

LEARN Community of Practice
Local Education Adult Resource Network

January 7, 2026
12:00 – 1:30 PM

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Engaging: Small Group Networking
3. Learning & Discussion: Adult Learner Engagement Pipeline Framework – Connect & Onboard
4. Wrap Up

Meeting Schedule

March 4, 2026

May 6, 2026

June 2026 In-Person Convening

Information: <https://wsac.wa.gov/LEARN>

Contact: AdultPathways@wsac.wa.gov



Local Education Adult Resource Network (LEARN) Community of Practice

January 7, 2026





Agenda

- Engagement Opportunity Announcement
- Connect and Onboard Presentation
- Small Group Discussion & Report Out
- Wrap Up



Wrap Up

- Next session – March 4, 2026

Contact email: adultpathways@wsac.wa.gov

Website: www.wsac.wa.gov/LEARN

LEARN
Community of Practice

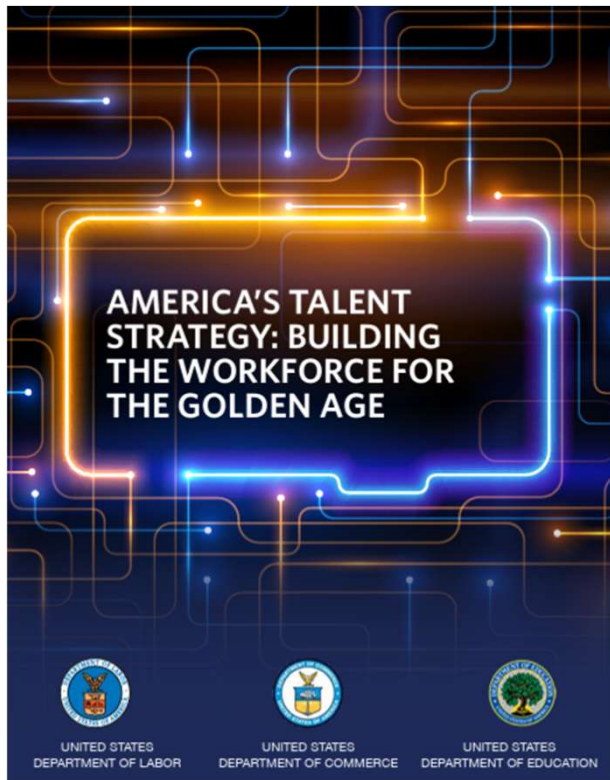
Virtual Convening

January 7, 2026

AGENDA

- I. Fast Overview of Postsecondary Education
- II. Learner Agency
- III. Engagement Pipeline Overview
- IV. Connect Examples
- V. Onboard Examples
- VI. Discussion

Federal Focus on Postsecondary Education



Industry-Driven Strategies

Scale Registered Apprenticeships and other high-quality work-based learning models, aligning education and training programs to career pathways, and targeting federal investments toward employer-led upskilling initiatives.

Worker Mobility

Clearly identify credentials that are valued in the labor market to support informed decision making, integrate AI-powered tools and competency-based assessments that allow workers to advance based on demonstrated skills and abilities, and getting the disconnected workforce into training opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency.

Integrated Systems

Streamline program administration and simplify governance requirements to empower states to integrate disparate funding streams and improve service delivery.

Accountability

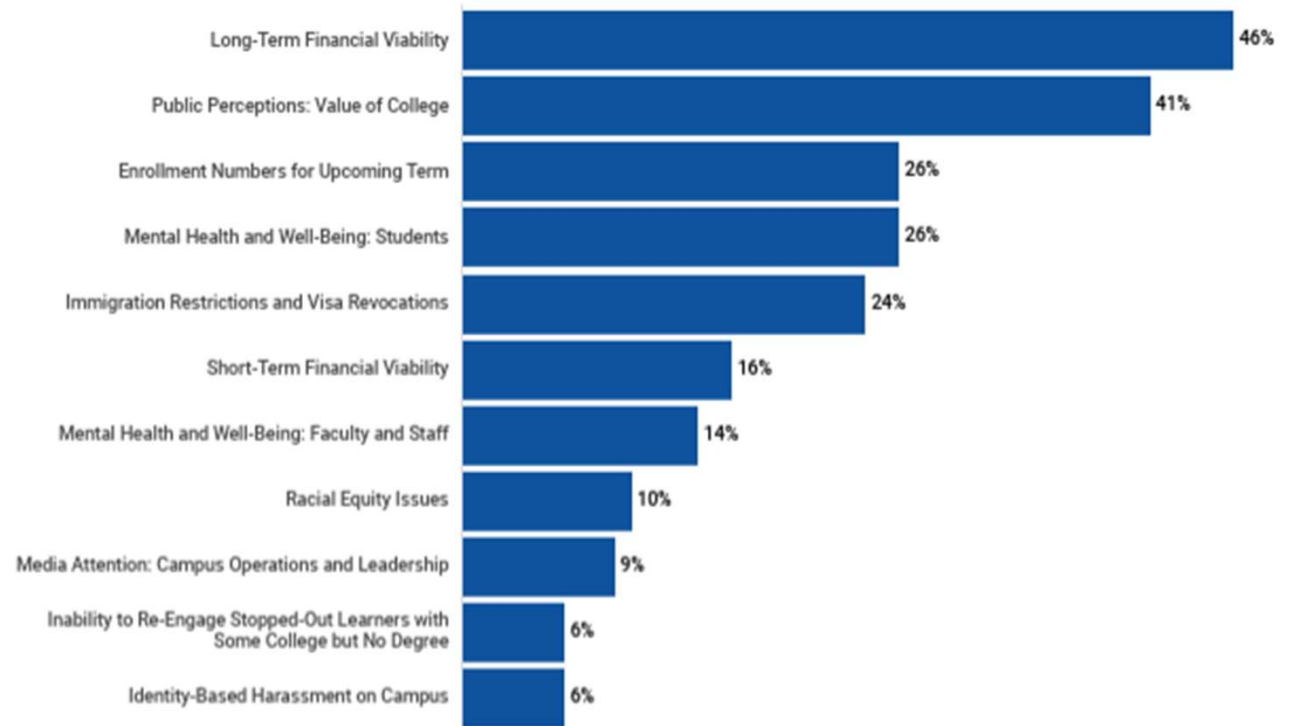
Reform or eliminate ineffective programs and redirect funding to programs that demonstrate success in connecting Americans with high-wage jobs. Performance measures and ROI data.

Flexibility & Innovation

Leverage existing statutory authorities to promote flexibility and innovation, prioritizing AI literacy and skills development across the workforce system. Use pilot projects.

Market Trends – College President View

Figure 2. Distribution of Most Pressing Concerns



2025 FALL TERM PULSE POINT SURVEY

College presidents are concerned about enrollment, financial sustainability and low public perception of value.

Market Trends - Sector Level



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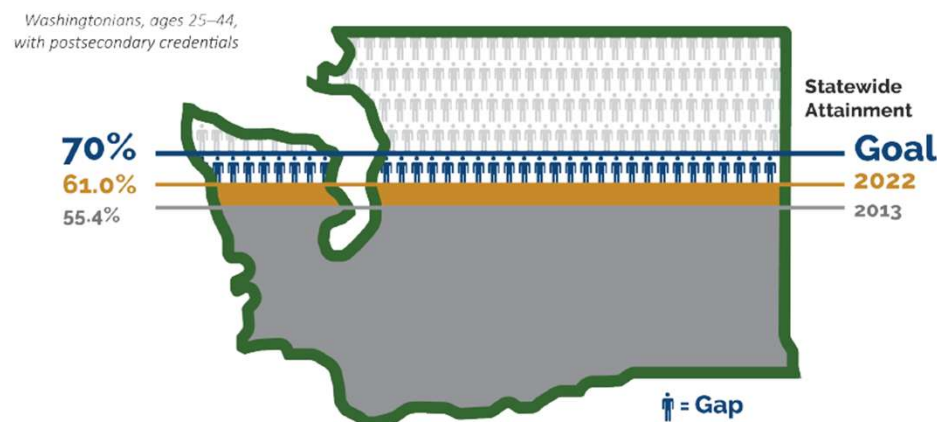
Environmental Realities

- **2026 Traditional Student Peak** – new markets adults, dual enrollment and some college, no degree
- **Value Imperative** – cost effectiveness, transparent outcomes, employer partnerships and career pathways
- **Technology Shift** – AI aware search and discovery, AI Literacy

Leadership Opportunities

- **Portfolio** – Invest in high-demand, career-oriented programs
- **Positioning** – Unify brand and enrollment strategies to speak with one clear voice to all *Modern Learners*, reinforcing the three critical messaging components of cost, convenience and career outcomes.
- **Culture** – Instill a student-centric culture built on values and outcomes. Invest boldly to communicate value and deliver on the promise of the long-term return on investment in higher education.

Adult Learner Opportunity



Washington Student Achievement Council

Currently, [47 percent of adults in Washington](#) do not have a credential, making adult learners a critical population to engage (or re-engage) toward the state goal.

Washington Pipelines

MEDIA RELEASE: WASH. JOINS LUMINA STATE ATTAINMENT COLLABORATIVE

Washington joins multi-state effort using higher education to drive economic prosperity

State working to set new goal for better-educated, better-trained residents

November 12, 2025

Olympia—Washington has joined Lumina Foundation's State Attainment Collaborative, a multi-state initiative to help states revise or adopt goals for ensuring people get education or training that leads to good jobs. The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) will lead the state's efforts.



This work will build momentum toward [Goal 2040](#): By 2040, three-fourths of adults in the U.S. labor force will have college degrees or other credentials with value that lead to meaningful careers and economic mobility.



Clark College receives grant for Healthcare Workforce Development

Jul 31, 2025

Clark College has been awarded \$130,000 by the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges to launch the Healthcare Pathways Regional Coordination for Southwest Washington. This project, which will be implemented in 2026, will support local healthcare workforce development by expanding awareness of career pathways and strengthening collaboration between education and industry partners.

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WSDOT grants aim to build transportation workforce

September 25, 2025

[Caitlin Cormier](#), communications, 564-669-4607

[Travis Mahlum](#), ADA compliance and workforce development, 564-233-5531

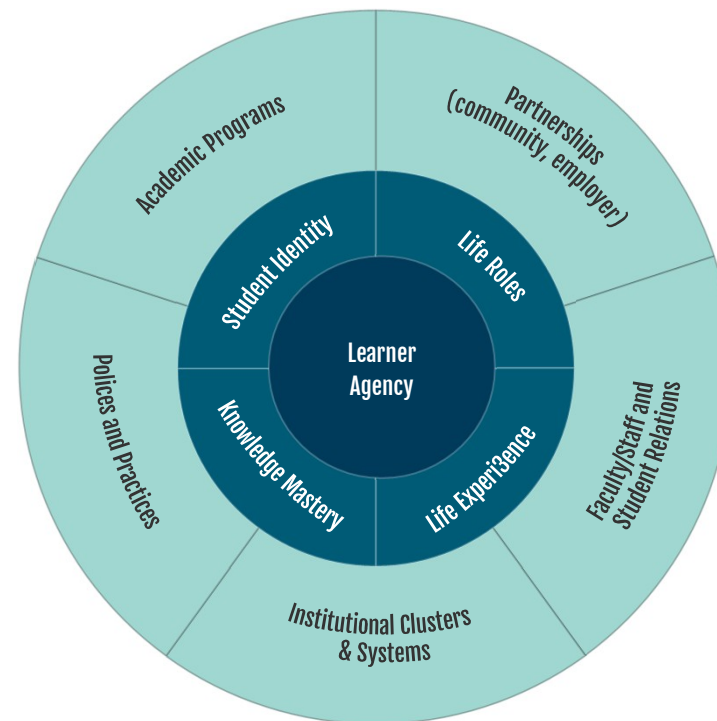
OLYMPIA – Nine organizations will receive grants from the Washington State Department of Transportation to help grow the state's transportation workforce.

The awardees all provide training, mentoring and job placement. The grants aim to help people in the state who don't often get such opportunities.

WSDOT's Workforce Advancement and Vocational Education and the Pre-Apprenticeship Support Services [grant programs](#) help socially disadvantaged people. This includes young adults leaving foster care or the juvenile rehabilitation system. It also includes unhoused individuals.

Adult Learner Agency

The capability of an individual to holistically engage in learning by leveraging experiences and knowledge flows from across life roles, including – work, family, community and education – in order to develop and maintain a healthy and prosperous life.



Source: Adapted from Soares Group, Emergent Strategy for Organizational Change, 2025

Adult Learner Engagement Pipeline

Connect

Onboard

Progress

Complete

Transition

The Connect phase comprises all the ways an adult learner comes to understand and take action on a decision to increase their human capital.

The Onboard phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner comes to select, enroll in and begin an education/training program.

The Progress Phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner proceeds through an education/training programs and is supported toward completion.

The Complete phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner completes an education/training program, receives a credential and prepares to transition to further education, a promotion or new job.

The Transition phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner enters into and is supported through entry into a new education program, role or job. This is inclusive of a feedback loop to the beginning of the pipeline and beginning a new cycle.

Technology and Data Infrastructure that connect stakeholders and adult learners

Partnerships to ensure that support and services across all phases is optimizing the use of public and private resources

Public Policy Review and Iteration to ensure that public finances and regulation are optimizing outcomes for adult learners and ROI for taxpayers

Connect

Learner-Driven

- Self-reflection
- Workplace awareness
- Web search
- Life Change

System-Driven

- Public Program
- Education/Training provider Outreach
- Worksource Center Outreach
- Community Based Organization Outreach
- Employers encourage further education/training and provide information on labor market skills needs

Onboard

Learner-Driven

- Career Interest Exploration
- Academic Readiness Review
- Work and Life Readiness Review (e.g. Financial, child care, mental health, etc.)
- Become aware of and use available services
- Search/Select Program

System-Driven

- Assess eligibility for available program support
- Education/Training provider program and cost information, eligibility and advising support
- Worksource Center provided financial, advising and counseling services
- Community Based Organization provided financial, advising and counseling services
- Employer provided information and support

Outreach – Reengage Some College, No Degree Learners



RE
UP

- New Jersey Community College, 50 AA programs, 25 workforce training
- Partnership with national outreach and coaching provide
- 8,000+ students
- Data-driven outreach
- Multiple channel outreach
- Reduce Administrative friction (waived fees, simplified forms)
- Advising and enrollment support

Onboard - Prescreening and Enrollment Support



- One University, 26 colleges
- 240,000+ students
- Connect student to SNAP, cash assistance and Medicaid
- Single Stop at CUNY – prescreened for benefit eligibility during enrollment and advising
- Case workers co-located across campuses.

- 1. Basic Needs/Student Support
- 2. Outcomes (which can be captured within basic needs, growing interest in understanding and addressing the affordability challenges with childcare needs)
- 3. Academic credit for prior learning
- 4. Outreach
 - a. Some college no credential population

Onboard and Connect – Education and Training Partnerships



Mission: Provide comprehensive and individualized support to help low-income young people, ages 16-29, build their own path to higher education and beyond

- **Who we serve:** Young people disconnected from education and/or employment from nontraditional education pathways
- **Where we serve:** King, Pierce, and South Snohomish Counties
- **Who we partner with:** GED and High School Reengagement Programs, Community-Technical Colleges, Community Based Organizations



A network of 50+ service providers from community based organizations, community technical colleges, and open doors reengagement programs across Pierce & King counties

Discussion

- What are you doing right now that could be expanded?
- What low hanging fruit could you tackle next?

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Thank You

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thesoaresgroup.com

The Soares Group is a consulting firm dedicated to enhancing the nation's human capital by aligning college and workforce education.

We support senior leaders in business, education and non-profits to build new education pathways to economic competitiveness, quality credentials and good jobs.

Adult Learner Engagement Pipeline				
Connect	Onboard	Progress	Complete	Transition
The Connect phase comprises all the ways an adult learner comes to understand and take action on a decision to increase their human capital.	The Onboard phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner comes to select, enroll in and begin an education an education/training program.	The Progress Phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner proceeds through a education/training programs and is supported toward completion.	The Complete phase comprises all the ways that an adult learner completes and education/training program, receives a credential and prepares to transition to further education, a promotion or new job.	The Transition phase comprises all the ways than an adult learners enters into and is supported through entry into a new education program, role or job. This is inclusive of a feedback loop to the beginning of the pipeline and beginning a new cycle.
<p><u>Learner-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflection • Workplace awareness • Web search • Life Change <p><u>System-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Program • Education/Training provider Outreach • Worksource Center Outreach • Community Based Organization Outreach • Employers encourage further education/training and provide information on labor market skills needs 	<p><u>Learner-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Interest Exploration • Academic Readiness Review • Work and Life Readiness Review (e.g. Financial, child care, mental health, etc.) • Become aware of and use available services • Search/Select Program <p><u>System-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess eligibility for available public program support • Education/Training provider program and cost information, eligibility and advising support • Worksource Center provided financial, advising and counseling services • Community Based Organization provided financial, advising and counseling services • Employer provided information and support 	<p><u>Learner-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand program requirements and schedule • Time management plan • Complete require coursework • Check-in with faculty, advising and counseling services on regular basis <p><u>System-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education/training provider instruction delivery and assessment • Education/training provider Advising and Counseling Services to ensure continued progress toward completion. • Worksource Center, Community Based organization and Employer support to ensure progress toward completion • Employer engagement in education program development and delivery. 	<p><u>Learner-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continued awareness of completion requirements and goals • Begin process of exploring Transition phase – next education/training program, employment opportunity. • Complete coursework and celebrate with family <p><u>System-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education/training provider track progress toward completion • Education/training provider provide support and services to prepare for Transition phase • Employers actively engaged in outreach for employment opportunities • Worksource Center and Community based organization assist with move to transition phase. 	<p><u>Learner-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for/Select next education/training or employment opportunity • Understand new opportunity environment and requirements • Network with new stakeholders and supporters • Begin and sustain new opportunity <p><u>System-Driven</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer, Worksource, Community based organization support transition to new opportunity. Provide coaching for success and support continued education and training. • Return to Connect phase when ready.
Technology and Data Infrastructure that connect stakeholders and adult learners				
Partnerships to ensure that support and services across all phases is optimizing the use of public and private resources				
Public Policy Review and Iteration to ensure that public finances and regulation are optimizing outcomes for adult learners and ROI for taxpayers				