

Report Snapshot

2026 STEM Education Report Card

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Washington Student Achievement Council

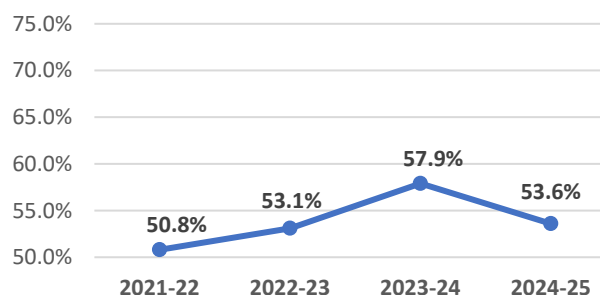


STEM education is vital for Washington's innovative economy. A strong STEM labor market requires an aligned education system. The 2026 STEM Education Report Card looks at how well the state's education system is preparing students for STEM careers. The report covers early learning and K–12 studies through postsecondary programs and the workforce.

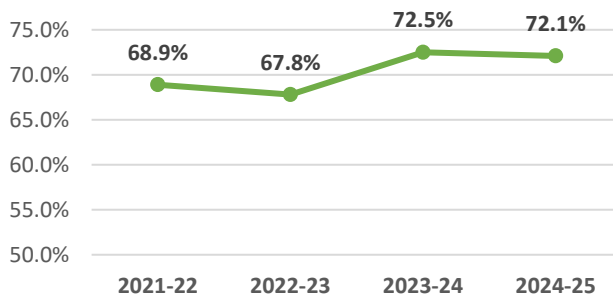
Washington remains one of the leading states in the country for STEM employment opportunities. Demand for workers in STEM and related health occupations¹ in Washington is growing. The number of jobs is projected to grow by over 100,000 over the next decade. To prepare for careers in STEM, students must get off to a strong start in early learning, meeting standards and staying on track as they progress through K–12 and postsecondary education.

Kindergarten readiness rates have risen in recent years, but in 2024–25, only 53.6 percent of students were ready for kindergarten in all areas. There is more work to be done to make sure that all children in Washington are ready for kindergarten and prepared for academic success. The percentage of students who were kindergarten-ready in all developmental and learning areas rose from 50.8 percent in 2021–22 to 53.6 percent in 2024–25. The percentage of students who were kindergarten-ready in math rose from 67.8 percent in 2022–23 to 72.1 percent in 2024–25.

**Students Kindergarten-Ready
in All Areas**



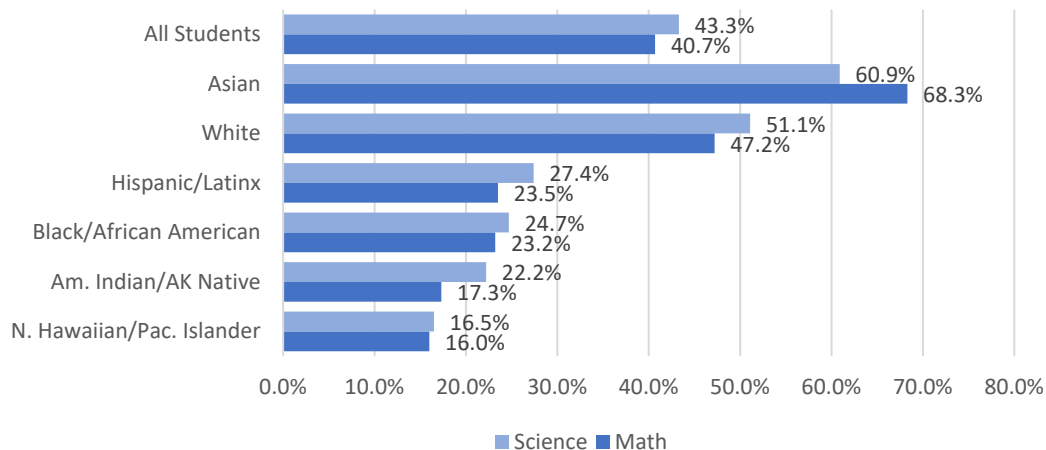
**Students Kindergarten-Ready
in Math**



Source: Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card. Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)

The percentage of students who met standards on K–12 math and science assessments varied by race and ethnicity. Compared with their peers, fewer students from some racial and ethnic minorities are meeting standards on math and science assessments. Students in those groups may need more support to prepare for college.

Students Scoring 3 or Above on Assessments in Math (Grades 5, 8, & 10) and Science (Grades 5, 8, & 11), by Race and Ethnicity, 2024-25

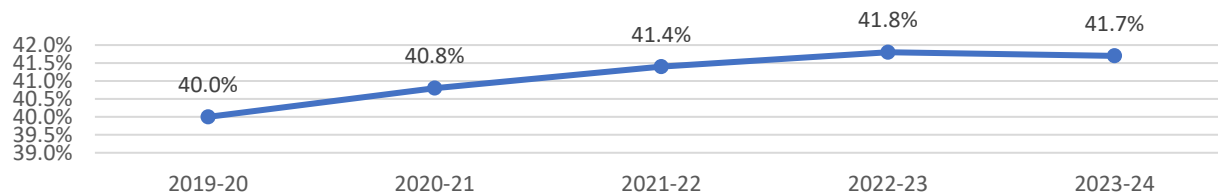


Source: Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report Card. Smarter Balanced and WCAS Assessments.

Note: Students must score level 3 or above on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) and the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) to meet the standard. This shows they are on track with college preparation without needing remedial classes.

In recent years, more students have completed postsecondary programs in STEM and health fields. As a result, the share of STEM in all postsecondary completions has grown. The share of all certificate and degree completions in STEM and health fields increased from 40.0 percent in 2019–20 to 41.7 percent in 2023–24.

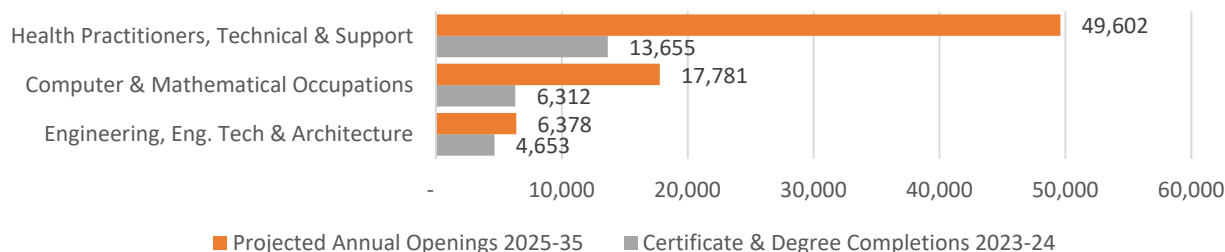
Washington STEM & Health Certificate and Degree Completions as a Percentage of All Completions, by Academic Year



Source: WSAC staff analysis of Lightcast Q4 2025 labor market data.

The STEM education and labor market outlook in Washington shows large supply and demand gaps in key fields. For example, over the next decade, annual job openings in health and computer/mathematical jobs are projected to be much larger than the annual number of graduates completing programs in these fields. While smaller, engineering also shows a significant gap between projected openings and annual completions.

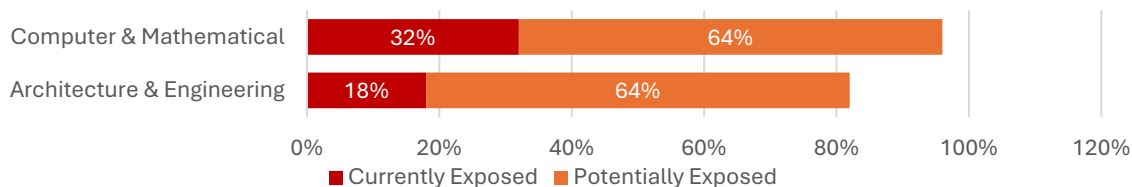
Gaps Between Projected Annual Job Openings 2025-35 and STEM Degree & Certificate Completions (2023-24) in Key Washington Occupational Fields



Source: WSAC staff analysis of IPEDS and Lightcast Q4 2025 labor market data.

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) could significantly impact jobs in the STEM field. A recent study from a leading AI development firm found that AI may be able to take on a larger range of tasks in jobs that were once thought to be safe from automation.² For example, the study notes that 32 percent of tasks in computer and mathematical jobs are currently exposed to AI, and up to 96 percent of tasks in these fields could potentially be automated. Many tasks in architecture and engineering jobs could also be automated.

Percentage of Job Tasks Currently and Potentially Exposed to AI by Key STEM Occupation



Source: Analysis of Anthropic data in Massenkopp et al, 2026 .

These fast-moving developments in AI and their potential effects on STEM jobs need to be closely monitored as the labor market evolves.

Read the [full report](#).

References and Notes

¹ This report includes an expansive definition of STEM that includes the health field as a STEM-related area.

² Massenkoff, M. and McCrory, P. (2026). Labor market impacts of AI: A new measure and early evidence. <https://www.anthropic.com/research/labor-market-impacts>