

WEIAOB 2026 Legislative Advisory Committee: Meeting Minutes

September 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Attending (alphabetical by last name):

Jane Broom and Bill Lyne.

Others attending (alphabetical by last name):

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

Meeting called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Introductory Comments

Presenter: Joel Anderson

- The Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) will review meeting minutes from August 13, continue discussing goals for the 2026 legislative session, and decide which bill draft to submit as part of WSAC's 2026 decision package to Gov. Ferguson's office and OFM.
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Key Takeaways

- Additional information is being gathered from JLARC, LEAP, and WSIPP about opportunities to collaborate with the Board on research regarding WEIA expenditures.
 - LAC members expressed a desire to engage more with the Legislature and comment on legislation and budget drafts, as needed, when WEIA expenditures would be impacted.
 - LAC members decided to submit their original bill draft as part of WSAC's 2026 decision package to Gov. Ferguson's office and OFM.
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Discussion: 2026 LAC Planning

Presenter: Joel Anderson

Material: 2026 LAC Planning

- LAC meetings for the remainder of 2025 have been scheduled.
- During the first LAC meeting, members expressed interest in knowing:
 - How WEIA expenditures are currently being spent.
 - How the proportion of overall higher education funding coming from WEIA is changing over time.
 - Whether WEIA expenditures are still going toward their intended uses.

- Joel met with Rep. Paul on August 28 to discuss opportunities for collaboration between nonpartisan fiscal committee staff (Office of Program Research, OPR) and the Board regarding research on WEIA expenditure data.
 - Rep. Paul agreed to schedule a meeting with OPR staff to explore this topic further.
 - LAC members liked this approach and wanted to know whether WEIA expenditures were replacing General Fund-State expenditures for higher education.
 - Some LAC members noted that there is significant demand for degrees in fields like engineering, but institutions do not have enough capacity to serve all interested students.
- LAC members continued discussing the Board's approach during the 2026 legislative session. Feedback from them included:
 - The Board should be prepared to comment on legislation, as needed, if it impacts WEIA expenditures. It would be helpful to develop simple documents containing background information on WEIA for legislators.
 - The LAC will be an important tool for the Board to communicate feedback to legislators and Gov. Ferguson's office about WEIA expenditures.
 - More legislative engagement is better. LAC members were willing to meet with legislators and comment on both legislation and budget drafts, as needed.

Discussion: 2026 Bill Draft

Presenter: Joel Anderson

Material: 2026 Bill Drafts 1 and 2

- Based on feedback from the previous LAC meeting, Joel scheduled meetings with the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC), Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program (LEAP) Committee, and WA State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to discuss opportunities for collaboration on research projects regarding WEIA expenditures.
 - Prior to these meetings, LEAP seems like the best fit for initial collaboration. The committee already maintains all budget data on fiscal.wa.gov.
 - It may be feasible for LEAP to create data tables or visualizations that specifically detail WEIA expenditures.
- WSAC has allocated some funding internally to host in-person programming for the Board during the 2026 legislative session, if interested. The College Promise Coalition may also be able to support this work.
- All agency request legislation must be submitted to Gov. Ferguson's office and OFM by next Friday, September 12.
- Two drafts of Board legislation that would amend RCW 28B.77.310 were presented to LAC members. The first bill draft 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.

- In addition to the changes listed above, the second bill draft would add representatives from the Governor's office and OFM to the Board.
 - Staff from Gov. Ferguson's office and OFM said that this may present conflicts of interest. It could prevent them from approving the bill as a WSAC request.
 - LAC members agreed to submit the first bill draft.
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Closing

Presenter: Joel Anderson

- Joel will start looking at WEIA expenditures and determining which legislators LAC members should try to meet.
- The next LAC meeting will be September 24 at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:49 a.m.