

## **10-Year Roadmap Issue Briefing**

**Challenge Area:**  
**Student Readiness: Remedial Education**

**Planning Activity:**  
Strategies to reduce the number of students requiring  
precollege coursework and to accelerate the progression of  
those in precollege courses into college credit-bearing courses

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## Summary

This issue brief discusses one challenge area identified in the Washington Student Achievement Council's 2012 Strategic Action Plan—Student Readiness: Remedial Postsecondary Education. The information in the brief is based on national and statewide research and data, and includes input from a wide range of stakeholders participating in the Roadmap development work groups.

In Washington State, about three out of five recent high school graduates who enter the community and technical college system enroll in pre-college (remedial) coursework in English, mathematics or both. Many older adults returning to school also require remedial or brush-up coursework to become ready for college-level curricular content.

Regardless of their age, students will be seeking employment at a time when the majority of jobs (by 2020, 64 percent nationwide) will require postsecondary education. Students who are not adequately prepared when they arrive at college are less likely to persist and complete, and will not be adequately prepared for college, careers and the 21<sup>st</sup> century global workplace.

- Examining these two policy issues—underprepared recent high school graduates and returning adult students—suggests the need to identify strategies to reduce the number of students requiring precollege coursework, and to identify strategies that will accelerate student progress toward completion of certificates and degrees.  
While progress in these areas has been slow, new and promising practices have been adopted that may address these needs. Among them: Adopting common placement assessments across higher education;
- Partnering with K-12 to implement the Common Core Standards and Smarter Balanced 11th grade college readiness assessment;
- Creating a more robust and meaningful senior year – a Launch Year – which provides opportunities for high school seniors to earn college credits;
- Preparing educators for the realities of returning adult students who may have issues related to military deployment trauma, “worklessness” and other stressors;
- Implementing curricular changes, including contextualized and integrated courses, cohort models and modularized, self-paced models;
- Using technology to administer diagnostic assessments and to provide “anytime, anywhere” instruction, tutoring and resource access; and
- Collaborating across sectors to create seamless transitions from preschool to and through graduate school and on to a lifetime of learning.

Specific policy options and recommendations for the Student Achievement Council's consideration will be presented at the May 2013 Council meeting.

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## Context of the 10-Year Roadmap

Increasing educational attainment is vital to the well-being of Washington residents and to the health of our state's economy. In collaboration with interested citizens and representatives of the state's education system, the Washington Student Achievement Council proposes goals and strategies for increasing educational attainment. It accomplishes these tasks through a 10-year Roadmap and two-year Strategic Action Plans.<sup>1</sup>

The Roadmap outlines strategies that address long-term degree production goals, higher education access and affordability, higher education finance planning and strategic investments, innovative methods for delivering educational services, and removal of obstacles for students transitioning through the educational system.

The first Strategic Action Plan was adopted by the Council and delivered to the Legislature and Governor in December 2012. It identified five critical education issues that represent both obstacles and opportunities for improving educational attainment. Those issues are being examined in greater detail during the development of the first Roadmap, which will be delivered to policy makers by December 1, 2013.

### Five Challenge Areas

To inform the Council's work of creating the first Roadmap, work groups comprising Lead Washington Student Achievement Council Members, Council staff and External Work Group Members were formed to research, discuss and develop issue briefings and policy recommendations for each of these five critical challenge areas. In addition, two of these challenge areas were further broken down into sub-groups, as follows:

1. **Student Readiness:** Early Learning; Outreach and Support; Alignment; and Remedial Postsecondary Education
2. **Affordability**
3. **Institutional Capacity and Student Success:** Meeting Increased Demand; and Assessment of Student Skills and Knowledge
4. **Capturing the Potential of Technology**
5. **Stable and Accountable Funding**

Each of these areas touch upon the others and, in some cases, they significantly overlap one another. As the Roadmap is developed, the policy considerations and recommendations gleaned from each of these work groups will be pulled together in a cohesive plan of action.

### Challenge Area: Student Readiness - Remedial Postsecondary Education

This brief provides information on one specific challenge area—Remedial Postsecondary Education. This information is intended to assist Council members in their work of developing the 10-Year Roadmap to raise educational attainment in Washington.

## Introduction

The purpose of this brief is to 1) set the context for this work as it relates to the 10-Year Roadmap; 2) identify policy issues and questions to be explored in the challenge area of postsecondary remedial education; 3) provide an introduction to relevant research; 4) describe what the work group has learned so far; and, 5) introduce policy options for further consideration by the Council.

In February of 2013, the Community College Research Center published these significant findings:

In the United States, 60 percent of recent high school graduates enter community college already behind. These students are required to take remedial or developmental education courses before enrolling in college-level courses; in some cases, students are referred to two, three, or even four semesters of developmental education.

However, recent evidence suggests that this system is not as effective as colleges might hope. While the annual cost of providing remediation to community college students nationwide has been estimated at more than \$2 billion, many developmental education students never successfully progress to and through college-level courses.<sup>2</sup>

Putting the cost of remediation in another light, Joel Vargas, Vice President of Jobs for the Future, states:

Nationally, only 17 percent of low-income students who start high school ever complete an Associate's or Bachelor's degree at a public institution of higher education. This compares with 57 percent of their higher-income peers. Increasing college-readiness rates for low-income students by 20 percent could lower the cost per Associate's degree earned by as much as \$1,148 in higher spending states—or \$1,148,000 per 1,000 Associate's degrees earned by low-income students.<sup>3</sup>

In Washington, the vast majority of precollege coursework is offered through the community and technical college system. In 2010-11, \$21.76 million of state general funds was spent on pre-college (remedial) coursework in community and technical colleges for students who had graduated from high school within the previous three years. In addition, students pay tuition, fees and for books, but these non-college-level credits do not count towards a degree.<sup>4</sup>

The gap between the knowledge and skills needed to attain a high school diploma and the knowledge and skills needed to be on track for successful completion of college-level coursework is wide—and costly. Washington is losing too many students in this gap.

Students who once could not access a college education are now the students who have access but are unable to complete their college degrees because they linger in precollege coursework, simply do not build the momentum to reach college-level work, and, ultimately, do not reach college graduation.

# Policy Issues of Remedial Postsecondary Education

There are two distinct policy issues in this challenge area:

1. By 2020, 64 percent of jobs, nationwide, will require postsecondary education.<sup>5</sup> Students—both recent high school graduates and returning adult students—who are not adequately prepared when they arrive at college are less likely to persist and complete, and cannot acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of employers.
2. In 2010-11, of the 77,133 students enrolled in state-supported pre-college math and English courses, 45 percent were 21 years of age or younger.<sup>6</sup> About three out of five recent high school graduates who enter the Washington community and technical college system enroll in pre-college (remedial<sup>7</sup>) coursework in English, mathematics or both. Students who are not adequately prepared when they arrive at college are less likely to persist and complete.

Examining these two policy issues leads to the challenge of identifying strategies to reduce the number of students requiring precollege coursework; and to identify strategies to accelerate students from precollege coursework into college credit-bearing coursework - and on to completion of their certificates and degrees.

## Questions to Be Explored

The following policy questions were initially identified in the 2012 Strategic Action Plan, and were further refined through discussions and input from Council members, and members of the Remedial Education staff work group:

1. *Are currently used placement assessment tools correctly placing students in pre-college versus college-level coursework? If not, what strategies could be employed to increase appropriate placement?*
2. *What actions are needed in K-12 to reduce the number of recent high school graduates who require remedial instruction?*
3. *Will full funding of Basic Education support the actions identified above?*
4. *What can be done now to optimize the allocation of existing remedial education resources?*
5. *What actions are needed to improve workforce readiness and college success for returning students (those more than three years removed from HS graduation) who enroll in precollege courses?*

# What We Have Learned So Far

## National Studies

Recent research in remedial education suggests that educational policymakers would make greater strides by focusing on best processes rather than best practices—in other words, restructuring education itself.

This challenge to take bold action echoes a 2009 statement by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan:

"It's obvious the (educational) system's broken. Let's admit it's broken, let's admit it's dysfunctional, and let's do something dramatically different, and let's do it now. But don't just tinker around the edges. Don't just play with it. Let's fix the thing."<sup>8</sup>

- **Designing Meaningful Developmental Reform**<sup>9</sup> reviews common impediments to developmental reform and presents data that supports directions colleges can take to create a system of developmental education that might serve students more effectively. The report also addresses issues via what the authors term an “opposing forces” framework, and provides the case for each “side” around specific issues.

Three tensions slowing progress:

- Systemwide consistency versus institutional autonomy
- Efficient versus effective assessment
- Supporting student progression versus maintaining academic standards

Assessing college readiness:

- Student performance on standardized placement exams is weakly correlated with success in college-level courses; consequently, when colleges use these exams as the sole instrument of placement, a large proportion of students may be placed into courses for which they are underprepared or overprepared.<sup>10</sup>
- In the community college district and state system included in this study, b where students can take either the ACCUPLACER or COMPASS for placement, up to one third of entering students were severely misplaced (both over- and under-placed) based on English test scores, and more than a quarter of students were severely misplaced based on math test scores.
- Because of the variation in school quality and grading standards, many are skeptical that high school grade point average (GPA) can be used as a standardized measure of college readiness. However, the analyses of both state and urban system data suggest that including high school GPA as a measure of students' ability could improve placement accuracy.

- **Improving Developmental Education Assessment and Placement**<sup>11</sup> scans assessment and placement policies and practices at open-access two-year colleges in Georgia, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Findings included:
  - Students are unaware of the purpose and consequences of high-stakes placement assessments.
  - Standardized exams may be poorly aligned with academic standards for college-level coursework.
  - A single score on a cognitive exam is only a partial indicator of a student's overall college-readiness.
  
- **High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter**<sup>12</sup> is a decade-long national initiative launched by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in 2005, and described as intended to align the goals for college learning with the needs of the new global century. The initiative is especially concerned with students who, historically, have been underserved in higher education.
  - This report describes the essential learning outcomes believed necessary for twenty-first-century challenges, including: knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; intellectual and practical skills; personal and social responsibility; and integrative and applied learning.
  - These learning outcomes were developed through a multi-year dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education.
  - The intent is that the essential learning outcomes are taught in K-12 and continue at higher levels through college-level coursework.
  
- **Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education: A Joint Statement**<sup>13</sup> produced by the Charles A. Dana Center, Complete College America, Inc., Education Commission of the States, and Jobs for the Future in December 2012 provides combined insight from multiple perspectives on remedial education. The Joint Statement describes several lessons learned, including:
  - There is limited evidence of overall effectiveness in remedial education.
  - Remedial education course sequences are a key factor in high student attrition.
  - The assessment and placement process is too often an obstacle to college success.
  - The academic focus of remedial education is too narrow and not aligned with what it takes to succeed in programs of study.<sup>14</sup>
  - Remedial education does not adequately provide the non-academic supports many students need.
  - The longer it takes for students to select and begin a program of study, the less likely they are to complete a credential.



The Joint Statement also provides the following principles for creating a fundamentally new approach to remedial education:

**Principle 1.** Completion of a set of gateway courses for a program of study is a critical measure of success toward college completion

**Principle 2.** The content in required gateway courses should align with a student's academic program of study – particularly in math.

**Principle 3.** Enrollment in a gateway college-level course should be the default placement for many more students.

**Principle 4.** Additional academic support should be integrated with gateway college-level course content – as a co-requisite, not a pre-requisite.

**Principle 5.** Students who are significantly underprepared for college-level academic work need accelerated routes into programs of study.

**Principle 6.** Multiple measures should be used to provide guidance in the placement of students in gateway courses and programs of study.

**Principle 7.** Students should enter a meta-major<sup>15</sup> when they enroll in college and start a program of study in their first year, in order to maximize their prospects of earning a college degree.

## Remediation in Washington State

As we turn our attention to the issue of remediation in Washington, perhaps it would be helpful to keep in mind this overarching question: *what policies are needed to improve education transitions, retention, persistence and completions so that Washington citizens have the skills and abilities needed to be competitive workers and contributing citizens in the state?*

It also would be helpful to approach this issue through the eyes of a student, that is: how is a student served by the current processes and practices, and how can policies be developed to improve the service to each student?

## Placement Assessment

In Washington, there is currently no consistency in types of placement assessment, nor is there consistency in cut scores among those colleges which administer the same placement assessment instrument.

As a result, a student may take a placement exam at one college and be placed into a course that is two levels below college-credit bearing. Another student may earn the same score, on the same placement exam, at a different college and be placed into a college-level course. The first student could be required to take *two quarters longer* to reach college-level work, often spending unnecessary time and money on tuition and books. In the meantime, as the number of required precollege courses increases, the likelihood that the student will persist and complete decreases.<sup>16</sup>

## **K-12 Efforts**

Washington is one of 45 states that have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, the Common Core State Standards.<sup>17</sup> The standards are a single set of rigorous educational standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts and mathematics.

The standards were developed voluntarily and cooperatively by states with input from teachers and college faculty, and are designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are career and college-ready. Having common standards across states allows for greater collaboration on many tools and policies. Adoption of the Common Core will change the focus of K-12, but whether or not it will reduce remediation is an open question.

From the **Washington State Board of Education**<sup>18</sup>:

In implementing the Common Core Standards, we have an opportunity to create seamless academic standards between the two sectors of education in Washington State.

Currently, students face different academic standards for exit of K-12, and entrance into higher education. This manifests both in terms of course requirements (differences in high school graduation requirements as compared to minimum college entrance requirements), as well as differences in assessments (tests used to earn a high school diploma, versus entrance into college or placement in a particular course). The remediation challenge we face may in part be a function of the standards disconnect between our two sectors.

As the K-12 world works to connect our graduation standards to minimum college entrance requirements in this state, we urge the higher education community to consider formally adopting the 11th grade Common Core test from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium<sup>19</sup> into the system rubric for admission and placement decisions, so that students experience seamless expectations through the two sectors.

## **Impacts of Fully Funding Basic Education**

Will fully funding basic education address the need for remedial education for recent high school graduates? How will it address this issue? Funding will improve the situation, but funding alone is not the answer.

- The Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction's proposal includes:
  - **Phase I:** Full state funding in four areas: transportation; maintenance, supplies and operating costs; full-day kindergarten; and lower class sizes (17 students maximum) in grades K-3.
  - **Phase II:** Full state funding of the salaries and staffing levels of current educational staff.
  - **Phase III:** State funding for enhanced levels of educational staff and enhanced salaries.

The proposed budget also includes funding for teacher evaluations, dropout prevention and using data to better inform instruction.

- The Quality Education Council<sup>20</sup> identifies many recommendations, including:
  - Continued phase-in of full-day kindergarten (FDK) based on school poverty factors and phase-in funding for additional teachers to support smaller class sizes in grades kindergarten through 3 based on school poverty factors.
  - Statewide reforms such as the Teacher and Principal Evaluation system, implementation of the Common Core State Standard (CCSS) and increased statewide accountability create a greater need for coordinated, focused and aligned professional learning. The QEC recognizes the need for professional learning for all educational staff to implement these statewide reforms and to improve educator outcomes.
  - ESSB 2261 affirmed in statute that the program of basic education included the opportunity for students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet graduation requirements that are intended to prepare them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship. Investments in the new career and college-ready graduation requirements should include the educational opportunity for all students to be career and college-ready at graduation and early intervention for struggling students.

Funding will support implementation of the Common Core Standards, Smarter Balanced Assessments, and a more robust and meaningful senior year—a Launch Year—which opens doors to college and careers. Fully funding K-12 will have the effect of adding a third high school science credit to existing graduation requirements; the assumption is that this additional core requirement will better prepare students for college-level work.

And, support for high school students who struggle academically will be increased through enhanced funding for the Transitional Bilingual and Learning Achievement Programs, lower class size, increased allocation for guidance counselors, and through the creation of parent involvement coordinators.

## **Needs of Returning Adult Students**

Many adult students are returning to campus many years after high school. Often, they do not prepare for placement assessments and may spend time in precollege coursework they could have skipped by attending a targeted brush-up course, prior to taking the placement exam. If the student is returning for “retooling” in a new career, he or she may benefit from a contextualization of any needed precollege coursework into the desired career training program curriculum.

In addition to the adaptations required to be successful in a college culture and the work of getting “up to speed” to enroll in courses which will bear college credit, returning students who are involuntarily removed from the workforce may have added stressors of financial changes and may have a sense of “worklessness,” a belief that they are not capable of working again.

In *Work, Worklessness, and the Political Economy of Health* (2011), the importance of work is described as follows:

Work is the cornerstone of modern society and dominates adult life with around a third of our time spent working. It is a vital part of self-identity and for most of us it is the foundation of economic and social status. As such, the material and psychosocial conditions in which we work have immense consequences for our physical and mental wellbeing.<sup>21</sup>

For returning adult students who are also returning military veterans, the entry (or reentry) to the college environment may pose unique stressors, particularly for those veterans who are already facing readjustment issues, some related to physical or mental injuries.

Tom Taratino of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America states:

If colleges are not prepared to help transition soldiers from combat you do run the risk of losing an entire generation. The GI Bill isn't a thank you for your service. What it really is is a readjustment benefit. It is giving them the opportunity to do something that is constructive for their mind and their body that gives them a mission and allows them to move forward in life.

## **Pre-college (Remedial and Developmental) Efforts Underway**

Given the “open door” access to education that community and technical colleges offer, most precollege work occurs on those campuses. The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has partnered with K-12, the Washington Center for Improving Undergraduate Education, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Washington Student Achievement Council in a variety of efforts to minimize the need for pre-college courses, especially for recent high school graduates, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of precollege programs.

Baccalaureate institutions have also implemented new strategies to provide additional support to the small percentage of their students who are not prepared for college-level work. One example of this work is the implementation of a math pilot project at Washington State University, based on the math emporium strategies developed by the National Center for Academic Transformation.<sup>22</sup>

In the last few years, institutions in Washington have engaged in a range of significant projects focused on addressing issues related to their own pre-college programs:

- **College Readiness Professional Development Project:** Washington State GEAR UP<sup>23</sup> partnered with the College Readiness Project English Team, the Transition Math Project, and ACT to provide professional development for 36 math and English teachers in seven GEAR UP schools.

The year-long experience supported teachers in infusing college readiness standards into existing curricula and focusing on delivery strategies, intentionally weaving the student attributes, or habits of mind, needed for success in postsecondary education into their courses.

- **Precollege math:** Transition Math Project (TMP) was one of the first statewide efforts to rethink how to improve college readiness for high school students. Funded for three years (2006-2009), and led by the SBCTC, the TMP defined college readiness standards, promoting the idea of early assessment for high school students to encourage them to continue taking math, and building local college/school district partnerships around the state.

Building upon the TMP work, the Rethinking Pre-college Math project (RPM), focused on pre-college math innovations from a program or department-wide perspective by addressing core instructional and assessment practices to accelerate student progress to and through college-level math.

- **Integration of precollege and college-level courses:** Efforts are underway to expand the success of the original Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST)<sup>24</sup> model further into college-level work by developing new models to integrate and accelerate student progression in pre-college math and English into professional-technical programs at 12 colleges (I-BEST for Dev Ed) and applies the same contextualization strategies to a transfer pathway (Academic I-BEST).
- **Collecting and analyzing data:** Currently, 15 colleges in Washington State are involved in Achieving the Dream, a national project funded in Washington by the College Spark Foundation, which provides support to colleges in collecting and analyzing student data; designing, implementing, and evaluating intervention strategies around student success.

The higher education system continues to work on college readiness in two critical arenas: 1) partnerships with K-12 to reduce the level of remediation among students entering directly from high school; and 2) streamlining processes and improving student success in precollege programs across the system.

- **Core to College: Preparing Students for College Readiness and Success**<sup>25</sup>  
Washington is one of ten states participating in this project, with the goal for higher education systems in the participating states to explore how they might use the Common Core State Standards and related Smarter Balanced assessments to improve student college readiness and increase rates of enrollment and graduation.
- **Accelerated, outcomes-based contextualized applied learning model** adopted by the community and technical college system in May 2012, is based on program elements and best practices identified through the various system initiatives in precollege education. Credits are awarded to students based upon achievement of learning outcomes associated with a course at the end of each quarter. Students may advance through multiple course levels in one quarter.

## **Emerging Themes for Consideration**

These options could be considered for optimal allocation of existing resources, as well as leading to future policy options. Higher education institutions have been grappling with the issues of transforming or rethinking precollege education for many years, and have made great strides, in some cases, to improve student success in moving from precollege to college-level coursework.

Many of the policies and practices listed below currently exist as these “islands of innovation;” changes in policy could bring these practices to scale across the state.

### **Use of Data to Inform and Improve Policies and Practices**

- Make better use of Big Data<sup>26</sup> for educational improvement (every electronic activity – keystroke, video view, quiz, and so forth – can be captured and analyzed).
- Collect longitudinal data, analyze and disaggregate data; use to inform practices.
- Develop professional development for educators, administrators and support staff to evaluate and use data to inform policies and practices that improve student outcomes.
- Continue research on practices developed through the Transitions Math Project and Rethinking Precollege Math initiatives.<sup>27</sup>

### **Use of Technology to Support Practices**

- Develop infrastructure and staff capacity necessary to manage the ever-growing amount of data available to inform educational policies and practices.
- Use of adaptive assessments and adaptive technology for self-paced work.
- Use of technology to support inverted/flipped models of instruction which provide greater in-class time for applied practice and formative assessment.
- Create a culture of innovation and a norm of using technology as a tool for diagnostic assessment, teaching and learning.

### **Broad Collaboration Across Educational Sectors**

- Create and adopt open education resources which lower costs for students (often no cost for open textbooks), encourage use of timely and relevant resources, and promote collaboration amongst educators.
- Create professional development which can be shared across sectors, utilizing both face-to-face and virtual forums:
  - Require cultural competency and English Language Learning teaching competency for all teachers, both secondary and postsecondary.
  - Develop means of supporting best practices exchange and implementation at an institutional level (several forums exist for exchange of best practices at the individual faculty level), including Professional Learning Communities.
- Share best practices between and amongst colleges and universities (e.g. modified emporium model precollege math program at WSU, or Academy for College Excellence-inspired cohort model at Bellevue College).
- Support and incentives for much broader communication and sharing of insights across disciplines, institutions, employment categories, and segments of the educational system.

## **K-12 System**

- Create a meaningful Launch Year<sup>28</sup> for high school seniors
  - Encourage more students to take Advanced Placement courses and participate in other dual credit/enrollment options, increasing the student’s familiarity with college expectations (for those deemed to be on track for college readiness through Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced 11th grade exam)
  - Provide a transition course for those who need some remediation in 12th grade to avoid remediation in “grade 13” (freshman year of college).
  - Consider “bucket” models allowing for individually-paced learning and potential acceleration through more than one level of coursework in a term.
- Revisit the school calendar. That is, the length of day, number of days required, and period of the year.
- Allocate a portion of additional funding for basic education to support efforts to increase student readiness for college and careers.

## **Transitions from Secondary to Postsecondary**

- Scale up professional development for teachers, faculty, advisors and support staff; creating cross-teams of educators from high schools and colleges (Instructional Learning Communities) to create seamless transitions from grade 12 to “grade 13” (freshman year of college).
- Adopt statewide teaching and resource technology tools, such as Learning Management Systems, digital libraries, and online learning portfolios to increase student familiarity with technology tools which will be used in postsecondary institutions and in the workplace.
- Development of career pathways beginning in high school and extending into postsecondary education, including contextualized coursework in the first year of college.
- Create cohort-based first-year seminars and experiences with a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies necessary for college success.

## **Assessments**

- Provide advising which makes clear the high-stakes of placement assessments.
- Offer pre-placement assessment brush-up sessions to increase appropriate placement.
- Use diagnostic assessments which provide meaningful data to improve teaching and learning (in lieu of assessments which are merely used for sorting and placement).
- Utilize multiple indicators of college readiness, including high school transcripts.
- Accept Smarter Balanced 11th grade assessment as evidence of students’ being on track to be college-ready upon completion of the 12th grade, and do not require further placement assessment.

## Postsecondary Instruction and Student Support

- Adopt policies and practices to support recommendations of the statewide community and technical college Transforming Precollege Education work group, on a statewide level, including instructional models or methods, such as:
  - Contextualized or integrated content courses. Integration of precollege coursework with specific technical training (e.g. I-BEST); or precollege coursework integrated with other college-level coursework (e.g. precollege math integrated with earth science)
  - Cohort-based
  - Accelerated, competency-based (e.g. “bucket”) precollege courses which allow students to move through more than one level of precollege work – or even into college-level work - in a single quarter or semester. Students enroll in one precollege math course - regardless of how far below college-level coursework they place - and are given credit at the end of the term for the highest level they achieve that term. (Example: FastStart@CCD<sup>29</sup>)
  - Modularized, self-paced
  - Inverted/flipped models
- Develop enrollment, student services and instructional policies and infrastructure which support open-ended courses (“bucket” courses).
- Identify the distinct needs of groups of students in precollege coursework, including recent high school graduates; older, returning adults; veterans; and English language learners.
- Identify the distinct needs of individual students through diagnostic and formative assessments; use this data to tailor instruction and support.
- Increased incentives for teaching underprepared students and those in introductory courses (Student Achievement Initiative model of funding for institutions; other incentives for educators).
- Increased monitoring and enhancement of actions within higher educational institutions which cultivate students’ employability skills or “soft skills.”
- Support for universal exposure of students to global economic, political, and cultural realities to prepare them for careers and citizenship in a global society.

## Next Steps: Policy Options and Recommendations

The Remedial work group will continue to gather information and will identify specific policy options and recommendations for consideration by the Washington Student Achievement Council at the May 2013 Council meeting.



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Justin Montermini, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
Bill Moore, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges  
Jane Sherman, Council of Presidents  
Phil Venditti, Faculty Association of Community and Technical Colleges  
Jane Wall, Council of Presidents  
Gena Wikstrom, Northwest Career Colleges Federation  
Bryan Wilson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

## Endnotes:

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- <sup>1</sup> Washington Student Achievement Council (2012) Critical Crossroads: A Call for Action.
- <sup>2</sup> Community College Research Center. (2013) *Designing Meaningful Developmental Reform*. Retrieved from <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/designing-meaningful-developmental-reform.html>
- <sup>3</sup> Vargas, J. (2013). *The Economic Payoff for Closing College-Readiness and Completion Gaps: Why States Should Invest in Accelerating Low-Income Youth To and Through Postsecondary Credentials*. Retrieved from [http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/TheEconomicPayoff\\_022513.pdf](http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/TheEconomicPayoff_022513.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup> Prince, D. (2012). *Role of Pre-College (Developmental and Remedial) Education 2009-10 Public High School Graduates Who Enroll in Washington Community and Technical Colleges in 2010-11*.
- <sup>5</sup> Workforce Training and Education Board. (2012). *High Skills High Wages: Washington's 10-year Strategic Plan for Workforce Development*.
- <sup>6</sup> Prince, D. (2012). *Role of Pre-College (Developmental and Remedial) Education 2009-10 Public High School Graduates Who Enroll in Washington Community and Technical Colleges in 2010-11*.
- <sup>7</sup> Working definition: Remedial is defined as precollege coursework necessary to prepare recent high school graduates for college-level work.
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- <sup>9</sup> Community College Research Center. (2013) *Designing Meaningful Developmental Reform*. Retrieved from <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/designing-meaningful-developmental-reform.html>
- <sup>10</sup> Belfield, C.R., & Crosta, P. M. (2012). *Predicting success in college: The importance of placement tests and high school transcripts* (CCRC Working Paper No. 42). New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.
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- <sup>12</sup> Kuh, G.D. (2008). *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- <sup>13</sup> *Core Principles for Transforming Remedial Education: A Joint Statement*. (2012).
- <sup>14</sup> Programs of study: A set of courses, learning experiences, and learning outcomes required for a postsecondary credential that are defined by academic departments within colleges and universities.
- <sup>15</sup> Meta-majors are a set of broad content areas that students choose upon enrollment at a postsecondary institution. A meta-major includes a set of courses that meet academic requirements that are common across several disciplines and specific programs of study. Enrollment and completion of meta-major courses guide students through initial academic requirements and into programs of study.
- <sup>16</sup> Burley, A., Cejda, B., and Butner, B. (2001). *Dropout and Stopout Patterns Among Developmental Education Students in Texas Community Colleges*. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 25(10): 767-782.
- <sup>17</sup> Common Core State Standards website: <http://www.corestandards.org/>
- <sup>18</sup> State Board of Education input on 10-Year Roadmap development. (2012) Retrieved from <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2012.11.08%20Student%20Achievement%20Council.pdf>
- <sup>19</sup> Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>
- <sup>20</sup> Quality Education Council. (2013). *Quality Education Council Report to the 2013 Legislature*. Retrieved from <http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2013documents/QEC2013Report.pdf>
- <sup>21</sup> Bamba, C. (2011). *Work, Worklessness, and the Political Economy of Health*.
- <sup>22</sup> National Center for Academic Transformation website: <http://www.thencat.org/R2R/AcadPrac/CM/MathEmpFAQ.htm>
- <sup>23</sup> GEAR UP website: <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/PreparingForCollege/GearUp>
- <sup>24</sup> Bloomer, T. (2012). *2012 I-BEST Review: Lessons Being Learned from Traditional Programs and New Innovations Next Steps and Issues for Scaling Up*. Retrieved from [http://sbctc.edu/college/education/resh\\_rpt\\_12\\_1\\_ibest\\_review\\_000.pdf](http://sbctc.edu/college/education/resh_rpt_12_1_ibest_review_000.pdf)
- <sup>25</sup> Core to College website: <http://www.rockpa.org/page.aspx?pid=580>
- <sup>26</sup> "Big data" is the fine-grained information about customer experiences, organizational processes, and emergent trends generated as customers conduct normal business. Retrieved from <http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/rise-big-data-higher-education>
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- <sup>28</sup> The state's Launch Year Act, signed into law in 2011, requires all public high schools in Washington to work toward increasing the number of dual credit courses offered to high school students. Retrieved from <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1808-S2.SL.pdf>
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