

WEIAOB 2026 Legislative Advisory Committee: Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Attending (alphabetical by last name):

Jane Broom, Ruben Flores, Charles Knutson, Bill Lyne, Eleni Papadakis, and Rep. Dave Paul.

Others attending (alphabetical by last name):

Joel Anderson (WSAC), Sienna Jarrard (WA Student Association), Vanessa Ponce (WA Student Association), and Sheila Steiner (ICW).

Meeting called to order at 3:01 p.m.

Introductory Comments

Presenter: Joel Anderson

- The Board established a 2026 Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) during its July 17 meeting to review current WEIA expenditures and develop draft recommendations for the 2026 legislative session.

Key Takeaways

- LAC members agreed to a general meeting timeline and discussed what kinds of information would be helpful for better understanding how WEIA funds are being spent.
- Some LAC members expressed interest in the Board issuing high-level recommendations to the Legislature that comment on all WEIA expenditures rather than only policy level expenditures.
- LAC members provided feedback on an updated bill draft to amend the Board's statute, RCW 28B.77.310. At the next LAC meeting, members will decide which bill draft to submit to Gov. Ferguson's office and OFM.

Discussion: 2026 LAC Planning

Presenter: Joel Anderson

Material: 2026 LAC Planning

- LAC members reviewed goals for their work and a proposed meeting schedule for the remainder of 2025. The proposal included six meetings between September 1 and December 31. It received general support.
- LAC members reviewed how the Board has produced legislative recommendations in recent years and discussed key questions to answer in 2026.

- Regarding the state operating budget, LAC members expressed interest in learning more about:
 - How current WEIA funds are being spent.
 - How proportions of higher education funding from various accounts (i.e., General Fund-State, WEIA, etc.) have changed over time.
 - Whether carryforward level WEIA expenditures are still being spent on their originally intended purposes.
 - LAC members emphasized the importance of transparency while reviewing current WEIA expenditures. There was interest in focusing on more recent data because of language in the 2025-27 operating budget that allowed WEIA expenditures to supplant other higher education funding for the first time.
 - Nonpartisan legislative staff said that producing a full list of carryforward level WEIA expenditures would be difficult because each line item in the budget is calculated manually.
 - Some LAC members expressed interest in producing higher-level recommendations about WEIA expenditures that focus on broad categories of spending (i.e., state financial aid programs, faculty compensation, etc.).
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Discussion: 2026 Bill Draft

Presenter: Joel Anderson

Material: 2026 Bill Draft

- Draft Board legislation that would amend RCW 28B.77.310 was presented to LAC members. It would:
 - Extend Co-chairs' term lengths from one to two years.
 - Require the Board to elect Co-chairs biennially instead of annually.
 - Allow the Board to meet more than four times a year.
 - Require the Board to consult data from WSAC instead of WTB and eliminate the requirement for WTB to maintain a public-facing WEIAOB data dashboard.
 - Change the annual due date for the Board's legislative report to December 31 from August 1.
 - LAC members provided feedback on the draft. Some suggested amendments included:
 - Adding two members to the Board—specifically, representatives from the Governor's office and Office of Financial Management.
 - Preventing WEIA expenditures from supplanting other higher education funding.
 - Naming other agencies and entities as collaborators in evaluating the effectiveness of WEIA expenditures. (Examples included the WA State Institute for Public Policy, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, and Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee.)
 - WSAC and the Office of the Code Reviser will work on updated drafts of Board legislation to consider at the next LAC meeting.
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Closing

Presenter: Joel Anderson

- LAC members will receive scheduling polls to help determine future meeting dates. The next meeting will happen during the week of September 1.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:01 p.m.