilities remain open after school hours and throughout the summer and holiday breaks, welcoming all children in the county to continue their learning journey in a stimulating and nurturing setting. This strategy not only amplifies our students' learning experiences but also ignites a passion for lifelong learning. By dedicating ourselves to extended day learning, we provide a holistic blend of educational enrichment and care, specifically designed to cater to the diverse needs of our community's youth and steer them towards a promising future.

Using a combination of well-established STEM programs at both of our area high schools and middle schools, along with a strong connection to our workforce development efforts in Lewis County through Centralia College and Lewis County Transit, the Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County will create new and exciting after school and summer programs. These programs will give insight to career awareness through career and technical education engagement, and work-based exploration. The Boys & Girls Club currently serves as a member of the advisory group for the Renewable Energy Vehicle & Infrastructure Technician (REVIT) training program. The REVIT training program is a concerted effort to develop statewide curriculum in grades 8-12 STEM programs. The main goal of this career and technical education program is to develop curriculum, that educates students on the various renewable energy programs and careers. From zero emission fleets, to overcoming the challenges of transitioning our world to a clean and healthy environment, students will participate in hands-on instruction using emerging technologies such as hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, solar power systems, and wind turbines. This will introduce participants and help make them aware of educational and career options in the renewable energy industry.

With funding from Career Connect Washington and the Washington Department of Ecology, the REVIT program officially began its development phase in September 2022, with a pilot commencing in September 2023. As a result of the curriculum development funded by these sources, on April 14, 2023, Centralia School District 401 submitted documentation to OSPI to request the approval of two STEM exploratory CTE courses that have been introduced in the REVIT pilot. The classes include an exploratory Science Renewable Energy course and an exploratory Material and Earth Science course. Unit 1 of 4 has been finalized in full and is in pilot. Unit 2 is 80% complete and will be completed in January 2024. Units 3 and 4 are in development and will be completed by April 2024 and piloted through June 2024. The first pilot class is currently at the start of the second Trimester, with 23 students currently enrolled.

This program will be the foundation with which we build this project around. Using the strategies and planning framework developed in the REVIT models, our programs will be able to move rapidly from the theoretical to the practical, maximizing the benefits for students.

**How is or will the partnership be structured?**

Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County will serve as the lead agency but will be supported by four partnering agencies: Centralia College, Centralia School District 401, Chehalis School District 302, and Lewis County Transit. This partnership provides a number of key components for project success. 1) Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County will lead the engagement and program delivery, 2) Centralia College will provide program support and instructional strategies, 3) Centralia & Chehalis School Districts will provide curriculum and educational content, and 4) Lewis County Transit will assist in the overall project, financial management, and transportation services.

**How have or will the partner organizations learn from each other and the communities served, and how does or will the partnership incorporate this learning into ongoing work?**

Each of the partners provides unique services to the students enrolled in this program. Those services include K-12 education, college and career readiness, after school and summer programs, and transportation services. By combining these into a single coordinated system of collaboration these entities will help students examine real-world scenarios that align to work opportunities throughout the communities that these entities serve. Using various work study programs, cooperate site visits, and community leader engagement, this project will bring a tangible connection and a comprehensive learning opportunity to all students involved. Furthermore, this project will be another step in the development of a workforce that will be responsive to the job needs of area employers. It is no longer viable to wait for careers and jobs to appear, this partnership is focused on preparing students for the next generation of workforce skills. Through this experience, the agencies involved will learn how to set expectations, coordinate workforce development, and deliver a prepared and talented employee. These lessons learned will then be integrated into a broad-based online curriculum that can be shared across our region and our state, so that others in communities like ours, can accelerate the development of the next generation of a skilled workforce.

This program is currently being expanded into a growing alumni network for possible job shadowing opportunities and internships in various business and industry settings. Students are made aware of careers and post-secondary opportunities throughout the districts. Career and College Readiness (CCR) is a priority, and a multitude of programs are organized by a district-wide committee. At WF West High School, students participate in a daily CCR block specifically focused on post-secondary readiness. There is also a full-time Career and College Advisor at the high school that meets with every student multiple times before graduation. Finally, in order to serve our non-English speaking community, both school districts have a dedicated staff of professionals to assist students and families as they navigate the school system and plan for careers and college. Partnering with the Center of Excellence for Clean Energy at Centralia College will help with promoting the program and disseminating the finished curriculum to other colleges. Center staff will track the number of graduates and their placements and will continue to work as an industry intermediary – tracking news, trends and labor market demand; and sharing those across the college system to enhance educational programs.

**Who are the focal population(s) in your partnership's work, and what assets do learners and families in these populations bring to their educational journeys?**

Lewis County encompasses several high poverty areas that would greatly benefit from this type of investment. A large percentage of Lewis County is marked in the 40% -100% poverty range on WSDOT's community accessibility page (insert link) and several areas are 15% - 30% minority regions. English proficiency is a challenge for many residents, with the city of Centralia meeting the LEP threshold for limited English proficiency. This community is also home to a high veteran population, with most communities falling into the 10% - 20% range. Lewis County is a coal community in transition. Following the initial downsizing of the TransAlta coal plant and impending closure, the area has seen high unemployment and disproportionately low wage jobs. As of the 2019 U.S. Census, 12.2% of Lewis County residents were living in poverty. In contrast, only 9.8% of Washington State residents were similarly affected. The County saw a 13.3% unemployment rate in 2009, a low of 6.2% in 2019 and a high of 16.6% in 2020 (Employment Security Department, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically worsened these issues and increased disparities in equity.

Lewis County needs new living wage jobs – and a new identity – so it can rise out of poverty and embrace its full potential. The REVIT program is designed to target both socio-economically challenged families and a diversity of population that necessitates a strong and significant outreach to the various BIPOC sub-group populations. One of our strategies is to share with families and students the myriad of opportunities that will be available in the renewable energy industry over the next several decades. These opportunities are made available to all individuals and are equitable in their attainment given the foundation of learning we are putting together in the REVIT program.

**What is the geographic region where the focal population(s) that would be served by this investment live?**

In a broad sense, the entirety of the Southwest Washington region would benefit from this effort due to a more educated and trained workforce becoming available. More directly, the cities of Centralia and Chehalis, along with Lewis County can use this new workforce to realize a new set of economic development goals.

Both of these cities are located in a coal-transition community with close to 20% of the population living below the Federal Poverty Level and almost 50% of the population is Medicaid eligible. Traditionally, these cities have high instances of unemployment, income levels below the state median, and a shortage of family-wage jobs. It is also worthy to note that the majority of schools in Lewis County exceed the free and reduced lunch thresholds. The free and reduced lunch enrollment percentage in Chehalis School District is 55.7% while Centralia School District is 95.2% as of October 2023.

**What are some of the systemic barriers that learners and families in your focal population(s) encounter?**

Our community is comprised of both socio-economically challenged families and a diversity of population that necessitates a strong and significant outreach to the various BIPOC sub-group populations. One of our strategies is to share with families and students the myriad of opportunities that will be available in the renewable energy industry over the next several decades. These opportunities are made available to all individuals and are equitable in their attainment given the foundation of learning we are putting together in the REVIT program.

REVIT will be a motivating and accessible example to these young minds, encouraging them to participate as equals no matter their economic demographic or cultural identity. Shining a spotlight on equity and justice will be the foundation to help our project team create a more inclusive and diverse environment for our students. Our strategic equity action goals will include:  
Data collection to facilitate data-informed decision-making: The first action is foundational because it will allow the project partners to know the demographics of students who participate in the educational opportunities offered under REVIT. With this information, we will be able to effectively strategize and target outreach so that all communities benefit from the REVIT program.

Increasing opportunities for new applicants to the program: Our second goal aims to increase participation by underserved communities. This will be accomplished by improving how the project partners communicate about the REVIT career prep opportunities. In addition, the project partners will work to alleviate resource constraints (financial, IT, human resources, etc.) through a range of activities, including free community education workshops and career exploration events to be conducted at each of the school districts.

Data will be collected through a variety of sources including Student Information Systems at the school level, Grade book systems, transit systems, and state education systems. Recruiting processes will be designed so that BIPOC and socio-economically disadvantaged students are aware of the program and are encouraged to apply. Additionally, recruiting processes will seek out students on a career pathway that includes renewable energy programs and careers will also be targeted. Finally, students who demonstrate a high level of interest through an oral interview or written submission will also be considered.

Utilizing the methodology of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in our curriculum development means all students will have an equitable opportunity to access and engage in the program curriculum. UDL strategies ensure that all learner's needs and potential barriers are addressed in the planning process. Instead of a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum, learners are empowered through various means of presentation, ways to engage in the concepts, and demonstrate their understanding. This involves expert and media presentations, cooperative learning, hands-on project-based activities, and real-world experiences. When barriers to learning are removed, student engagement and motivation in learning increases. It provides the environment necessary to produce learners who engage in problem solving with endurance, working cooperatively, and thinking creatively "outside the box". The curriculum under development through the REVIT program is relevant and highly engaging, with hands-on projects

that include a clear “why” and purpose for students current and future learning and goals. In addition, the students will have projects that provide for multiple ways of learning and representing learning. Further, both students and teachers involved will have connection with and access to industry experts that make the curriculum and learning relevant and applicable, so students can see themselves in this field both now and in their future careers.

Transportation also proves to be a major barrier for several students and families. However, transportation is provided by the Centralia-Chehalis Transportation Co-Op for students coming and going to school for K-12. Additionally, Lewis County Transit offers fixed route bus service throughout the Twin Cities of Centralia and Chehalis, and express service to Tumwater, Grand Mound and Olympia and express service to Castle Rock. These transportation services are provided free of charge for students 18 and younger.

**What work do you propose undertaking during the granting period?**

Utilizing the partnerships described above, our goal during this grant period will be to expose students to job opportunities in the renewable energy fields. Fortescue Future Industries and Lewis County Transit have been included in the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub funding from the US Department of Energy. This funding will create a need for technical energy jobs and as such these participating students will have a head start in these career fields. Currently the program being developed, REVIT, is in pilot at Centralia High School. This grant would extend the exploratory and preparatory curriculum of REVIT to the Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County that will be integrated into our program delivery model.

The Boys & Girls Club of Lewis County is poised to integrate the REVIT curriculum into its shorter classroom periods and after-school programs. The majority of the program activities will take place between June 25<sup>th</sup> through August 25<sup>th</sup>, a 60-day period, to encourage retention and engagement from students throughout the summer break. We anticipate up to 25 students will enroll in the program, at an estimated cost of \$5,000 per student. Eligible costs will include supplies for hands-on activities, staff wages and benefits allocable to the project, and related travel for project management. K-12 and higher education partners will be no-cost participants who will benefit from the development of this course; they will provide consultation to ensure course curriculum and materials are aligned with desired workforce and CTE outcomes. When awarded this grant, the following expenditures will be funded over a two-year period:

<b>ELIGIBLE COST</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>Staff Wages &amp; Benefits</b>	\$180,000
<b>Travel/Transportation Services</b>	\$ 30,000
<b>Supplies</b>	\$ 40,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$250,000

Research from the Boys & Girls Club of America shows that 7.7 million kids and teens are alone and unsupervised after school while nearly 25 million don't have access to after-school programs. This means that millions of our nation’s youth are left unsupervised, unguided and unsafe. What happens during out-of-school time can have a significant impact on reversing the negative trends facing youth, including dropout rates, obesity and violence. Therefore, it is imperative that we keep our youth engaged by offering a hands-on curriculum that focuses on the relevant renewable energy topics and technologies being introduced in our community and careers.

**How will this proposed work contribute to increasing educational attainment for the focal population(s) in your region?**

Educational research tells us that engaged learning environments have the greatest success for student achievement. The hands-on learning that will take place through the REVIT program will spur curiosity in these students and bring about an extended opportunity beyond their K-12 daily education. It

also provides a look into the future by examining careers in electric vehicles, wind and solar technologies, hydrogen production, and other renewable energy career fields such as those listed in the table below.

Career	SOC Code
Bus/Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	49-3031.00
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	49-3023.00
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	49-9071.00
Wind Turbine Service Technician	49-9081.00
Fuel Cell Engineer	17-2141.01
Energy Engineer	17-2199.03
Mechanical Engineer	17-2141.00
Energy Auditor	47-4011.01
Policy Analyst	19-2041.01
Transportation Planner	19-3099.01
Sustainability Specialist	13-1199.05

While these specific industry careers currently have a 1.3% or lower annual growth rate, the adoption of new energy-efficient and sustainable technologies will force these traditional careers to evolve into a new technical and specialized industry. While there is not yet data available, it is anticipated that these specialty careers will be in extremely high demand. In fact, renewable energy technologies will create a plethora of jobs across these and other key industries.