

The Washington Student Achievement Council provides planning, oversight and advocacy to support increased student success and higher overall levels of educational attainment in Washington State.

A cabinet-level agency

The Council is a cabinet-level agency composed of nine members whose work is supported and carried out by a staff of about 100 employees.

Five of the Council members, including a current higher education student, are appointed by the governor to represent the public.

One member is named by each of the following education communities: the public four-year institutions, the community and technical colleges; the independent non-profit institutions; and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Council supports student success

The Council is responsible for a broad array of programs and services supporting student success.

- State **financial aid** programs and services help keep college affordable for all.
- The **GET** (Guaranteed Education Tuition) program helps families save for college.
- **Early outreach** and success programs target under-represented middle and high school students (College Bound Scholarship; GEAR UP).
- A **10-year roadmap** for higher education recommends initiatives and resources needed to increase educational attainment.
- **College admission standards**, transfer and articulation policies, and Prior Experiential Learning guidelines to support student preparation, progress and completion.
- **Protecting students** by authorizing out-of-state institutions to operate in Washington.
- **Advocating for students** and a more seamless statewide higher education system committed to access, success, affordability, and accountability.



Washington Student Achievement Council

Council established July 1, 2012

The Council was established by the Legislature, following recommendations from a governor-led steering committee, which focused on building a student-centered, seamless public education system. The broad mission of the Council is to:

- **Propose goals for educational attainment**, recommend resources to achieve the goals, and monitor progress.
- **Propose improvements and innovations** needed to meet evolving needs.
- **Educate the public** about why we need to achieve the goals and the level of resources needed to do so.
- **Link the work** of educational programs, schools, and institutions. from secondary through postsecondary and from training through careers.
- **Take a leading role** in facilitating educational attainment, analysis and research.

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A closer look at the Council's work

The bill establishing the Washington Student Achievement Council (HB 2483) stresses that too few Washington residents are completing postsecondary programs at a time when increased educational attainment is critical to the social and economic well being of the state.

The statute provides tools and strategies to help guide the Council in achieving increased educational attainment. It also notes that improving educational attainment is a multi-level challenge involving the public schools, state education agencies and organizations, and the higher education institutions.

Among the strategies the Council is required to pursue to advance this objective:

- **Conduct, coordinate strategic planning**

- ♦ Work collaboratively to create and update bi-annually a 10-Year Roadmap for higher education to raise educational attainment.
- ♦ Prepare a bi-annual short-term Strategic Action Plan with strategies for meeting the goals of the 10-Year Roadmap.

- **Foster innovative practices**

- **Conduct research and analysis to remove barriers**

- **Facilitate collaboration on student transitions**

- ♦ Minimum College Admissions Standards
- ♦ Enhanced Advising and Counseling
- ♦ Prior Experiential Learning Initiatives

- **Administer financial aid programs**

- **Administer state and federal grants**

- ♦ Focused on increased access and success

- **Provide consumer protection**

- ♦ Authorizing, licensing, approving institutions
- ♦ Program review

- **Coordinate system design**

- ♦ Analyze need for additional degrees, programs, centers and sites, and consolidation or elimination of programs within the scope of the 10-Year Plan.
- ♦ Prioritize funding needed to accomplish goals outlined in 10-Year Roadmap.



Raising educational attainment fuels economic growth, strengthens society

As educational attainment increases, students develop into citizens who are more capable of critical thinking, more aware of their world and its diversity, more creative in their problem-solving, and more successful in addressing social and economic challenges of the future.

Education is perhaps the most important engine of economic growth and individual and financial health. Success in growing a stronger economy and democracy and lifting incomes and well-being depends upon increasing educational attainment.

— HB 2483