

WEIAOB 2026 Legislative Advisory Committee Update: October 9, 2025

Introduction

On July 17, 2025, the Board agreed to form a 2026 Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) for the purposes of reviewing current WEIA expenditures and developing draft recommendations for the 2026 legislative session. After soliciting volunteers, Co-chairs Broom and Rep. Paul appointed the following Board members to serve on the LAC:

- Jane Broom (Co-chair)
- Rep. Dave Paul (Co-chair)
- Collin Bannister
- Ruben Flores
- Charles Knutson
- Bill Lyne
- Eleni Papadakis
- Dr. Terri Standish-Kuon

LAC members will continue to meet through the end of the 2026 legislative session to help the Board respond to new budget- and legislative-related developments, as needed.

Summary of Work Completed: August 13-October 9

Over the course of three meetings, LAC members have progressively discussed goals for the 2026 legislative session, started researching external stakeholders that may be able to help the Board document and analyze WEIA expenditures, and finished drafting legislation to amend the Board's statute ([RCW 28B.77.310](#)).

- **Key questions and takeaways from the first three LAC meetings are summarized on the following page.**
- WSAC's 2026 decision package (DP) and agency request legislation (ARL) for the Board are attached at the end of this document.

Topic	Key Questions	Takeaways
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the Board want to know about current WEIA expenditures? • Does the Board want to issue recommendations on carryforward, maintenance, and/or policy level expenditures? • Does the Board want to issue recommendations on general types of investments (i.e., state financial aid) and/or specific investments (i.e., programs, provisos)? • How could the Board collaborate with other committees, agencies, etc., to analyze WEIA expenditures? • What does effective oversight of WEIA expenditures look like in the next year? Three years? Five years? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board wants to have more detail on (1) how WEIA funds are currently being spent, (2) how the proportion of higher education funding coming from WEIA has changed over time, and (3) whether WEIA expenditures are still going toward their originally intended purposes. • Issuing higher-level recommendations about WEIA expenditures (i.e., categories or larger amounts) may help the Board be more effective. • LEAP, JLARC, WSIPP, and ERDC may all be helpful partners for analyzing WEIA expenditures in the future. • Protecting funds in WEIA for higher education is critical given the budget environment.
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Board want to amend its own statute (RCW 28B.77.310)? • Does the Board want to issue recommendations on other legislation? • Does the Board want to testify and/or sign in on legislation during session? • How could the Board socialize and support its bill (submitted by WSAC)? • Should the Board pursue additional legislation to support collaboration with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board wants to pursue legislation that improves its operations (see WSAC's DP and ARL at end of document). • The Board should be prepared to engage on other legislation, as needed, if it will impact WEIA expenditures. • The Board should engage Gov. Ferguson's office and the Legislature more frequently to emphasize the importance of protecting funds in WEIA and identify new strategies for

	other committees, agencies, etc.?	conducting oversight of WEIA expenditures.
General/Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the Board want to communicate with the Legislature and Gov. Ferguson’s office during session?• Does the Board want to host a lobby day during session?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Board may want to host an in-person event during session to talk with legislators about the purpose of WEIA.

Summary of Work Ahead: October 10-December 15

LAC members will meet four more times in 2026 to continue working on the following tasks:

- Drafting and submitting the Board’s 2025 legislative report.
- Producing more detailed summaries of current WEIA expenditures.
- Exploring potential collaboration with external stakeholders to improve the documentation and analysis of WEIA expenditures.
- Developing talking points for the Board’s bill to amend RCW 28B.77.310.
- Engaging key legislators and Gov. Ferguson’s office about the purpose of WEIA and its broader role in higher education funding.
- Drafting 2026 legislative recommendations for review and final approval during the Board’s January 2026 meeting.

Questions, comments, or concerns about the LAC may be sent to Joel Anderson, JoelA@wsac.wa.gov.



Student Achievement Council
2025-27 First Supplemental Budget Session
Policy Level - WB - WEIA Board Operations

Agency Recommendation Summary

WSAC has provided staff support to the Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB or “Board”) since fall 2023. After two years of facilitating quarterly meetings, issuing annual funding recommendations, and developing strategies to conduct stronger oversight of Workforce Education Investment Account (WEIA) expenditures, WSAC has identified multiple opportunities to streamline Board operations. This proposal will improve Board administration by extending co-chairs’ term lengths, allowing members to meet more frequently, eliminating unfunded mandates, and providing more time to issue annual funding recommendations. The proposal has no fiscal impact.

Program Recommendation Summary

PCA - SAC-Policy Coord and Admin

WSAC has provided staff support to the Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB or “Board”) since fall 2023. After two years of facilitating quarterly meetings, issuing annual funding recommendations, and developing strategies to conduct stronger oversight of Workforce Education Investment Account (WEIA) expenditures, WSAC has identified multiple opportunities to streamline Board operations. This proposal will improve Board administration by extending co-chairs’ term lengths, allowing members to meet more frequently, eliminating unfunded mandates, and providing more time to issue annual funding recommendations. The proposal has no fiscal impact.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2026	2027	2025-27	2028	2029	2027-29
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Decision Package Description

WSAC has provided staff support to the Workforce Education Investment Accountability and Oversight Board (WEIAOB or “Board”) since fall 2023. Over the past two years, the Board has extensively discussed how to become more effective and provide annual funding recommendations to the Legislature that are timely, well-informed, and constructive for fiscal committee members to consider.

Carrying out Board duties—namely issuing workforce education funding recommendations and ensuring accountability for WEIA expenditures—has highlighted numerous areas for improvement within current Board operations. For example:

- **Board co-chairs must serve one-year terms**, meaning that leadership may switch in the middle of a biennium or before co-chairs have led the Board through both biennial and supplemental budget years.
- **The Board must meet four times a year**—as opposed to more often—which limits its ability to conduct thorough, meaningful reviews of WEIA expenditures.
- **The Board must consult data from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTB)**, which is tasked with maintaining a public-facing data dashboard to track progress toward performance metrics identified by the Board. However, WTB no longer provides staff support to the Board, and the Legislature eliminated funding to maintain the data dashboard in its 2025-27 biennial operating budget.
- **The Board must report its annual funding recommendations to the Legislature by August 1**, but state agencies do not submit decision packages until mid-September and the Governor’s budget proposal is not released until mid-December. This timeline significantly inhibits the Board from issuing funding recommendations that are responsive to perspectives expressed by state agencies and the Governor’s office prior to the next legislative session.

Following the passage of legislation to increase WEIA revenue in the 2025-27 biennium, the Legislature's 2025-27 biennial operating budget relied on more than \$1.5 billion in WEIA expenditures—making it an increasingly large and influential piece of the state budget. **As biennial WEIA expenditures continue to rise, it is imperative for the Board to operate effectively and efficiently while conducting oversight of the Legislature's spending on workforce education priorities.** Accordingly, this proposal will improve Board administration by extending co-chairs' term lengths to two years, allowing members to meet more than four times a year, eliminating the now unfunded mandate to maintain a data dashboard, and providing until December 31 for the issuance of annual funding recommendations to the Legislature. The ideas listed above have not been submitted by WSAC or other state agencies in previous budget cycles.

Considering the problems described above, this proposal will benefit Board members—representing various business, higher education, labor, workforce, and student sectors and perspectives—by stabilizing Board leadership and creating additional time for discussion and evaluation of WEIA expenditures. It will also offer increased flexibility for the Board to utilize other data sources as it conducts oversight of WEIA expenditures and develops annual funding recommendations. Choosing not to approve this proposal will preserve various constraints on the Board's work, leading to more cursory analyses of WEIA expenditures and less comprehensive funding recommendations for the Legislature to consider each year.

WSAC receives \$356,000 in carryforward level funding from WEIA per biennium to provide staff support to the Board. Among other functions, this work involves facilitating quarterly meetings, planning and hosting frequent advisory committee meetings to develop funding recommendations and Board bylaws, and conducting detailed research on Workforce Education Investment Account (WEIA) expenditures dating back to the creation of WEIA in 2019.

This proposal will not expand, reduce, eliminate, or alter the existing cost of Board operations. It has no fiscal impact.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal does not expand, reduce, eliminate, or alter the existing cost of Board operations. It has no fiscal impact.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

This proposal does not expand, reduce, eliminate, or alter the existing cost of Board operations. It has no fiscal impact.

Workforce Assumptions:

This proposal makes no changes to FTEs involved with Board operations and has no fiscal impact.

Historical Funding:

This proposal does not expand, reduce, eliminate, or alter the existing cost of Board operations. It has no fiscal impact. To provide staff support to the Board, WSAC currently receives the following funding:

FY2026

- FTE = 1.0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$178,000*
- Near General Fund = \$178,000 (WEIA)
- Other Funds = \$0

FY2027

- FTE = 1.0 FTE
- Total Funds = \$178,000*
- Near General Fund = \$178,000 (WEIA)
- Other Funds = \$0

*WSAC received a biennial, carryforward level appropriation of \$356,000 from WEIA in the 2025-27 biennial operating budget. It is assumed that these funds will be split evenly across FY2026 and FY2027.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This proposal relates to the following goal areas from Results Washington:

- Goal 1: World-class Education
- Goal 2: Prosperous Economy
- Goal 5: Efficient, Effective, & Accountable Government Metrics

Goal 1 is supported by the focus on improving oversight of WEIA expenditures, which ensures that they are effectively increasing student success and career readiness to help more Washingtonians earn a postsecondary degree or credential. This outcome consequently supports Goal 2 by enhancing high-demand degree production and cultivating a more credentialed workforce in Washington State. Streamlining Board operations directly relates to Goal 5 and allows WSAC to provide targeted support for Board members who want to identify key workforce education priorities for the Legislature to fund from WEIA.

This proposal supports WSAC's 2026 Strategic Action Plan by making it easier for the Board to engage in continuous and long-term assessments of targeted intervention programs and to monitor Washington State's progress toward its postsecondary attainment goal. It also allows the Board to better advocate and prioritize funding for access to postsecondary education, particularly among students of color, low-income students, and other students from historically excluded populations.

Performance Outcomes:

This proposal will not expand, reduce, eliminate, or alter the existing cost of Board operations. It has no fiscal impact. Streamlining the Board's administration will improve its capacity to conduct oversight of WEIA expenditures, to ensure that they are producing intended results and effectively increasing student success and career readiness.

Equity Impacts

Community Outreach and Engagement:

Given the technical nature of this proposal, it was not shared at WSAC's annual stakeholder engagement sessions where hundreds of state agencies, organizations, and other partners provide direct feedback on potential decision packages and agency request legislation. However, it was discussed extensively by Board members who represent various business, higher education, labor, workforce, and student sectors and perspectives. Among other guiding principles, the Board seeks to help 70% of students in each cohort of Washington high school graduates complete a postsecondary degree or credential and provide support for equitable educational access and economic outcomes for systemically underserved students.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

This proposal will benefit students from historically excluded populations by improving the Board's capacity to conduct oversight of WEIA expenditures, to ensure that they are producing intended results and effectively increasing student success and career readiness.

Target Communities and Populations:

The Legislature's 2025-27 biennial operating budget included more than \$1.5 billion in WEIA expenditures, with nearly all funding going to Washington State's higher education and workforce development priorities. These investments directly enable more than 110,000 students and apprentices to pursue a postsecondary degree or credential through the Washington College Grant (WA Grant) while also supporting other initiatives related to postsecondary enrollment, affordability, completion, and basic needs.

Students of color, low-income students, and other students from historically excluded populations benefit significantly from improved access to postsecondary education and, consequently, increased financial security and economic mobility. By streamlining Board operations, this proposal will benefit these communities further by improving the Board's capacity to conduct oversight of WEIA expenditures, to ensure that they are producing intended results and effectively increasing student success and career readiness.

Community Inputs and Incorporation:

This proposal was discussed extensively by Board members who represent various business, higher education, labor, workforce, and student sectors and perspectives. Feedback from the Board enabled WSAC to identify key administrative changes that will streamline the Board's operations and improve its capacity to conduct oversight of WEIA expenditures.

Other Collateral Connections

HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions

N/A

Puget Sound Recovery:

N/A

State Workforce Impacts:

N/A

Intergovernmental:

N/A

Stakeholder Impacts:

This proposal has support from Board members, who represent various business, higher education, labor, workforce, and student sectors and perspectives. No opposition is anticipated.

State Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Changes from Current Law:

Draft agency request legislation amending RCW 28B.77.310 is attached. The legislation would amend:

- Subsection (3) to extend co-chairs' term lengths from one to two years and require biennial co-chair elections instead of annual elections.
- Subsection (4) to allow the Board to meet more than four times a year.
- Subsection (7) to 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.
- Subsection (8) to change the annual due date for the Board's legislative report to December 31 from August 1.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

N/A

Governor's Salmon Strategy:

N/A

Reference Documents

[Z-0430.1.pdf](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2026	2027	2025-27	2028	2029	2027-29
Obj. N	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Agency Contact Information

Armen Papyan
(360) 515-2399
ArmenP@wsac.wa.gov

BILL REQUEST - CODE REVISER'S OFFICE

BILL REQ. #: Z-0430.1/26

ATTY/TYPIST: CC:eab

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Concerning workforce education investment
accountability and oversight board administrative
changes.

1 AN ACT Relating to workforce education investment accountability
2 and oversight board administrative changes; and amending RCW
3 28B.77.310.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.77.310 and 2023 c 282 s 1 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) The workforce education investment accountability and
8 oversight board is established. The board consists of 18 members, as
9 provided in this subsection:

10 (a) Four members of the legislature consisting of the chairs and
11 ranking minority members of the respective higher education and
12 workforce development committees of the senate and house of
13 representatives, ex officio; and

14 (b) The following members appointed by the governor with the
15 consent of the senate:

16 (i) Five members representing the businesses described in RCW
17 82.04.299 or subject to the tax rate under RCW 82.04.290(2)(a)(i);

18 (ii) Two members representing labor organizations, one of which
19 must have expertise in registered apprenticeships and training a
20 high-demand workforce and one of which must represent faculty at the
21 four-year institutions of higher education;

1 (iii) Two members representing the institutions of higher
2 education, as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, one of which must be from
3 the four-year sector and one of which must be from the community and
4 technical college sector;

5 (iv) Two members representing students, one of which must be a
6 community and technical college student;

7 (v) One member representing the independent, not-for-profit
8 higher education institutions;

9 (vi) One member representing the workforce training and education
10 coordinating board created under RCW 28C.18.020; and

11 (vii) One member representing the student achievement council,
12 established under this chapter.

13 (2) Except for ex officio and student members, board members
14 shall hold their offices for a term of three years until their
15 successors are appointed. Student board members shall hold one-year
16 terms.

17 (3) The board shall have two cochair. One cochair shall be one
18 of the chairs of the respective higher education and workforce
19 development committees of the legislature and the other cochair shall
20 be one of the board members representing the businesses described in
21 RCW 82.04.299 or subject to the tax rate under RCW
22 82.04.290(2)(a)(i). The cochair shall hold the position for a (~~one-~~
23 ~~year~~) two-year term. The board members shall elect the cochair
24 (~~annually~~) biennially.

25 (4) Nine voting members of the board constitute a quorum for the
26 transaction of business. The board shall meet at least four times a
27 year.

28 (5) Staff support for the board shall be provided by the student
29 achievement council established in this chapter.

30 (6) The purposes of the board are to:

31 (a) Provide guidance and recommendations to the legislature on
32 what workforce education priorities should be funded with the
33 workforce education investment account; and

34 (b) Ensure accountability that the workforce education
35 investments funded with the workforce education investment account
36 are producing the intended results and are effectively increasing
37 student success and career readiness, such as by increasing
38 retention, completion, and job placement rates.

39 (7) The board shall consult data from the education data center
40 established under RCW 43.41.400 and the (~~workforce training and~~

1 ~~education—coordinating—board))~~ student achievement council
2 established under this chapter when reviewing and determining whether
3 workforce education investments funded from the workforce education
4 investment account are effectively increasing student success and
5 career readiness. (~~The workforce training and education coordinating~~
6 ~~board shall maintain the workforce education investment~~
7 ~~accountability and oversight board data dashboard on a public-facing~~
8 ~~portal and work with the board to update and modify the data~~
9 ~~dashboard as new performance metrics are identified.))~~)

10 (8) The board shall report its recommendations to the appropriate
11 committees of the legislature by (~~August 1st~~) December 31st of each
12 year.

13 (9) For the purposes of this section, "board" means the workforce
14 education investment accountability and oversight board established
15 in this section.

--- END ---