


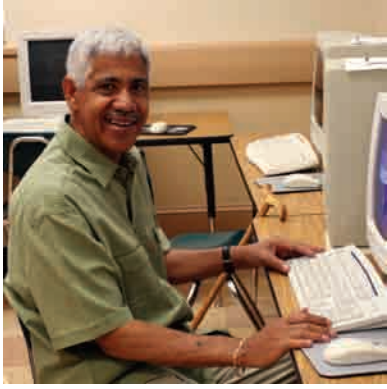
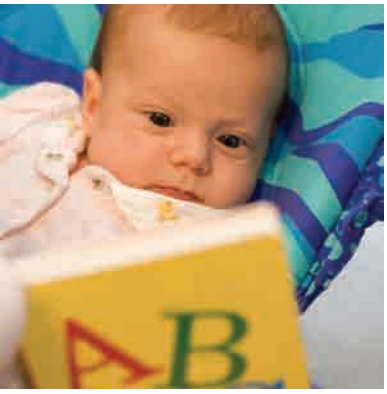






Washington Learns

WORLD-CLASS, LEARNER-FOCUSED, SEAMLESS EDUCATION

November 2006

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"There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."

John F. Kennedy
35th President of the United States

CHRIS GREGOIRE
Governor

STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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Dear Washingtonian,

On behalf of the members of Washington Learns, I am pleased to submit this report on developing a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for our state.

Starting in July 2005, the Washington Learns committees have worked hundreds of hours to prepare these findings and recommendations for you. We reviewed our entire education system—early learning, K-12, post-secondary education and workforce training—to figure out how to provide high-quality lifelong learning for all our citizens in the 21st Century.

Education is the single most important investment we can make for our children, our state, our economy and our future.

We propose a bold plan to redesign and re-invest in education during the next decade. We offer a new way of thinking about the purpose and function of public education, and we believe that math and science education must be addressed first.

Our education system must encourage creativity and innovation, and reward performance. Students should be allowed to learn at their own pace, and must be prepared for success at the next level. As home to the world's technology leaders, we must embrace and use technology to its fullest potential.

We all share responsibility with teachers, parents and families to provide quality education, beginning at birth and continuing through lifelong learning. We will invest in programs that work, and we will hold ourselves accountable for results.

I know it will not be easy. Changing the way we think about education is difficult, and changing our entire education system is a major challenge. But I believe in our ability to rise to this challenge, and to do better than we have ever done before.

It is time for bold, purposeful action.

It is time to make some big changes to Washington's education system. It's time to make the hopes and dreams of our children a reality.

It is time to get to work.

Sincerely,

Chris Gregoire
Governor

01. WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION

Our current education system was designed for the previous economy, and our students are falling behind international standards. As our economy and the world around us changes ever more dramatically, we must transform our education system in order to better prepare our children.

The new economy is not bound by state borders, it isn't driven by manufactured goods or natural resources alone, and it doesn't rely solely on services. In the new economy, technology means that a software designer in Redmond is as likely to compete with a worker in Bangladesh as with one in Silicon Valley. A grocery store stocker in Spokane is linked to a complex global supply chain where information and transactions can update in less than a second. New economy workers offer creative solutions and respond instantly to opportunities for innovation. The new economy is based on knowledge, and knowledge is based on education.

Education is the single most important investment we can make for the future of our children and our state. Employers need to know that the workers they hire can meet the complex demands of the new economy. In specific industries where Washington has a competitive advantage—global health, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and technology, and other research-intensive industries—the demands on our education system are even greater. These industries need world-class workers and world-class research. From fields to factories, hospitals to hospitality, for every established and startup business, Washington's economic future depends on an internationally competitive, world-class education system.

Washington has a constitutional duty to provide a basic education for all children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. But **it is an economic necessity that we change our entire education system** from early learning through graduate school so that it is not merely basic, it is excellent.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM

Our education system has improved during the past decade. Schools have become less isolated and more coordinated, and are keeping better track of what students know and can do. But the improvements of the past decade are not enough to prepare us for the next century, and individual school improvements will not bring us the system-wide results that we need.

Washington has the potential to become a global leader. We are home to diverse technologies and opportunities for innovation. We enjoy a strategic geographic location, making it easy for us to participate in international trade. In fact, one in three jobs is connected to international trade, the highest percentage of trade-dependent jobs in the nation. Washington is truly like a small country, well known around the world for the quality of our airplanes, software, coffee and agricultural products.

Our existing workforce is well-educated. But if current trends continue, our future workforce will not be educated enough.

Right now, in Washington:

- Less than 50 percent of children enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Only 74 percent of ninth graders graduate from high school with their peers.
- Only 60 percent of black and Hispanic students graduate from high school with their peers.
- We have been importing educated workers from other states and nations to fill our best jobs, leaving the less stable and lower paying jobs for people educated in Washington.
- One-third of the adult population has only a high school diploma or less.
- The younger working age population is less educated than their older counterparts.
- Nearly one-quarter of employers report difficulty finding qualified job applicants with occupation-specific skills.

These facts cannot be ignored. Education is the key to success in the global economy, and our education system is not preparing our students to compete. It's time to make some big changes so that we can start seeing better results.

OUR MISSION

One primary mission drives this report and our recommendations:

To be competitive in the global economy, we must educate *more* people to achieve at *higher* levels.

We must hold our students to educational standards that are at least as high as those used in other states and nations. Put simply, we must educate all Washingtonians to a level that makes them competitive worldwide.

The reality is that more Washingtonians need more education. For our communities, investing in education keeps kids out of trouble and prevents future costs of crime and incarceration. For our citizens, investing in education pays them directly with access to better jobs. While a high school diploma is no longer the ticket to a family-wage job, not everyone needs four years of college. Research shows that even one additional year of college or workforce training can result in a higher-paying job in the new economy.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

While economic necessity drives these recommendations for education reform, we must never forget that a healthy democracy depends on educated citizens.

More than ever before, our education system must prepare world citizens who respect cultural differences, who understand political differences, and who can make informed choices among different policies. Our democracy must be free and strong, and our citizens must be informed and engaged, if we are to set an example for the rest of the world.

BOLD REFORMS FOR A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM

Every strategy for change in this report is a dramatic shift in thinking about how education is delivered and about the results we expect for the investments we make.

We are moving away from a one-size-fits-all education system that automatically promotes students based on their age or the amount of time spent in a classroom. We are moving toward a lifelong seamless system that promotes students based on what they actually know and can do. These are fundamentally bold reforms.

We will start early, because a child who loves learning becomes a lifelong learner. With the new state **Department of Early Learning** and the public-private **Thrive by Five** partnership, we will offer parents, child care providers and other caregivers the information and support they need to be their children's first and best teachers.

The first year sets the stage for the rest of a student's academic life, so we will phase in voluntary **all-day kindergarten** to every parent who wants it. For busy working parents, we will rate child care services using a simple five-star system to provide quick and easy access to information about the quality of child care in their communities.

Teaching matters. We must **attract and retain the best and brightest teachers** and faculty for our students, and reward the best teachers for their commitment to results. We will offer better support and teacher training at all levels, making sure that teachers have the skills and resources to bring **math, science and creativity into every classroom**.

We will hold our students to **math and science standards** that match or exceed the standards of other states and nations, and we will make sure that students, from kindergarten through graduate school, are prepared for their next level of classes.

We will make better use of technology in **virtual classrooms**, supported by well-trained teachers and staff, that deliver personalized materials to reach and challenge students while allowing them to learn at their own pace.

We will increase **opportunities for everyone to get post-secondary education**. Investments in workforce training will educate the next generation of mechanics, nursing assistants and technicians. At the same time, our colleges and universities will provide Washingtonians with the advanced degrees, such as computer science and engineering, that are in high demand by local employers.

We will **hold ourselves accountable**. The state, parents, teachers, families, communities, businesses, civic organizations and educational institutions will share responsibility for results, and we will never again let Washington's education system fall behind.

PRINCIPLES FOR CHANGE

A world-class education system is coordinated and focused on the long-term success of every learner. It will not be easy. No one sector of the education system can achieve this ambitious goal alone. We must shift our thinking away from that of separate, independent education delivery systems. We can no longer treat early learning, K-12 and higher education as separate and distinct. Instead, we need an education system that flows seamlessly from birth to adulthood, and is committed to shared responsibility and accountability for results.

There are five principles that guide us toward a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system.

1. Share Accountability for Continuous Improvement

We must compare ourselves to the best education systems in the nation and the world, set clear goals and hold ourselves accountable for results. All of us—not just state government or schools and colleges, but also parents and families, communities, businesses, civic organizations and philanthropists—must actively contribute to the conversation on improvement and results.

Setting goals is the first step, but we must also review progress toward our goals and report results on a regular basis. We cannot allow the education system to fall so far behind the economy that it has to play catch-up every decade. We cannot allow nearly half of our students of color to fail while businesses clamor for a diverse workforce to compete globally. Instead, we must constantly modernize our education system with the best technology and instructional techniques from around the world. This includes applying techniques proven to bring skill levels up for children of color.

To make this work, the various levels of education (early learning, K-12 and higher education) must stop thinking of their area as separate from the rest of the system and embrace a shared mission to help all Washingtonians reach their full potential. We are in this together, and it will take all of us to get the job done.

We will improve reporting and accounting systems to link spending clearly to results, and we will engage in regular conversations about spending and results at the state and community levels. We will invest only in programs that work, and we will demonstrate better outcomes.

2. Tailor Education to Fit the Needs of Individuals

A world-class education system supports individual learners. Such a system recognizes that race, ethnicity, and poverty are factors in how teachers teach and how students pursue schooling. This requires a fundamental redesign of our schools, so that we measure and effectively teach **all** students what they should actually know and be able to do. By using technology, in the classroom and online, we can deliver specialized material and individualized learning. Instead of one-size-fits-all, we can provide one-size-fits-one.

As we personalize our schools, we must add to the old 3R's (readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmatic) a new set of R's—rigor, relevance and relationships. Rigor means that all students are challenged to achieve at the highest levels appropriate for their course of study, whether that is core academics such as algebra and chemistry, or career and technical education. Relevance means that classes and projects excite students to learn, to excel, and to see the connection between what they are learning and what they plan for their future. Relationships mean that students are supported by adults—family, teachers or community members—who help them plan for their future and encourage them to care and to succeed.

3. Bring Creativity into the Classroom

People who are creative and imaginative will thrive in the knowledge economy. The old model of a hierarchical bureaucracy has largely been replaced with flexible business organizations whose employees have the authority to create solutions as challenges and opportunities arise.

In the new economy, many skills can be outsourced, but creativity and imagination cannot.

Washington's creative talent shows up in high-tech and research, arts and philanthropy. We must tap that talent, and bring it into the classroom in a focused effort to benefit every student. Project-based learning, applied learning, career and technical education and exposure to the arts are all ways to involve and challenge students, giving them the tools to be creative and innovative throughout their lives.

4. Engage Parents, Communities & Private Partners

The education system works best when parents and families are involved. We all know that families and other caregivers have a major influence on children's achievement, in school and in life. The parenting role may be shared by many people—grandparents, aunts and uncles, mentors, friends and foster parents. When schools, families, caregivers and community groups come together to support learning, children do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy school more.

State government cannot and should not be the only party responsible for education. Schools and families must talk to each other about how to work together. The broader community must be engaged and supportive, and where practical, must contribute financially to the shared goal of educating more people to higher levels.

With public-private partnerships, we can find creative ways to fund scholarships, increase the use of technology, provide mentors and reduce costs. Private organizations bring credibility, nimbleness and flexible funding, and they directly benefit from an educated workforce. The public sector offers experience and expertise along with public resources and public accountability. Each partner is essential in creating a lasting, sustainable, world-class lifelong learning experience.

5. Commit the Necessary Human & Financial Resources

A world-class education system sets high expectations for all students and commits the human and financial resources necessary to help all students succeed. We must be diligent about redirecting current educational dollars into proven strategies for improved results. We must identify the most effective new strategies and try them to prove that they work. And we must acknowledge that relying only on current resources will not get the job done.

Eighty percent of education spending pays for people—students, child care and early education teachers, classroom teachers, instructional assistants, librarians, counselors, nurses, administrators, faculty and researchers, and all the support staff who drive the buses, clean the floors, serve the food, connect the wires, support the software, repair the roofs, provide security and perform the many other activities that allow learning to occur.

We need a ten-year strategic plan to direct the human and financial resources necessary to produce a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system.

STRATEGIES FOR REFORM

In the pages that follow, we outline five major areas of reform for our education system. They require contributions from the educational, public and private sectors. Each follows our guiding principles. Each is focused on developing students into lifelong learners. Together, they are the major changes that will help us educate more Washingtonians to higher levels so that we can be globally competitive in this economy and in the next.

Let us imagine an education system that gives every child the opportunity to succeed in school and in life. Imagine an education system that entices people of all ages and abilities to seek more education and workforce training to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Imagine the best and brightest teachers in the classroom and principals who lead and inspire. Imagine classes of thinkers, who learn not just memorized answers but also the skills of adapting to change and creating innovative new solutions. Imagine an education system that sparks interest in all subjects while preparing us for productive careers and thoughtful citizenship. Let us imagine an education system that produces careful consumers and caring world citizens.

Let us work together to build a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington.

TEN-YEAR GOALS FOR A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM

1. Parents will be their children's first and best teachers, and will have the support they need to help their children "learn to learn" in their first years of life.
2. Families will have access to high-quality, affordable child care and early education programs staffed by providers and teachers who are adequately trained and compensated.
3. All children will enter kindergarten healthy and emotionally, socially and cognitively ready to succeed in school and in life.
4. All students will transition from third grade with the ability to read well and do basic math, and with the ability to actively participate in a learning environment.
5. All students will transition from eighth grade with demonstrated ability in core academic subjects, citizenship skills and an initial plan for high school and beyond.
6. All students will graduate from high school with an international perspective and the skills to live, learn and work in a diverse state and a global society.
7. All students will complete a rigorous high school course of study and demonstrate the abilities needed to enter a post-secondary education program or career path.
8. All Washingtonians will have access to affordable post-secondary education and workforce training opportunities that provide them with the knowledge and skills to thrive personally and professionally.
9. Washington will have a well-trained and educated workforce that meets the needs of our knowledge-based economy.
10. Academic research will fuel discoveries and innovations that allow Washington businesses to compete globally.

02. BACKGROUND & MAJOR FINDINGS

The 2005 Legislature created Washington Learns to conduct a comprehensive review of the state's entire education system, from early learning through K-12 and post-secondary education, and to issue final recommendations by November 2006.[1] An interim report was issued on November 15, 2005, providing recommendations which were nearly all adopted by the 2006 Legislature.[2]

The large scope of work combined with the short time frame has made this review a challenging task. But it also presented the opportunity to craft broad solutions that move us closer to world-class, learner-focused, seamless education.

HISTORY & PROCESS

Beginning in July 2005, a thirteen-member Steering Committee, chaired by Governor Gregoire and advised by 75 citizens, educators, business and community representatives on three advisory committees, immersed itself in this work to bring you these strategies and recommendations.

As directed by legislation, the three advisory committees were the Early Learning Council, the K-12 Advisory Committee and the Higher Education Advisory Committee. Each of these advisory groups met at least monthly from August 2005 through August 2006. Smaller working groups of the advisory committees also formed to address specific tasks, and these groups often met more frequently. From August 2005 through July 2006, we met at least four times each month, once each for the Steering Committee and the three advisory committees.

In early September 2006, we issued a Draft Report for Public Comment and received public testimony from nine communities at six public hearings in Olympia, Spokane, South Seattle, Vancouver, Mt. Vernon and Pasco.[3] Over 1,500 people attended the six public hearings and provided oral testimony. We also received more than 1,000 written comments submitted by mail or online. Finally, we commissioned a telephone survey of 600 citizens statewide, asking them to tell us their priorities for improving education in Washington. All of this public input has been considered in crafting this final report.

Complete information about every meeting held by the Steering Committee, the advisory committees and the various workgroups is available at www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov.

INTERIM REPORT & LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE

In November 2005, as directed by legislation, Washington Learns issued an interim report and recommendations for consideration by the 2006 Legislature.

The interim report proposed that the overarching goal for educational reform should be, as it remains today:

To raise educational attainment in Washington through a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system in order to compete globally and thrive locally.

The interim report focused on four areas for immediate action. These were:

- Improving the quality and availability of early learning programs and resources for parents of infants and young children;
- Investing in intensive, focused academic support for high school students who need extra help to meet the state's academic requirements in reading, writing and math, and providing additional resources for this purpose to schools with classroom teachers;
- Reducing the high school drop out rate and helping students plan and prepare for college, work or post-secondary job training; and
- Developing a statewide student information system.

Of the ten strategies proposed, seven required legislative action and six received favorable action. These strategies and the Legislature's response are summarized below.

2005 STRATEGY	LEGISLATIVE (BUDGET) ACTION
Create a cabinet-level Department of Early Learning.	HB 2964 was enacted creating the new Department of Early Learning, effective July 1, 2006 ($1.5 million).
Invest in focused academic support to help students meet state academic requirements.	New program was created. ($28.5 million). New mathematics learning materials ($3.4 million).
Expand programs like Navigation 101 to all secondary school students.	SB 6255 was enacted ($4 million).
Provide high school students the opportunity to assess college readiness during 10th or 11th grade.	Proposal discussed but not enacted.
Develop an additional career pathway to create pre-apprenticeship programs for high school students.	HB 2789 was enacted providing grants to support these programs ($175,000).
Continue the Transitions Mathematics Project (public-private partnership).	Funding was provided ($275,000).
Support development of longitudinal student data system.	Funding was provided ($2.9 million).

In addition to legislative and budget proposals, the interim report also recommended supporting a public-private partnership focused on public engagement and quality improvement in early learning settings. In response, the Thrive by Five partnership, co-chaired by Governor Gregoire and Bill Gates, Sr., was formed in January 2006 with an initial $9 million to invest in parent education, high-quality demonstration projects in White Center and Yakima, and other planned early learning improvements. Thrive by Five partners have pledged up to $100 million over the next decade for early learning investments.

THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION REFORM

The positive influence of competition is one of the founding principles of our state and nation. Competition sparks innovation, offers choices and pushes us to be better. Efforts to reform and revitalize education have also resulted from individual, national and global competition, leading us toward significant improvements.

Education reform is not easy. Rethinking, redesigning and reworking every part of our education system so that it provides world-class results is difficult for students, parents, teachers and the state. But every time the American people have been challenged to do better, we have come together and risen to that challenge. Every time we have found ourselves with a choice between striving for excellence or falling into mediocrity, we have pushed ourselves forward.

The Soviet Union's 1957 launch of Sputnik shocked America and led President Kennedy to call for a commitment to "landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth."[4] This reaction to global competition resulted in investments in university research and a demand for math and science experts that infused the nation's education system with new resources and purpose.

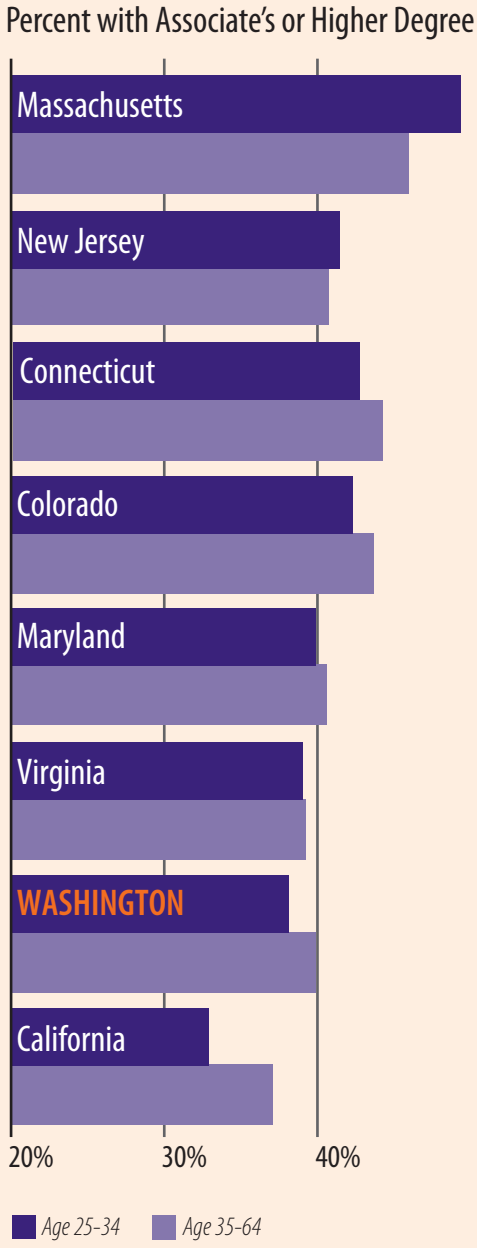
Thirteen years ago our country was deemed to be "a nation at risk" by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, and we were challenged to reform and reinvigorate our education system.[5] In Washington, legislation enacted in 1992 and 1993 moved us toward a performance-based education system with new learning goals, consistent academic standards, assessments based on those standards, and student and school accountability for results.[6] But the reforms of the 1990s are not enough to carry us through this century.

We are now at a moment when we are being challenged again. We have a choice as to whether our children and grandchildren will be able to compete in the new economy. Comprehensive educational reform is not easy, but we will rise to meet the challenge.

RAISING EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The United States is still among the world leaders in the proportion of 35- to 64-year-old adults with college degrees. This outcome results from deliberate national policies, like the G.I. Bill, that dramatically expanded the college-going population beyond a small number of elite citizens. This expansion continued with the population explosion of the baby boom generation.

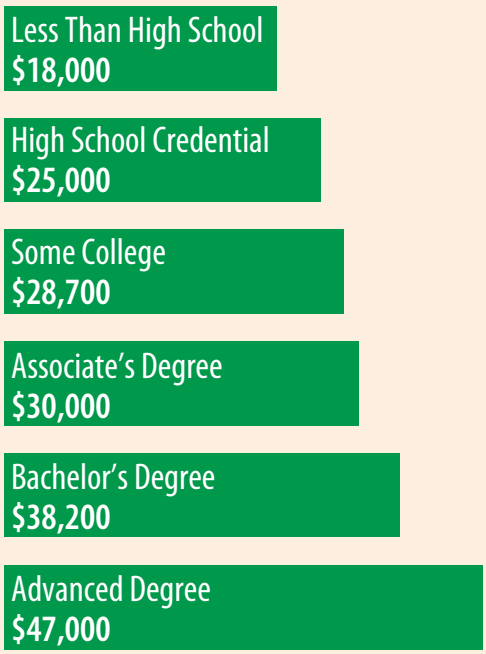
During the 1990s, as the importance of an educated workforce in the global economy became more clear, other nations invested heavily in their education systems while progress in the United States stood still. The United States ranked last among 14 nations in raising college participation rates in the 1990s.[7] Not surprisingly, the United States has dropped from first place to seventh in the educational attainment of younger adults (ages 25-34) compared with other major industrial democracies of the world.[8]



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 5 Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for Washington

Individuals Benefit with Increased Education

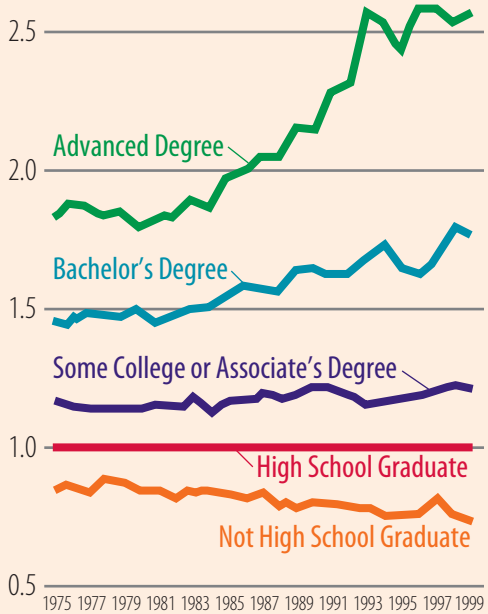
Median Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000,
5 Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for Washington.
Analysis by the Office of Financial Management.

The Value of More Education Has Increased Over Time

Average Earnings as a Proportion of High School Graduate's Earnings



Source: U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Surveys,
March 1976-2000

Our state has not escaped this alarming trend. Comparing the level of educational attainment between older working adults (ages 35-64) and the younger adult population (ages 25-34), Washington mirrors the nation. Our older population is better educated than our younger population, a trend that is clearly moving in the wrong direction.

With our educational strength heavily concentrated in the older population, our future workers will not be educated enough for the good jobs that await them. Two demographic forces make the urgency of raising educational attainment for everyone even greater. First is the impending retirement of the best-educated population in U.S. history—the baby boomers. Second is the growing proportion of youth from ethnic minority and low-income groups, precisely those who have in the past been served least effectively by the education system. These students graduate from high school, enroll in college and complete college programs at sharply lower rates than the baby boomers that preceded them.

Unless we meet these educational disparities head-on, workers with the necessary knowledge and skills will be in short supply at the moment when the baby boomer generation retires. At the same time, because other nations are investing heavily in education now, their well-educated younger adults have a competitive advantage over Washington workers.

During the next ten years, we must **educate our people to achieve higher levels of educational attainment.** This will require a sustained commitment and sharp focus on three transitions in education. We must ensure that:

- More young children enter kindergarten ready to succeed,
- More students graduate from high school with their peers, and
- More high school graduates complete higher education or workforce training.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Education is an investment, like investing in physical capital or stocks and bonds. We make these investments because we expect a high rate of return, in the form of higher wages and social benefits for the graduates, and thriving civic communities for all of us. We know that investing in education pays big dividends—for individuals, for communities and for the state as a whole.

As educational attainment increases, so does median income and lifetime earnings.[9]

Moreover, the earnings advantage for those with advanced education is growing. Before 1985, the earnings of a person with a graduate degree were 60 percent higher than the earnings of a high school graduate. Since then, the difference has grown to 100 percent.[10] A report by the Census Bureau shows that the earnings of people with baccalaureate and graduate degrees have been growing relative to a high school diploma since the mid-1980s. In 2004, people with baccalaureate degrees earned 1.8 times what high school graduates earned, and advanced degree holders earned 2.7 times what high school graduates earned.
But improved earnings do not necessarily require a four-year college degree.

Research shows that even one additional year of school beyond high school, especially if it results in a workforce certificate or credential, brings a significantly higher paycheck.[11]

Several economic studies of the long-term benefits of investing in high-quality early learning, especially for at-risk children, document very high cost-benefit ratios—about eight dollars returned for every dollar invested. Multiple studies have shown that once the public and private costs are taken into account, there is a substantial and positive rate of return on educational investments. One study showed that communities receive a return on investment of nearly 12 percent for the value of a baccalaureate degree over a high school diploma.[12]

Economists have also shown that investing in education has positive effects on the wages of all workers.[13] A one percent increase in the number of college graduates in a city brings rising wages for all other city residents. In fact, a one percent increase in college graduates brings a 1.9 percent wage increase for high school dropouts, a 1.6 percent wage increase for high school graduates, and a 0.4 percent wage increase for other college graduates.

Finally, a variety of positive social benefits are associated with higher education levels, including reduced rates of crime, higher voting rates and more civic participation, all of which lead to stronger communities.[14]

Research shows that education is a good investment. We know that education and training can lead to a better job. We understand that Washington's ability to compete nationally and globally is slipping. If we are to provide the best possible future for our children, our economy and our state, we must improve our education system so that we educate more people to higher levels.

"Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it."

Marian Wright Edelman
President & Founder of the Children's Defense Fund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03. THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE STATES

A world-class education system will prepare today's students to be tomorrow's citizens, capable of competing in the rapidly changing global economy and engaging thoughtfully in communities at home. To create a world-class education system in Washington during the next ten years, we need benchmarks to measure our progress.

In his widely acclaimed book "The World Is Flat," New York Times editorial writer Thomas Friedman describes how technology, education and economic interconnections have come together to allow India, China and many other nations to join the global supply chain for services and manufacturing.[15] In just a few short years we've seen a dramatic improvement in the ability of individuals as well as companies and institutions to collaborate and compete globally. Friedman offers convincing evidence that we must focus on education and training if we are to succeed.

Our state is well positioned to lead in this new world, but we must invest in education to keep our edge.

As we improve our education system to fit the new global economy, we cannot compare ourselves to mediocrity or settle for average. We propose a new benchmark to make sure that we remain competitive: the Global Challenge States. These states are the top eight performers on the New Economy Index. The index compares states on 21 indicators that measure how well they are positioned to compete in the new economy. Because it is not possible to get reliable data to compare ourselves directly with other nations, we propose the Global Challenge States as a substitute for international comparisons.

Currently, Washington ranks second among all fifty states for its potential to compete on the New Economy Index, trailing only Massachusetts. But our high ranking is based on our potential, and our ability to reach our full potential depends on education.

THE NEW ECONOMY INDEX

In some respects, there is nothing new about the new economy. We still work, and we still buy, sell and trade products and services, just like we always

How Washington Measures Up

Children Enrolled in Preschool

1 Virginia
2 New Jersey
3 Connecticut
4 Massachusetts
5 Maryland
6 California
7 Colorado
LAST WASHINGTON

K-12 Expenditure per Student

1 New Jersey
2 Connecticut
3 Massachusetts
4 Maryland
5 Virginia
6 Colorado
7 WASHINGTON
8 California

K-12 Student-Teacher Ratio

1 Virginia
2 New Jersey
3 Connecticut
4 Massachusetts
5 Maryland
6 Colorado
7 WASHINGTON
8 California

Funding per Student at Research Schools

1 Connecticut
2 California
3 New Jersey
4 Maryland
5 Massachusetts
6 WASHINGTON
7 Virginia
8 Colorado

Bachelor's Degrees per 1,000 Population

1 Massachusetts
2 Connecticut
3 Colorado
4 Virginia
5 Maryland
6 WASHINGTON
7 New Jersey
8 California

Advanced Degrees per 1,000 Population

1 Massachusetts
2 Connecticut
3 Maryland
4 Colorado
5 Virginia
6 New Jersey
7 California
LAST WASHINGTON

have. But the ways in which we interact have changed, and the speed of our transactions influences how we organize production, how we establish patterns of trade and how we deliver to consumers.

Developed by the Progressive Policy Institute in the mid-1990s, the New Economy Index ranks states on 21 indicators of their potential to compete in the new economy.[16] These indicators are grouped into five categories that define what is new about the new economy:

1. Knowledge jobs. Indicators measure the employment of information technology professionals; jobs held by managers, professionals, and technicians; the educational attainment of the entire workforce; and the education level of the manufacturing workforce.

2. Globalization. Indicators measure how much manufacturing and foreign direct investment is related to exports.

3. Economic dynamism and competition. Indicators measure the number of fast-growing companies (companies with growth of 20 percent or more for four straight years); the rate of new business startups and existing business failures; and the value of initial public stock offerings by companies.

4. Transformation to a digital economy. Indicators measure the percentage of the population that is online; the number of ".com" domain name registrations; technology in schools; the degree to which state and local governments use information technologies to deliver services; internet and computer use by farmers and manufacturers; and broadband access by residents and businesses.

5. Technological innovation capacity. Indicators measure the number of jobs in technology-producing industries; the number of scientists and engineers in the workforce; the number of patents issued; industry investment in research and development; and venture capital activity.

In 2002, the last time the index was published, Washington ranked second overall on the New Economy Index.[17] But our high ranking is based on our potential, and whether we are able to make the best use of our education system will determine whether our global leadership becomes a reality.

COMPARISON OF EDUCATION STATISTICS

The Global Challenge States, the top performing states overall in the New Economy Index, are, in rank order: Massachusetts, Washington, California, Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey, Connecticut and Virginia.

After measuring Washington against the Global Challenge States on a series of education indicators, it is clear that we need to make some major improvements to our education system in order to compete with other states and nations.

Our students are falling behind other states and nations, and we need a long-term strategic investment in education in order to remain competitive.

04. FIVE INITIATIVES FOR A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM

Within each of the following five major initiatives are specific strategies for reform that will produce real results to bring us closer to a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington. We will invest in early learning so that children start off as lifelong learners. We will improve math and science teaching and learning so that our citizens have a competitive edge. We will personalize learning so that every student has the opportunity to succeed. We will offer college and workforce training for everyone. And we will hold ourselves accountable for results.

EARLY LEARNING: A SMART INVESTMENT

Research into the brain development of young children tells us that children are born learning. As their child's first and best teachers, parents have the first and best opportunity to start their children on the path to lifelong learning.

Through early experiences, the basic architecture of the brain is built, and the quality of that architecture determines whether a child's learning and behavior will be sturdy or fragile. As the brain matures, the ability to process complex information builds on this early hard-wiring of the brain.

The years from birth to age eight are the "learning to learn" years, when children build the foundations to become capable readers, writers, mathematicians, artists, musicians, creative thinkers, speakers of more than one language and caring citizens. With guidance from parents, families and other caregivers, children develop bonds with others and learn to express compassion, work well in groups and live with rules. These are the years when each child's innate capacity for creativity must be developed. These are the years when parents and early education teachers can make the most difference in a child's life and future. With a strong foundation, children will be prepared to communicate about subjects more deeply, and to connect and apply their learning to new topics and personal interests in later years.

A survey of Washington kindergarten teachers in 2004 found that more than half of children entering kindergarten were not ready for school.[18] The child who is not ready in kindergarten starts behind other children, and children who start behind tend to stay behind throughout their time in school.

Economists and educators have found that investments in high-quality early learning, especially for at-risk children, yield significant benefits. The Perry Preschool Study **found that eight dollars was saved for every dollar invested in early learning**, as the costs of remedial education, special education, abuse and neglect, health care, school drop-out rates, teen pregnancy, crime and incarceration were all significantly reduced.[19] The clear message is that if we invest now in quality early education, we will all benefit later as more of our students graduate from high school, become and stay employed and earn higher wages.

Strategy 1: Create a cabinet-level Department of Early Learning that reports to the Governor and is accountable to the public.

Child care and early learning programs were spread across many different state agencies, making it difficult for parents to get information about services in their communities. This was an inefficient use of taxpayer dollars, and resulted in a lack of attention to the importance of early learning.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More efficient use of resources, improved early learning support for parents and families, and more young children ready to succeed when they enter kindergarten.

ASSIGNMENT

With legislation enacted by the 2006 Legislature, the new Department of Early Learning was created July 1, 2006, and the Director reports directly to the Governor. This agency is now working with parents, families and communities across the state to improve early learning in Washington.

Strategy 2: Support public-private partnerships focused on engaging the public and improving the quality of early learning.

Many prominent business, community and government leaders support early learning and would like to partner with the state to help improve the quality of early learning services. This partnership depends on broad participation, including active state involvement as a funding partner, and strong ties to local communities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Parents and teachers will have better knowledge about strategies that can improve the quality of early learning, communities will be more aware of the importance of early learning, and best practices in early learning will be available statewide.

ASSIGNMENT

In January 2006, the state joined with more than a dozen organizations in creating a statewide public-private partnership, Thrive by Five Washington. Thrive by Five begins with $9 million in new funding that will be invested in parent education, high-quality early learning demonstration projects in White Center and Yakima, and other early learning improvements. Thrive by Five partners have pledged up to $100 million for early learning over the next decade, and the partnership is governed by a board of directors co-chaired by Governor Gregoire and Bill Gates, Sr.

The Department of Early Learning and Thrive by Five, working with state and local agencies, will provide leadership to early learning public-private partnerships forming in communities across the state. These local partnerships will be encouraged to seek local funding and develop strategies to improve coordination and exchange information between the community, early care and education programs including K-12.

Strategy 3: Make voluntary parenting information and support readily available to parents, grandparents and other caregivers.

Parents, including guardians who act as parents, are their child's first and best teachers. Every parent wants his or her child to thrive. But many parents are confused about what to do when they face midnight feedings, teething, tantrums and many other challenges. Voluntary, culturally appropriate information can help parents understand child development and get support when they need it. Armed with information and support, parents will be more effective caregivers and advocates, prepared to nurture creativity, curiosity and empathy in their children.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Parents and caregivers will feel competent and capable of responding to their children's needs, and their children will be well-prepared to succeed in kindergarten and life.

ASSIGNMENT

The Department of Early Learning will continue to work with the Thrive by Five partnership to make parenting information, translated into multiple languages, readily available through workplaces, libraries, faith communities, websites and other places where parents and caregivers, including family, friends and neighbors, might be found.

Strategy 4: Improve the safety and well-being of children in child care and early education programs.

When parents search for child care, they ask first, "Will my child be safe? Can I trust the caregivers and teachers to respond to my child's needs?" Next come questions about what their child will do and learn and whether the program is affordable, convenient and has a schedule that allows the parent to work. It is the state's duty to reassure parents, and to regulate child care so that children are safe.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Child care will be safer for children, and the state's liability will be reduced because fewer children will be injured while in child care.

ASSIGNMENT

By July 2007, the Department of Early Learning will develop a strategic plan for improving state child care regulations. In developing the plan, consideration must be given to the recommendations of the Early Learning Council, including the need for an information system capable of providing timely information for parents and streamlining the work of regulators.

Better child care regulation will minimize bureaucratic rules and regulatory barriers and emphasize the need for mutual respect among parents, providers and state staff who enforce regulations. Rules will be concise and clearly focused on keeping children safe and improving early learning outcomes for children. Timely inspection and complaint information will be readily available to parents through the internet and other means.

Strategy 5: Phase in a five-star voluntary rating system that gives parents better information about the quality of child care and early education programs, and expands the availability of high-quality early learning opportunities.

While parents are their children's first and most important teachers, many parents need help meeting their children's early learning needs. Parents often work outside the home and rely on child care and early education services while they work. For these parents, a **five-star voluntary quality rating system** will provide quick and easy information to help guide their choices. For child care providers, the quality rating system will provide fair and equitable quality standards and the resources and incentives to continuously improve the early learning services they offer.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Parents will have more information to choose among better child care programs, and children will be better prepared to succeed in kindergarten and in life.

ASSIGNMENT

The Department of Early Learning will phase in a five-star rating system in collaboration with the Thrive by Five partnership. Implementation will be guided by the Early Learning Council's proposed Quality Rating and Improvement System and Tiered Reimbursement recommendations. Thrive by Five demonstration sites will phase in the rating system by July 2007, with the inclusion of additional communities subject to appropriations.

Strategy 6: Expand early learning teacher training to produce more well-trained, culturally-competent, diverse and imaginative child care providers and early education teachers.

Research strongly links teacher qualifications and pay to improved early learning outcomes for children. But child care center lead teachers are required to have just 20 hours of training within the first six months of employment and earn just over $10 an hour. Professional development and training will, combined with reasonable pay and benefits, attract and retain better early learning teachers and promote long-lasting relationships between early learning teachers and the families and children they serve.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The quality of early learning programs will improve. We will attract and retain better early learning teachers, and children and families will have a more stable early learning environment.

ASSIGNMENT

The Department of Early Learning will work with higher education institutions and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop strategies for substantially increasing the availability of early learning teacher training. Among the issues that will be addressed are: credit for community-based training and experience, transfer of credits across institutions, availability of classes in rural communities and during evening and weekend hours, a stronger link between early learning courses in high school and early learning careers, and math and science education for early learning teachers.

Strategy 7: Develop and implement a kindergarten readiness assessment tool.

Preparing children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond is too important to leave to chance. We must make sure that what we're doing is working and that schools have the right information to respond to the individual needs of students entering kindergarten. **A kindergarten readiness assessment will help teachers, parents and caregivers understand the social and academic development of kindergarteners.**

EXPECTED RESULTS

The assessment will acknowledge all aspects of development, including cultural differences among children, and will support smooth transitions from early learning to kindergarten. Our ability to tailor kindergarten to the developmental and cultural needs of individual children will be improved. Children will transition smoothly from early learning to kindergarten, we will identify children with special needs earlier, and information about improving kindergarten and early learning programs will be more readily available.

ASSIGNMENT

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will work with the Department of Early Learning and the Thrive by Five partnership to develop a kindergarten readiness assessment tool that aligns with Washington's redesigned benchmarks about what children should know and be able to do when they enter school. A preliminary kindergarten assessment tool will be selected by June 2008, to be evaluated by demonstration projects in the 2008-2009 school year.

Strategy 8: Phase in voluntary all-day kindergarten for all students.

Most young children are ready for more than a few hours of learning opportunities in half-day kindergarten. Their eager minds and growing social, emotional and physical maturity seek out more hands-on learning and exploration, and a full day gives teachers more time to make sure children are ready for first grade. Students who attend full-day kindergarten are more likely than their peers to read at grade level, have good attendance and do well in science. Teachers and parents who already have full-day kindergarten have reported overwhelmingly positive results.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will be ready for success in primary school classrooms.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, starting with the 2007-2008 school year, phase in all-day kindergarten, beginning in schools with high poverty levels. To qualify, schools must review the quality of their programs, use the kindergarten assessment tool and demonstrate strong connections and communication with early learning providers and parents. Funding will gradually be improved until all parents have access to a voluntary all-day kindergarten program.

Strategy 9: Prioritize additional Initiative 728 funding to reducing K-3 class size.

Smaller classes mean more personalized attention for students, and this personalized attention can make the most difference in the early years. We should prioritize additional class size reduction funds by focusing them on the primary grades.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Students will exit the third grade reading at grade level, with a basic understanding of math, and with the ability to work cooperatively.

ASSIGNMENT

During the 2007 legislative session, add language to Initiative 728 that establishes K-3 class size as a priority use when additional funds are received by school districts.

Strategy 10: Create K-3 classrooms that build solid foundations.

Instead of automatic grade-to-grade promotion, we should focus on the individual development of each child in an environment that provides all kinds of experiences. Young children have a great capacity to learn. They mimic, pretend, try things out, and express themselves in many ways. They ask why things work the way they do and how to do things themselves. This is when the foundation is laid for the years of school ahead. **A redesigned K-3 classroom can group children based on their actual abilities, not just the time they've logged, and allow them more exposure to arts, science, music, foreign languages and other subjects.**

This new, ability-based classroom encourages a wide variety of experiences so that students can discover their personal interests and talents and follow their natural desire to know more. Students will have broader interests and opportunities when they can sample science, social studies, languages and expressive experiences in the arts, including painting, sculpture and drama, and in physical education, including movement, dance and motor skills.

This means that some students will spend a shorter time and others a longer time in these primary classes, but every student will be ready for fourth grade work when they begin fourth grade.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Students will be interested in many topics, including science and the arts, and they will have the basic reading and math skills for success in fourth grade, as learning becomes more subject oriented.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, provide demonstration project grants to implement best practices for developmental learning in kindergarten through third grade. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will collect data on student academic and social development results related to the materials and instructional practices used.

MATH & SCIENCE: A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Washington students are falling behind international standards for math and science. Only 51 percent of our high school students passed the most recent test of tenth grade math skills.

When high school students are not well-prepared in math and science, they do not pursue the careers or college degrees that require those skills. Jobs in skilled trades from construction to automotive repair require sophisticated math and science skills, and students who enter college should be prepared for college level classes. But 32 percent of Washington students who go to college must take remedial math classes before taking college level classes, and students who enter the workforce are finding it more difficult than they thought to get a well-paying job.[20]

If Washington is going to compete in the global economy, we must hold our students to math and science standards that are at least as high as those in other states and nations.

Employers are demanding more workers with science, technology, engineering and mathematical skills. The top jobs in the new economy require an understanding of math and science, so our math and science curriculum must prepare students to meet state and international standards.

We all have a responsibility to get past the perception that math and science are too hard and show students that math and science are fun, interesting and that they are good at it.

Strategy 1: Develop math and science materials to train child care and early education teachers.

Math and science fundamentals should be introduced early to build a strong foundation and create interest and confidence in higher level math and science classes. Young children learn math and science as they play counting games, stack blocks, sort toys by color, splash in water and watch a caterpillar crawl. These children will benefit from adults who understand and enjoy math and science, and who know how to enhance children's basic learning with words, questions and activities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More children will be ready for school, as measured by a kindergarten readiness assessment. More children will be interested in math and science, and see its relevance to their lives.

ASSIGNMENT

By July 2008, the Department of Early Learning will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop math and science curriculum materials. These materials will be used by community organizations and higher education institutions to train and educate child care and early education teachers.

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

Henry B. Adams

Strategy 2: Bring world-class math and science into our classrooms.

- Establish a limited list of math and science curricula made up of world-class content and concepts.
- Increase high school graduation requirements so that students have the math and science skills they need to begin careers or start college level classes.

State assessments have shown that at least half of our students are not learning the math skills they need, and science knowledge lags behind math. Currently, each school district picks its own curriculum and we require only two math credits to graduate. Students who transfer between schools are then confronted with different standards, and many high school graduates who go on to a college or university end up taking a remedial math class because they are not prepared for college level course work.

Washington has not been clear enough about what math skills are expected of a high school graduate, especially one who wants to go to a college, university or skilled training program. A state focus on best practices, including a high-quality rigorous curriculum, is a step toward ensuring the right concepts are presented to our students at the right time. This means replacing "general math" in middle and high school. Technology can be used to provide a wide variety of online math and science programs to students of all ability levels and to improve and expand course offerings in K-12 and higher education.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will demonstrate to colleges and employers that they have mastered rigorous state standards, and will fare better on international comparisons. There will be more math and science course offerings in schools and colleges, and fewer students will need remedial math at the college level. School districts will experience savings in time and resources for curriculum selection.

ASSIGNMENT

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will adopt **international performance standards for math and science** benchmarked to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) or the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and will adopt high school graduation requirements aligned with those standards.

By July 2008 for math and by July 2009 for science, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education will identify no more than three curricula for elementary, middle and high school, along with diagnostic and other materials that are aligned with the new standards.

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will incorporate into their accountability plan the requirement that schools must use one of the state curricula, with exceptions granted by waiver from the State Board of Education for districts that demonstrate outstanding student performance in math and science.

School districts and colleges and universities will increase access to more math and science courses and tutorials.

Strategy 3: Build expertise in math and science teaching.

- Increase math and science course requirements for all prospective teachers.
- Ensure that teachers assigned to teach math and science in middle and high school are prepared to do so.
- Provide professional development and training for teachers to use the state curricula materials.

A world-class education system requires teachers who are effective, not only in their own subject matter but who can also relate learning to other subjects such as math and science. **Teachers must be supported, trained and prepared to be effective.** Teacher preparation at the elementary, middle and high school levels should incorporate the state math and science curricula.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will meet state academic standards, and fewer students will need remedial classes at the college level. More teachers in all subject areas will use math and science concepts in their teaching, and more teachers will encourage students in math and science studies.

ASSIGNMENT

By December 2007, the Professional Educator Standards Board will adopt new math and science knowledge requirements for people entering teacher preparation programs, and certification requirements for math teachers in middle and high schools that will prepare them to teach state math and science standards.

Within appropriated funds, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop and provide training programs, or contract with curriculum publishers for training programs, for teachers using the state math and science curriculum.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will provide math and science content training for teachers who need the foundation knowledge to support state instruction in math and science.

The state will continue to partner with the Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) program and other public-private efforts to improve the curriculum and teaching of science.

Strategy 4: Attract more math and science teachers.

New, more rigorous math and science graduation requirements will require more math and science teachers, but many districts report difficulty filling these teaching positions because they have few qualified applicants. Two existing programs have successful track records in addressing this. One provides a loan for students in college math and science teacher preparation programs to help meet school expenses. The loan is forgiven for recipients who teach either subject for three years in Washington schools. The second program provides a one-year, hands-on, school-based program to prepare non-teaching professionals, such as engineers or computer scientists, for effective classroom teaching.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More qualified math and science teachers.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, by June 2008, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will expand the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program for teachers who commit to a period of teaching math or science in Washington.

Subject to appropriations, by June 2008, the Professional Educator Standards Board will expand the Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification Program for business professionals and instructional assistants to be licensed to teach math and science.

Strategy 5: Get students excited about math and science, using public-private partnerships.

Students tend to think that math and science are difficult and boring. Some students worry that that if they take these classes in high school they will ruin their grade point average and jeopardize their chance to get into the college of their choice. We must turn those attitudes around and help students and their families understand the benefits of a career in math- and science-related fields. Programs like Navigation 101 show students that they need math and science skills for any future they might choose. **Working together, we can give students the confidence to do well in math and science classes.**

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will take math and science classes in middle and high school, and go on to complete math- and science-related certificates and degrees in college. Businesses will have a better-trained and well-educated workforce and more Washingtonians will be able to compete for good jobs in the knowledge-based economy.

ASSIGNMENT

Beginning in 2007, the state will work with local community organizations and partnerships, such as e3 Washington, on student activities to reinforce math and science concepts and skills.

The Governor's Office, the Legislature and the Museum of Flight will continue to develop and implement the Washington Aerospace Scholars Program, which engages students from all over the state in summer math and science enrichment programs.

Beginning in 2007, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will partner with the Washington State Science and Engineering Fair to create more opportunities for students to showcase their work in science and engineering.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will lead a public-private partnership that will pilot math and science pathways that begin in middle school and progress through high school to college and career. These demonstration projects will address the technology and curriculum needs of students and professional development needs of staff.

Strategy 6: Expand incentives and opportunities for students seeking high-demand math- and science-related certificates and degrees.

Not enough Washington students are earning certificates and degrees in fields that require math and science to meet the needs of our workforce. The two main causes for this are lack of student demand and lack of program capacity. In some areas, like secondary math and science teaching, there are simply not enough students interested in careers in the field. In other areas, like nursing and construction, there is strong student demand, but not enough spaces available in existing college and workforce training programs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will complete programs and earn degrees in high-demand math- and science-related fields. **Washingtonians will complete math- and science-related college programs that lead to good jobs, and employers will be able to find qualified applicants for jobs requiring math and science skills.**

ASSIGNMENT

Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will identify low- and middle-income students who show an interest in math and science in middle school. Those students will be informed that if they do well on the math and science WASL in the 10th grade, they will be eligible to apply for a four-year college scholarship for a high-demand math or science degree. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will also notify low- and middle-income 10th grade students who score in the fourth level of the math WASL that they are eligible to apply for the scholarship.

We recommend, beginning in June 2007, that the state appropriate funds to match private donations raised by the Washington Education Foundation to purchase Guaranteed Education Tuition shares for high school students graduating in the class of 2010. The scholarship program will be administered by the Washington Education Foundation.

In the 2007-2009 budget, we recommend that the state target enrollment funds and require colleges and universities to expand access in high-demand math and science certificate and degree programs.

The Washington State Apprenticeship Council will continue to work with high schools and community and technical colleges to expand opportunities for pre-apprenticeship programs in the building trades.

Strategy 7: Partner with after-school programs to support math learning.

Many students participate in after-school programs with organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs. These programs offer a safe environment in which students can socialize, play and do homework after the regular school day. Many programs provide computers, and some of these programs have adult mentors that offer personalized attention to students. **Research shows that after-school programs that are well-designed and connected with students' school studies can improve academic learning for those struggling in school.** Personal help and computer tutoring programs can reinforce skills and provide practice in math.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Mentors and after-school staff personalize the message that math is important, and students, especially lower-performing students, will show better math skills.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, the Governor's Office and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will partner with the Boys and Girls Clubs, other after-school programs and the private sector to conduct demonstration projects that focus on building math skills through activities after school. Strategies will include computer-based programs, mentor and tutor programs, and programs that include students assisting other students.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING: HELPING EVERY STUDENT SUCCEED

The ability to provide an individually tailored public education has never been more possible, or more needed. It is possible because technology lets us personalize the delivery of education in ways undreamed of just a few years ago. Technology, both online and in the classroom, expands teaching options and learning opportunities for all students, whether they are struggling, average or exceptional. It allows access to educational materials at any time of day or night, and can make learning more exciting for students who learn in different ways.

Personal, individualized learning is the key to helping *every* student succeed.

We hold high expectations for all our students, so we must redesign our schools to serve the different needs of all our students. Redesigned schools will recognize students' different cultures, learning styles and individual needs. Rather than marching students of varying abilities through uniform class periods together, we can tailor teaching and adjust learning time to suit individual abilities. A personalized experience means that students have mentors to encourage them to succeed, they have opportunities to learn with their hands in addition to traditional classroom learning, and they are a part of a caring community that includes parents, families, friends and teachers.

Personalized learning prevents students from dropping out, and allows students to use their natural talents and abilities to excel. All students can and should be challenged and expected to perform at the highest levels, and we have the tools now to allow each to progress at his or her own pace.

Strategy 1: Expand and make the most of learning time.

Students learn differently and need different amounts of time and support to master various concepts. For some students there is not enough time in a day to grasp what they need to know. Others may want to learn more about a topic, but the class is moving on to something else. Many schools have been creative about how they assign students, breaking up the day into different groups working on different skills. Some school districts also arrange the school year so that students don't have "time to forget" between school quarters and academic years by building in time for reinforced learning activities. But even with creative ways of organizing the existing school day, week and year, some students still want or need additional time.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will meet state standards and the achievement gap will narrow. More students will be prepared for more difficult coursework, and all students will have individualized learning options to suit their needs.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, schools and school districts will **provide students with additional learning time and will make better use of the time they have.** Additional time will help struggling students develop skills in reading, writing, math and science, including time for applied learning experiences, and additional time will allow students who want more of a challenge to accelerate their learning.

Strategy 2: Improve learning opportunities for English language learners.

English language learners are not only developing English skills so that they can communicate well in everyday situations, but also so they can learn the content in school classes and succeed academically. A specific curriculum coupled with skilled teachers will better support students as they learn the English language skills that open future learning and training opportunities. Our assessment of English proficiency should support the skills needed for broader learning.

EXPECTED RESULTS

English language learners will be more successful in academic coursework and have higher graduation rates. More students will be ready to begin higher education and training after high school.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will implement a regional best practices demonstration project in 2007-2008 that coordinates curriculum, assessment, teacher training, and family involvement. By December 2009, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will use the results of this project to recommend changes to state policies and practices on how we educate English language learners.

Strategy 3: Establish specialized programs to reach students who have dropped out of school.

Too many young people drop out of school. The negative economic and social impacts for these students and the state are severe. While students give many reasons for dropping out, we know that some youth have a greater potential for future success if opportunities other than the regular school environment are offered to them. **Youth academies where students have a focused, "24-7" educational experience without distractions have been successful** in other states. Other successful programs link personal support and work services to graduation requirements.

One program that has demonstrated a cost-effective method to turn at-risk school drop-outs into productive citizens is the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program. This program, with 60% of its funding from the federal government, has a nearly 80% success rate. Students earn high school credits, graduate from high school, pursue other education opportunities and become gainfully employed.

EXPECTED RESULTS

At-risk students will build basic skills and earn high school course credits. They will no longer be drop-outs but will complete high school or be enrolled in a technical or academic program, and they will become dependable employees and good citizens.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, using the Oregon program as a model, the Washington National Guard will coordinate the federal and state resources to provide facilities and implement a Washington Youth Academy Program with the first class of 150 students to begin in January 2009.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will implement a grant program for school district and community organization partnerships to prevent students from dropping out of school.

Strategy 4: Use technology to personalize and expand learning opportunities.

Washington is home to the world's technology leaders and our schools and colleges must use the power of technology to energize instruction and learning for students and teachers.

Technology allows more personalized connections, lessons, experiences and training, and expands options and opportunities for all students, whether struggling, average or exceptional. Technology is not bound by class time or any particular place, so students can access learning whenever they are ready in virtual classrooms. **Virtual learning allows more students from more places to reach higher levels of education and have more diverse experiences on their own schedule.** Middle school and high school students can take courses to make up for those they failed, or failed to finish on time. For students that excel and want something more, they can take advanced courses or courses not usually available in their district. Virtual classrooms expand opportunities for college students who do not live near a campus, allowing them to complete certificates and degrees from any college or university in the state. Partnerships such as the Digital Learning Commons provide access to these opportunities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More at-risk students will be connected to learning and make academic progress. More Washingtonians who do not live near a college campus will complete certificates and degrees. Students will take classes related to their interests and future plans and will be empowered to be responsible for independent learning. Advanced students will have access to more challenging materials and will be motivated to excel.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, along with private organizations specializing in technology hardware, software and applications will develop and implement several demonstration projects focused on providing virtual learning opportunities. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and private partners will report on project results and develop recommendations for future technology investments.

Colleges and universities will use technology to serve more students who are unable to get to a college campus, and to accommodate students who learn better using technology.

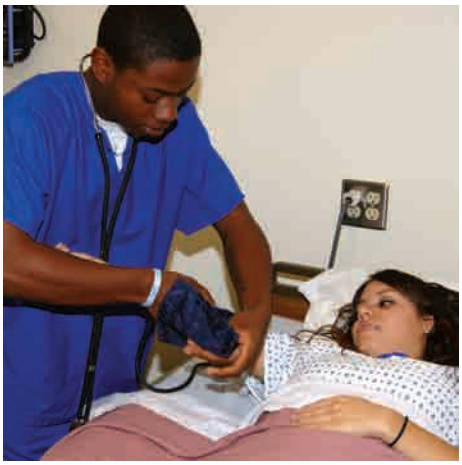
Strategy 5: Increase opportunities for career and technical education.

High schools must offer a variety of options to keep students with varied interests in school through graduation. While some students thrive in traditional classroom settings, others excel in hands-on and applied learning environments. Some are headed to college, while others will enter the workforce or pursue specialized training in skilled trades or technical professions.

Workforce projections for Washington emphasize job opportunities that do not necessarily require a college degree. Running Start for the Trades, Tech Prep and Skills Centers offer options for students, but we must create more opportunities, especially in programs related to high-demand fields.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will graduate from high school with skills that allow them to get jobs or pursue additional workforce training.



ASSIGNMENT

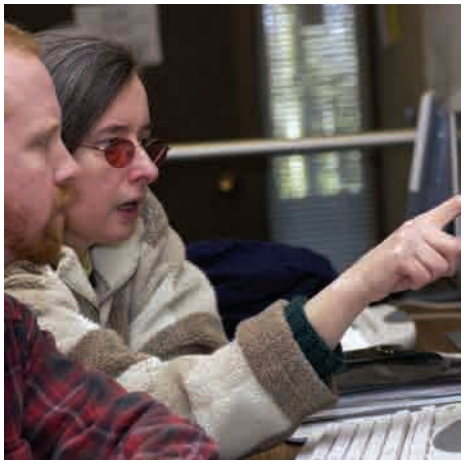
The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will assist school districts in developing new pathways for students interested in pursuing occupational interests along with their academic studies.

Subject to appropriations, startup funds will be provided for competitive grants to create career academies in Washington high schools. By January 2008, the P-20 Council will develop a request for proposals for these academies. Career academies will offer 11th and 12th grade students the opportunity to focus their studies and training on a particular occupational field. For example, an academy could offer courses and work-based learning opportunities to prepare students to earn their certificate and work as a Certified Nursing Assistant after high school. Academy curricula will be aligned with programs offered in local colleges and universities. This will enable students to transition from high school to college to earn an additional credential or degree if they choose. Proposals will require a public-private partnership with matching private funds. School districts, colleges and universities, employers, industry associations and unions will be eligible to create partnerships and apply for startup grants.

The Washington Apprenticeship Council will share results of demonstration projects and connect those interested in developing additional Running Start for the Trades programs in high schools and colleges.

Strategy 6: Create training programs for mentors and instructional coaches.

Ongoing instructional coaching and mentoring have proven effective in improving classroom instruction. There is always more to learn in teaching, and mentors and coaches help bring new approaches directly to the classroom where they can be put to use immediately. Coaches stand side-by-side with the teacher to provide encouragement, ideas, feedback, and examples related to effective practice. This type of professional development is particularly important in teaching to different types of learners. In light of recent evidence showing how creativity can increase student engagement, instructional coaches should also help teachers integrate creativity, innovation and technology into the classroom. Teacher mentors can guide new teachers with advice on everything from school district procedures to handling a student discipline issue. They will offer a personal touchstone as new teachers adjust to their new responsibilities.



EXPECTED RESULTS

Improved teaching and more personalized instruction.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop instructional coach training programs, with an initial focus on math coaching to be offered during the summer of 2007.

By June 2007, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will redesign and implement a novice teacher assistance program based on best practices and proven strategies to improve new teachers' skills and retain them in our schools.

Strategy 7: Reflect diversity and support cultural understanding.

The students in our classrooms represent the world. Activities in our early learning centers and K-12 and higher education classrooms should develop understanding of cultural backgrounds and appreciate the richness diversity brings to learning and the cooperation it builds among all of us. Parents and staff can share knowledge about different cultures and should be invited to do so. Much has been written on the importance of students seeing their own diversity reflected in the adults in their schools. Personalized instruction includes the use of teaching strategies that connect student culture with learning. It is not enough to create a program to serve a specific background, socioeconomic status or ethnicity; our goal is to reach every single student because every student has the potential to succeed. **Students are more likely to believe they can do well in school when others from their culture or background are role models in the school setting.**

EXPECTED RESULTS

Teaching and learning will be more individualized as schools work with the communities they serve to attract diverse staff. Greater personal respect will be fostered between students, staff, parents and the school community.

ASSIGNMENT

By December 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will review teacher preparation requirements in cultural understanding, will make recommendations for strengthening these standards, and will also recommend strategies to increase educator diversity.

Beginning in 2007, the education ombudsman will assist the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and school districts in implementing professional development activities on cultural competence, individualizing education and using the community to build cultural understanding.

Strategy 8: Focus on special education students.

Special education programs have set examples for quality, individualized instruction—for all students—for years. The individualized educational program in special education, informed by data and related best practices research, is a guide for how learning activities and evaluation of skills can be planned and provided for all students. Skilled teachers and paraprofessionals use a tremendously wide range of techniques and activities to implement individual educational programs. Research also shows that specialized activities related to the development of young children can have lifelong positive impacts on learning.

EXPECTED RESULTS

A renewed focus on appropriate, research-based instructional strategies. Special education students, along with all other students, will show increased developmental and academic achievement.

ASSIGNMENT

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will continue to work with the Department of Early Learning and the Department of Social and Health Services to ensure that children with special needs are recognized and responded to effectively. This includes early identification of developmental problems and services that are family- and child-centered and delivered in convenient places.

Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will collect data on the effectiveness of using the instructional practices steps by classroom teachers and special education teachers outlined in the Response to Intervention strategy.

Subject to appropriations, additional resources to support special education students will be provided.

Strategy 9: Launch a public-private campaign to promote creativity and innovation.

Applied, hands-on learning is a powerful tool for engaging students of all ages. Students see the relevance of information and skills when they participate in artistic and imaginative processes and create new ideas and products. Creative, applied learning techniques personalize learning and increase student engagement and motivation.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Teachers will apply creative learning techniques in their classrooms, and students' creativity and imagination will be recognized and appreciated in school culture. Student engagement and achievement will increase with fewer dropouts and less remediation.

ASSIGNMENT

By July 2007, civic leaders will work to establish a public-private partnership to launch a creativity campaign. An Imagination Award program to promote and recognize innovation by schools, students and teachers will be developed by the partnership. The partnership will hold a creativity summit that brings together industry, the arts and education to share best practices for integrating creativity in education.

COLLEGE & WORKFORCE TRAINING: INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES

Washington must be known for its commitment to broad educational opportunities and for a workforce that is among the best trained and educated in the world.

In order to compete in the global economy, we must prepare more Washingtonians for college and for jobs that are in demand by business and labor. The quality of our communities and the vitality of our arts and civic affairs depend on well-educated citizens.

We must ensure that colleges and universities are providing Washingtonians with the degrees, such as computer science and engineering, that are in high demand by local employers. At the same time, we recognize that many jobs do not require a college degree. We need to invest in workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities to educate the next generation of skilled laborers, mechanics and technicians.

Strategy 1: Give high school and college students the information and support they need to make informed decisions about the next steps in their educational careers.

- Expand programs like Navigation 101, which provide adult mentors for middle and high school students to help them plan for their careers.
- Encourage high school students to assess whether they are ready for college level courses, using a college readiness test during 11th grade so that their strengths and weaknesses are identified in time for them to make decisions about classes to take in summer school and during their senior year.
- Align high school graduation requirements and college admissions standards so that students are prepared for work or college level courses. High school graduation requirements will include three years of math, which may include applied math. Minimum college admission standards will include three years of high school math, including math in the senior year, or demonstrated competence in Algebra II.
- Develop a statewide web-based advising system that will tell students what classes they need to complete a college certificate or degree program, including information about how classes will be counted for students who transfer from community and technical colleges to four-year schools to complete baccalaureate degrees.

Students, at all levels, must be ready for their next steps with the academic and career preparation, information, and support necessary to plan and make informed decisions. People with education and workforce training beyond high school are far more likely to get family-wage jobs and are more engaged in civic and cultural activities in their communities.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More students will enter college or workforce training programs prepared to complete a certificate or degree. College students, including those who transfer from community colleges, will complete baccalaureate degrees more quickly and with fewer "extra" classes because more of the classes they take will count toward degree requirements.

ASSIGNMENT

By June 2010, all middle and high schools will fully implement a program like Navigation 101.

Subject to appropriations, by December 2008, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Council of Presidents will establish one college readiness test, which may also be used for placement decisions. State colleges and universities will all use the same test and the same "cut scores" for placement in college level math and language arts courses, and the test will be available online.

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will amend high school graduation requirements to include a minimum of three years of math, which may include applied math.

By September 2007, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will amend minimum college admission standards to require three years of math, including math in the senior year, or demonstrated competence in math skills through Algebra II.

Subject to appropriations, by July 2008, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Higher Education Coordinating Board will jointly develop and implement a web-based advising system for college students.

Strategy 2: Provide scholarships and support for low-income students and students who would be the first in their family to graduate from college.

Students who come from low-income families or whose parents did not graduate from college are less likely to graduate from high school and complete a college degree. We must break this cycle by targeting incentives and support for students who might not otherwise continue their education and training after high school. Focusing on low-income and "first generation" students will increase the educational attainment of our workforce and prepare more citizens for family-wage jobs and careers.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More low-income and first generation students will graduate from high school, enter college and complete a college degree. More well-trained and educated employees will be available for Washington businesses.

ASSIGNMENT

The Office of Financial Management will work with the Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement the Washington Learns Scholarship program. Subject to appropriations, beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, seventh grade students who qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch or who are from families in which neither parent completed a baccalaureate degree will be notified that they are eligible for the program. Scholarship recipients will receive support as they plan for college, and will be eligible for financial aid to cover the costs of tuition, books and materials for a college program leading to a credential, certificate or degree. Recipients must graduate from a Washington high school with a C average or better and have no felony convictions on their record. Family income will be assessed upon graduation. Students whose families earn more than the Washington median family income (currently $70,000 for a family of four) will receive a prorated scholarship amount.[22]

Subject to appropriations, beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, state colleges and universities will establish or expand programs which have proven to be successful in **improving the rates of low-income and first generation college students who stay in college and complete a degree**. Results of those efforts will be reported annually to the Governor and Legislature beginning September 2008. Continued funding will depend on continuing improvement in retention and graduation rates of low-income and first generation students.

Strategy 3: Increase access to workforce training for adults, especially those with low incomes, limited basic skills or limited proficiency with the English language.

One-third of Washington's working age adults have a high school degree or less. Employers need more trained workers to fill jobs that do not require a college degree. Bringing more people into the workforce reduces social service costs, raises the standard of living for citizens, and provides more skilled labor for Washington businesses.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More adults will return to college to enroll in programs designed to prepare them for jobs with local employers. Some of those adults will continue their education and training to complete two- or four-year degrees.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) will **expand the Integrated Basic Skills and Training (I-BEST) program**. Recent pilots of this program in ten colleges have proven that I-BEST students are fifteen times more likely to complete workforce training programs than students who are required to complete Adult Basic Education or English as a Second Language classes before entering a workforce training program.

The SBCTC recently launched a three-year demonstration project of the Opportunity Grant program in ten colleges. Those grants are available to low-income adults who participate in workforce training programs that lead to jobs in demand by local and regional employers. The SBCTC and the Higher Education Coordinating Board will evaluate these projects and submit a report to the Governor and Legislature by November 15, 2008. The results of that report will be used to determine if the projects should be expanded.

Strategy 4: Expand eligibility for the State Need Grant program to low-income working adults who are only able to take one college class per term.

Many adults who wish to improve their skills or complete a college degree also have to work full-time to support a family or are single parents, and are able to attend only one class per term. This should not disqualify them from the state's primary financial aid program if they would otherwise be eligible based on their income.

EXPECTED RESULTS

More working adults will attend college to improve their skills or complete degrees.

ASSIGNMENT

Last year the Higher Education Coordinating Board launched a one-year demonstration project to determine the effectiveness of providing State Need Grants to students who take four or five credits per term. Results, due in December 2006, will be analyzed to determine if this program should be expanded.

Strategy 5: Focus investments to generate more graduates of college and apprenticeship programs in high-demand fields.

Washington imports too many people to fill high-demand jobs in fields such as engineering, technology and health care, and in skilled trades such as construction. **Our own citizens must have the opportunity to get the education and training they need to land the good jobs that our economy creates.** The Prosperity Partnership, Technology Alliance and Washington Roundtable have identified high-demand degree production as a top priority.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Washingtonians will have access to programs that prepare them for stable, well-paying jobs and careers.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, we recommend that the 2007-2009 budget direct investments in colleges and universities to high-demand apprenticeship, certificate and degree programs.

Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year, the state may contract with independent colleges and universities for a specific number of slots in high-demand programs, such as nursing, when student demand is greater than the space available in public colleges and universities.

Whenever the state invests in high-demand programs in public or independent colleges and universities, the Office of Financial Management will set targets and monitor annual enrollment and completion rates in those programs. Funding will only continue for programs that meet enrollment and completion goals.

Strategy 6: Continue to support partnerships among community and technical colleges, unions and businesses to identify regional workforce skill gaps, and provide opportunities for adults to get training for jobs and careers that fill those gaps.

Both statewide and regional workforce skill gaps exist in Washington. Applied Baccalaureate Degrees, apprenticeships in the building trades and investments in high-demand programs help address statewide shortages but do not focus on specific regional workforce needs or fill job vacancies at the local level.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Regional job vacancies and skill gaps will be filled by adults trained in their communities for careers that meet specific, locally determined workforce needs.

ASSIGNMENT

Community and technical colleges, unions and businesses will continue to work together to determine regional workforce needs. Through these collaborations, and subject to appropriations, the following workforce training programs will be offered by the community and technical college system beginning in the 2007-2008 school year:

- Apprenticeship training programs leading to jobs in skilled trades that are in demand statewide and locally.
- The Training for Regional and Industry Needs (TRAIN) program will be established to offer financial aid to adults who earn less than the Washington median family income (currently $70,000 for a family of four) to help cover the cost of books, materials and tuition in job-specific training programs. The one-year program will lead to a credential or certificate in an occupation determined by the industry to have existing job vacancies and a need for skilled employees.
- We recommend that specific expectations for enrollment and completion rates in apprenticeship programs and TRAIN be included in the budget. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges will report annually to the Governor and Legislature on program results. This report will be used to determine if the state should continue to invest in these programs.

QUALITY & ACCOUNTABILITY: KEEPING THE PROMISE

A world-class education system is accountable for results. To educate more people to higher levels, we will focus on the transitions between early learning, K-12, higher education and workforce training, and improve student success at every level. We will reward innovation and pay for results.

We must compare ourselves to the best education systems in the nation and the world, set clear goals, make needed investments and adjust our strategies if we do not see better results.

All of us—not just state government and educational institutions, but also parents, families, communities, businesses, civic organizations and private philanthropy —will be dedicated to continuous improvement and will share responsibility for the success of all our students.

We will constantly monitor and regularly modernize our education system with new technology and best practices, and never again settle for a cycle of reform that occurs only once a decade. We will invest in improved and more transparent reporting and accounting systems that can track student outcomes and show taxpayers exactly how dollars are spent.

The bottom line is that policies and programs are worthless unless they deliver results.

Strategy 1: Create a P-20 Council to track progress toward long-term goals and improve student transitions through the education system.

Washington Learns has established ten long-term goals aimed at raising overall educational attainment. We must track progress toward those goals and make adjustments when we fail to reach our targets. By focusing on the transitions between early learning, K-12 and higher education, we can increase the number of students who are successful lifelong learners.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Clear benchmarks and indicators will track progress toward the ten-year goals established by Washington Learns. The public will be informed about progress toward our goals, and participate in solutions to challenges that impede our progress. More students will enter kindergarten ready to succeed, graduate from high school, and enter and complete college programs.

ASSIGNMENT

The Governor will create a P-20 Council by Executive Order. The council will be chaired by the Governor (or designee). Membership on the Council will include the Superintendent of Public Instruction (or designee) and the Executive Directors of the Department of Early Learning, the State Board of Education, the Professional Educators Standards Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Council of Presidents, the Independent Colleges of Washington, and a representative of the state's tribal schools and colleges. The Office of Financial Management will support and staff the P-20 Council.

The Office of Financial Management will coordinate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the four-year institutions of higher education in developing a longitudinal student data system to support the P-20 Council. The P-20 Council will work with the Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) program to establish indicators and a process to track progress toward the ten-year goals established by Washington Learns and included in this report.

Strategy 2: Use the Global Challenge States to benchmark performance and funding in our early learning, K-12 and higher education system.

The Global Challenge States are the top eight states in the New Economy Index (NEI). These states have economic and demographic characteristics similar to Washington, but often have better educational performance and funding. The NEI ranks states according to their potential to compete in the global economy, so comparing Washington to the leading states in that index illustrates our state's ability to compete globally. Since investments and outcomes in education and workforce training are vital to our ability to compete, the Global Challenge States provide an appropriate benchmark for performance and funding of Washington's education system.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Performance and funding for early learning, K-12 and higher education will be benchmarked against the Global Challenge States, whenever comparable data are available or can be developed.

ASSIGNMENT

The P-20 Council will work with the Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) program to develop benchmarks and indicators for progress toward our ten-year goals, benchmarked against the Global Challenge States.

Beginning with the 2007-2009 state budget, the Office of Financial Management will establish the Global Challenge States as a benchmark for competitive compensation for early learning and K-12 teachers and staff and higher education faculty and staff, per-pupil funding in K-12, and per-student funding in higher education.

By December 2007, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature, will develop a new teacher compensation reporting structure that will provide a complete picture of teacher salaries in Washington.

By December 2007, the Office of Financial Management will develop a methodology for comparing and benchmarking teacher pay among the Global Challenge States.

Strategy 3: Develop a financial health monitoring system for K-12.

Our current budget review system focuses on the current school year. It does a good job of monitoring budget activity and identifies those districts that have immediate difficulties. But the system does not provide a longer-term, prospective look at budget health. In fact, the current data system does not include many items that would assist districts in reviewing long-term issues. We need a system that provides more useful long-term information about financial health.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Financially strong school districts, better forecasting of potential budget difficulties and time to take corrective measures.

ASSIGNMENT

By December 2007, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Office of Financial Management, with advice from educational service districts, will develop a budgeting and obligations reporting system.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and educational service districts will review school district budgets for long-term health on a regular schedule.

Strategy 4: Develop a meaningful accountability system for K-12.

Educators are working hard to meet student interests and needs and provide a solid foundation for the future. Within these broader goals, more specific areas are being addressed, such as providing the best start possible in the primary grades and increasing knowledge and skills in math and science. The state needs to know if the policies and activities targeted to these and other efforts are successful or if adjustments are needed.

An accountability system is more than a system of measures. It must be flexible in its ability to understand different school settings while keeping the state's goals and standards as the overarching objective. It must contain information about the type of work reflected in the measures and the students and programs involved. And it must provide assistance and support for change.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Accurate measures of accomplishment and improvement. Meaningful information that guides decisions for classrooms, schools, school districts and policy makers. Increased public confidence in the work of students, teachers, schools and school districts.

ASSIGNMENT

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for an accountability system.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will review the state's academic standards at least once every ten years, and will report findings to the State Board of Education, the Governor and the Legislature.

Strategy 5: Develop a professional preparation and pay system.

In a standards-based education system, expectations should be clear for everyone involved—the staff as well as the students. In Washington, we have not been clear enough about teaching performance standards. Colleges and universities preparing teachers have requirements about the programs they provide, but each college independently determines if an individual in their program should receive a teaching certificate.

The preparation and licensing system should ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge for world-class teaching. Then, **we should compensate teachers for their performance**. Our teacher pay system should also acknowledge assignments that are difficult, recognize staff expertise, use incentives and reward achievements. The state should provide a system for teachers to continually improve their teaching skills.

EXPECTED RESULTS

We will have a clear and consistent understanding of expected teaching skills. Teachers will show demonstrated competency, be competitively paid, and Washington will recruit and retain the best teachers into a system that recognizes everything that teachers do for our kids.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, by June 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will set performance standards and develop, pilot and implement a professional teaching level assessment and licensing system based on demonstrated teaching skill.

By June 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will revise the requirements for college and university teacher preparation programs to match the new knowledge- and skill-based performance system.

Subject to appropriations, by June 2009, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will design and pilot a professional development delivery system that focuses on teacher knowledge and skill areas identified by the state.

Subject to appropriations, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, the teacher salary allocation model will include pay for performance, knowledge and skills.

By July 2007, a state committee will begin development of a professional performance-based educator salary system and will identify the elements and support systems necessary for implementation. The committee will involve teacher and administrator groups, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature.

Strategy 6: Expand and make the most of professional development time for educators.

Professionals in every field must continue to learn about the latest issues, research and practices in order to maintain and improve their skills and abilities. This is especially critical for teachers and other educators as we discover more about how students learn, what supports different students need, and how to be the most effective facilitators in various learning environments. Research shows that the most successful professional development is clear about its application to the learning experiences for students in the classroom or applied learning settings. The best professional development also provides opportunities for educators to practice using new skills and knowledge and to become proficient with the latest tools to promote learning.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Educators will continuously improve their skills so that students have the most meaningful learning experiences possible.

ASSIGNMENT

Subject to appropriations, beginning in the summer of 2007, schools and school districts will provide educators, including teachers, instructional specialists, support staff and instructional assistants, with time for quality professional development opportunities. The first priority for professional development is math and science content and instruction.

Strategy 7: Develop a public-private partnership to establish a school and district staff leadership academy.

Effective leadership is critical to improving student outcomes and transforming under-performing schools and districts into world-class learning centers. We know which leadership skills promote effective practices, and research shows that students in schools led by principals trained in top leadership academies perform better than their peers.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Schools will have high-performing teams of staff and teachers, and will personalize instruction to the strengths and needs of their students.

ASSIGNMENT

By the 2008-2009 school year, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will work with civic leaders, the Association of Washington School Principals, the Washington Association of School Administrators and others to establish a public-private partnership to launch a Leadership Academy for principals and other administrative staff.

Strategy 8: Establish a state tuition policy for higher education.

Annual tuition increases for resident undergraduates have varied considerably during the last 25 years. As a result, students and families cannot predict, with any degree of certainty, how much tuition will increase from one year to the next.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Students and families will know how much tuition might increase each year. Colleges and universities will be better able to plan for program development that responds to student and employer demands and state expectations. More low- and middle-income students will have access to public colleges and universities because the institutions will use some portion of tuition revenue for student aid and waivers. The quality of educational programs will improve and our colleges and institutions will recruit and retain top faculty and staff. Students and their families will know how much the state is investing in their education and training after high school.

ASSIGNMENT

We recommend that the 2007 Legislature establish a minimum system-wide goal to have all colleges and universities reach at least the 60th percentile of total per-student funding at comparable institutions in the Global Challenge States within ten years. Some schools may reach this minimum goal within a few years, others may take longer, but we expect every school in the system to reach at least the 60th percentile of peer funding within ten years. This is a "stretch" goal for the system as a whole, because most of our colleges and universities are well below the 60th percentile now.

By June 2007, the Office of Financial Management will establish **outcome-based performance measures for each school, benchmarked against the Global Challenge States**, to ensure that funding brings about the desired results. For example, community and technical colleges in Washington already lead the Global Challenge States in the number of Associate Degrees awarded per capita. Their funding levels should continue to allow them to maintain this outstanding performance.

We recommend that the 2007 Legislature set a **cap on annual tuition increases of no more than seven percent**. This is the historical average in Washington and is the annual increase assumed by the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program. The state will invest the remainder of the revenue needed to reach the 60th percentile of comparable institutions in the Global Challenge States within ten years. While tuition will not increase by more than seven percent per year at any college or university, tuition may not go up that much, or at all, in any given year if the state makes an investment that requires a smaller increase in tuition revenue to achieve the total per-student funding goal for that year.

Washington's public colleges and universities will inform students and their families of the contribution the state is making toward their higher education and workforce training. Tuition statements for students will show the cost of instruction for the program they are in, the amount the state is contributing to that cost through subsidies and financial aid, any institutional aid or waivers and the amount they are paying in tuition and fees.

Strategy 9: Strengthen accountability in higher education through performance agreements in the state budget for colleges and universities.

Washingtonians do not always know what they are getting for the dollars invested in higher education, and our colleges and universities do not always know what the state expects in return for the money.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The state, citizens, colleges and universities will know what is expected in return for state funding and tuition revenues.

ASSIGNMENT

Beginning in January 2007, the Governor's budget will describe specific, measurable results expected of colleges and universities in exchange for the institutional funding proposed. The state budget will include expectations for improvements in outcomes, such as the percentage of students from low- and middle-income families admitted to and retained in programs; the number of degrees produced in specific high-demand programs; the percentage of students who finish their program or degree on-time; and the average number of hours per week that buildings will be in use.

Each year, the Office of Financial Management will modify the expectations based on final appropriations by the Legislature. Institutions will be required to report to the Governor and Legislature in time for adjustments to be made in the next biennial budget based on whether the expected outcomes were achieved.

Strategy 10: Develop a ten-year plan for the enrollments needed in colleges and universities to accommodate high school graduates and adults, with an emphasis on increased degree production in high-demand fields.

Washington needs one coordinated enrollment plan that takes into account student and employer demand for education and workforce training at all levels. The plan must consider regional and statewide needs, and must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in future economic and workforce trends. Addressing the need for additional baccalaureate capacity in Snohomish County is a priority.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Informed decisions about how and where to expand access to higher education and training. For example, regional universities and branch campuses need to grow at a different rate than the main campuses of our research institutions. Place-bound students may be better served by increasing enrollment at University Centers on community college campuses. Graduate and professional degree programs require a special focus to meet the needs of the knowledge economy. A ten-year projection will help determine where and how investments should be made.

ASSIGNMENT

By September 2008, the Office of Financial Management, with the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and the Independent Colleges of Washington, will develop ten-year projections for the types and distribution of enrollments necessary to meet demographic and workforce needs. The plan will consider enrollments needed at the sub-baccalaureate, baccalaureate, and graduate and professional degree levels, and at which institutions in which areas of the state those enrollments should be distributed. The group will reconvene every other year to update the plan in time for biennial budget consideration.

By June 2007, state and local policy makers will determine how to address the need for additional baccalaureate capacity for people in Snohomish, Island and Skagit Counties.

Strategy 11: Restructure and strengthen the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) coordinates post-secondary education and workforce training. It also makes recommendations regarding system-wide policies and budget priorities. Better coordination will occur, and budget and policy recommendations for the system will be better informed, if the agencies and institutions responsible for implementation are represented on the board.

The Executive Director of the HECB is on the Governor's cabinet and should, therefore, be accountable to and appointed by the Governor. While the Governor appoints board members, there is no direct accountability to the Governor by board employees.

Current statutory deadlines for the colleges and universities to submit budget outlines to the board, and for the board to review them and make recommendations to the Office of Financial Management, do not allow time for review before the Governor's budget is developed.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Higher education agencies and institutions will be involved in crafting recommendations established by the Board. The Executive Director, a cabinet member, will be appointed by and accountable to the Governor. Budget recommendations from the Higher Education Coordinating Board will arrive at the Office of Financial Management in time to be fully considered as the Governor's budget is developed.

ASSIGNMENT

By September 2007, the membership of the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) will be changed to include one representative each from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Council of Presidents, and the Independent Colleges of Washington, each appointed by the Governor.

Beginning in June 2007, the Executive Director of the HECB will be appointed by the Governor from a list of three names submitted by the board. The Governor may ask for an additional list after reviewing the first slate of candidates.

During the 2007 legislative session, RCW 28B.76.210 will be amended to change the date by which the state's colleges and universities must submit an outline of their proposed budget to the HECB from August 1 to July 1 of each odd-numbered year. In the same statute, the date by which the HECB submits its recommendations on the proposed budgets and the Board's own budget priorities to the Office of Financial Management will be changed from November 1 to October 1.

CONCLUSION

The principles and strategies in this Washington Learns report are designed to transform our entire education system. It is a long-term goal, and it will require sustained participation by state and local governments, by parents, caregivers, teachers and community members, by business and private enterprise, by every level of educational institution, and by students themselves. Our commitment is to a new education system that will excite learners, invigorate teachers and impress employers. We will work together to create a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington. It is an economic and democratic imperative.

05. THE BRIDGE TO BETTER FUNDING & MORE MEANINGFUL ACCOUNTABILITY

This final report sets forth a vision of a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington. Achieving this vision will take time, but we will work to implement each step as quickly as we can. We have recommended important steps to begin implementation, but our work is not complete.

We have learned about the complexities and challenges that characterize all parts of our education finance system. The K-12 finance system is a particular challenge because of its constitutional mandates and complex mixture of state and local responsibilities.

We approached our work with a common-sense sequence and strategy in mind. First, we established the vision for education in Washington. Second, we asked how to spend current dollars more wisely in service of this vision. Third, we committed ourselves to making sure we have sustainable funding in place to execute that vision over the long term.

Our work over the last 16 months has been focused on the first phase of articulating the vision. This chapter now describes the next phases.

1. Develop a more meaningful and comprehensive accountability system.
2. Redefine basic education. Design a funding structure to support the new definition and make a significant down payment toward achievement of a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system.
3. Design a ten-year implementation strategy based on the new definition of basic education and associated new funding formula to support our world class, learner-focused, seamless education system.

STEP 1: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY THAT IS TRANSPARENT, INCENTIVE-BASED & BUILT ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

The public must be confident in the quality of education that occurs each day in every classroom, lecture hall and laboratory across the state.

In response to the complex challenges of global competitiveness, businesses have updated their approach to accountability. Businesses have always held themselves accountable for bottom line results, but these results are increasingly driven by innovation and adaptability to change.

Our education system must update its approach to accountability to reflect a similar emphasis on results. With more resources at stake, we must have the public's full confidence that current and future spending is focused and effective.

The state K-12 accountability system has been under construction for several years. A former state commission first took steps to implement a state accountability system in 1999. Then, in 2001, a national system was adopted for all states that receive federal education funds. Since then, accountability in K-12 has assumed the inflexibility of No Child Left Behind. While the federal approach has brought some positive outcomes, particularly the focus on the need to help struggling students, the negatives have been significant.

Many in the education community are concerned with the federal one-size-fits-all approach that fails to recognize state and regional differences. The federal requirements also conflict with the state's current accountability framework, which results in confusion, frustration and wasted time in schools.

We can do better.

A meaningful accountability system is focused on the right goals and requires a culture of transparency and shared responsibility. The Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) program is a model already proven effective throughout state government that can be applied to education. It is guided by the following principles:

- Take responsibility for delivering results.
- Base decisions on accurate, up-to-date data.
- Respond quickly to emerging situations.
- Allocate resources according to the most important priorities.
- Use strategies that are proven to work.
- Persist and follow up until the desired results are achieved.

We proposed twelve new strategies, detailed in this report, that are focused on building a comprehensive educational accountability system. These are critical first steps, and work should begin immediately.

We further recommend that:

- Beginning January 2007, the Governor, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education will work with the federal government on the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act to build an accountability system that is focused on improvement as well as achievement.
- The Department of Early Learning, the State Board of Education, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board will develop appropriate performance measures based on our ten-year goals and work to align the measures into a comprehensive educational accountability system.
- By December 2007, the P-20 Council will issue a first annual report on progress toward the ten-year goals.
- By December 2008, the Washington Learns Steering Committee will recommend the framework for a comprehensive education accountability system.

STEP 2: REDEFINE BASIC EDUCATION, DESIGN A FUNDING STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE NEW DEFINITION & MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DOWN PAYMENT TOWARD OUR LONG-TERM GOALS.

While early learning and higher education also face financing difficulties, the K-12 funding system, with its constitutional mandate and legal directives, poses the biggest challenge.

STEPS TO MEANINGFUL ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Establish clear goals for a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system.
2. Create the P-20 Council to monitor progress toward the state goals.
3. Develop a five-star voluntary quality rating system for child care and early education programs, phased in starting July 2007.
4. Develop culturally appropriate standards for what children should know and be able to do when they enter kindergarten.
5. Develop a kindergarten readiness assessment tool, aligned with the redesigned state early learning standards by June 2008.
6. Establish the Global Challenge States to benchmark our progress.
7. Require recommendations for the components of a new K-12 accountability system from the State Board of Education by December 2007.
8. Review the state academic standards at least every ten years.
9. Develop a financial health monitoring system for K-12 school districts by December 2007.
10. Design and implement a new system of teacher preparation and licensing.
11. Design and implement a new performance-based educator salary system.
12. Establish performance agreements with specific, measurable outcomes in the budget for the state's colleges and universities beginning in the 2007-2009 biennium.

Article IX, section 1 of the state Constitution states that it "is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders." Section 2 of Article IX requires the Legislature "to provide for a general and uniform system of public schools."

This strong constitutional mandate for public education has been upheld by the Washington courts in two major cases, known as *School Funding I (1977 and 1978)* and *School Funding II (1983)*.[23] Two landmark laws were enacted in 1977: The Basic Education Act and the Levy Lid Act.

Today, the K-12 education system is still financed by the thirty-year-old statutory formula of the Basic Education Act. The formula funds "full time equivalent" students sitting in seats for a specified number of hours each day for the 180-day school year, with teachers providing a minimum of 25 hours per week of classroom instruction. This is an input-only funding model that sends dollars to districts based on the number of students enrolled. Districts then determine how to use these funds along with other available state, federal and local resources.

More than a decade ago, expectations for the K-12 system were changed. Instead of measuring success by the amount of time students spend in classes, success is now measured by whether students meet academic standards.

But the funding model for K-12 education has not been updated to reflect the new expectations and has not addressed the question of how to use resources most effectively in order to improve student outcomes.

In a standards-based education system, the funding mechanism should be linked to results. The resulting questions are: how much should be spent and how effective is the spending?

The consultants hired to help us assess how to align funding with a standards-based system proposed a funding model consisting of a menu of inputs that show a correlation with improved student outcomes.[24] In Chapter 4, we recommended moving forward on some of the strategies in the K-12 consultants' work, both by creating demonstration projects to gather evidence of improved outcomes and by embracing other strategies but phasing in their implementation. The lessons we learn from these targeted investments will help us redesign our K-12 finance system.

Redefine Basic Education & Make a Significant Down Payment for Improved Education Funding

The Basic Education Act includes both a statement of goals and an allocation formula. The current statement of goals should be amended to reflect the 1993 adoption of a standards-based education system. By December 2008, based on knowledge gained from the demonstration projects, a new allocation formula defining basic education will be proposed.

In the 2007 legislative session, subject to appropriations, we recommend a significant down payment to improve basic education funding in key areas.

In the 2007 legislative session, we recommend that the Legislature amend RCW 28A.150.210 to read as follows:

> *The goal of the Basic Education Act for the schools of the state of Washington set forth in this chapter shall be to provide students with the opportunity to become responsible citizens, to contribute to their own economic well-being and to that of their families and communities, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives, and to develop a public school system that focuses more on the educational performance of students and includes high expectations for all students. To these ends, the goals of each school district, with the involvement of parents and community members, shall be to provide opportunities for all students to develop the knowledge and skills essential to:*
>
> 1. *Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings;*
> 2. *Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; and health and fitness;*

3. *Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems; and*
4. *Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.*

Develop a Clear & Understandable Funding Structure

Better information about funding and spending allows every participant in the education system to make more informed decisions about how to use resources to support student learning.

By December 2007, The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Office of Financial Management will develop the framework for a new transparent accounting structure and reporting system, based on the following requirements

- Districts will report expenditures by revenue source.
- Reporting of staff assignments by building and for selected programs will be strengthened.

By December 2008, the Washington Learns Steering Committee will issue recommendations for a revised K-12 funding model that will meet the Constitutional requirement of providing a basic education to all our students. The funding model will:

- Be clear and transparent for taxpayers.
- Be performance-based by reflecting expected results of educational services and include processes to review program and service performance over time.
- Identify the financial investment necessary to meet educational performance expectations.

STEP 3: DESIGN A TEN-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY BASED ON THE NEW DEFINITION OF BASIC EDUCATION & ASSOCIATED NEW FUNDING FORMULA TO SUPPORT OUR WORLD-CLASS, LEARNER-FOCUSED, SEAMLESS EDUCATION SYSTEM.

This report sets forth the framework for a long-term investment in our state education system, from early learning through K-12 to higher education. We have proposed the Global Challenge States (GCS) as our measure for global competitiveness, and we recommend the establishment, in statute, of our commitment to obtaining the necessary human and financial resources as measured by the achievement of specific GCS benchmarks.

Our implementation strategy will reflect the urgency we feel. We will work to do as much as we can, based on evidence, as soon as we can. This means that some recommendations may move forward earlier than others, because we are ready. Other recommendations will be examined through demonstration projects, refined and implemented when they are ready. Our commitment is to deliver a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system within a decade.

Stable and significantly increased funding is required to support the evolving needs of our education system.

We know that delivering personalized education will cost more. Identifying and addressing individual student needs is more expensive than allowing students to simply move through the grades. Over the long run, however, addressing individual student needs will generate a more robust economy by creating productive, thoughtful and caring citizens and will save money on costs like crime and incarceration. Personalizing education brings out every student's talents and potential and helps them realize who and what they can become.

We know that there are costs associated with expanding access to workforce training and higher education, particularly in high-demand fields. We understand that our ability to compete in the global economy depends on a high-performing, well-funded higher education and training system. We call on the state to commit to a sustainable level of funding that ensures affordability for students and families, and maintains the high quality of education for which our colleges and universities are known. In exchange, we will hold colleges and universities accountable for efficient and effective service delivery and for increasing the number of graduates from all walks of life who are able to meet the needs of our economy.

We support parents as their children's first and best teachers. We commit to working with communities and with Thrive by Five Washington to make sure parents have the supports they need to get their children off to a great start. Child care regulation will be more simple and clear, to better safeguard children in child care. Licensing information will be transparent and readily available to parents.

We propose to phase in new incentives and resources to help child care providers meet national standards for early learning quality. Working families will get help paying for child care through a system of scholarships based on family income and provider ratings in the new five-star voluntary quality rating system. Our most at-risk families and their children, including children in foster care, will receive priority for comprehensive services through a redesigned Early Childhood and Assistance Program (ECEAP).

During the next two years, the Washington Learns Steering Committee will work to develop a ten-year implementation strategy for stable and significantly increased funding to support a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington.

MOVING FORWARD

Significant and meaningful reform takes time. It takes time to conceptualize. It takes time to build public support. It takes time to implement.

Significant and meaningful reform also requires people. The Washington Learns Steering Committee would like to recognize and thank the educators, students and parents who are working so hard to improve our current system. As educators involved in this complex work know so well, future success depends on the willingness of those involved to share the results of their learning with one another. We thank you for your dedication and hard work, and we celebrate your continuing efforts to implement the Washington Learns vision.

Washington Learns has completed the first step to reform by setting forth a vision and a roadmap to achieve a world-class, learner-focused, seamless education system for Washington. We have recommended action on specific strategies within five key initiatives. The Governor and the Legislature will work as a team to implement these first phase proposals. Finally, we have recommended a clear process to oversee and guide the next phases of necessary reforms.

Now it is time for purposeful action. The quality of our future is at stake.

> "There is a place in America to take a stand: it is **public education.**"
>
> Tom Brokaw

MINORITY REPORT BY REPRESENTATIVE GLENN ANDERSON

The competitiveness of the global economy is fundamentally changing how we need to educate our children and provide for their future. A quality basic education has always been the foundation to individual success, and the value of that education is growing rapidly in the global economy. Indeed, our state's constitution defines the state's obligation to fund a basic K-12 education for all children as its "paramount duty." "Paramount" is defined as "superior to all other things." This constitutional mandate is based on the direct relationship between the level of individual education and overall economic prosperity and social order. The more educated a citizenry is, the higher the level of personal income and the less the need for remedial government programs.

Since the last of the original state court decisions (Doran III, 1982) defining our current state K-12 funding structure, a number of inequities or deficiencies have been identified. The Legislature has conducted numerous studies over the years (at least 17, not including research for specific projects or legislation) to address school financing concerns. Section 1 of E2SSB 5441 states, "The legislature finds that . . . more than a quarter of a century has passed since the current school finance system was first created, and the challenges facing our schools and students have grown and changed dramatically during that time."

The intent of the law authorizing Washington Learns was to provide for a thoughtful and thorough evaluation of our state's education finance system to ensure that state government is meeting its constitutionally mandated requirement to make ample provision for the education of the children residing within its borders. Early childhood learning and higher education, while not constitutionally mandated, were added to the study to ensure that a more integrated and seamless approach was taken across the education continuum.

The Legislature recognized that many of the challenges facing our state's K-12 education funding model are highly charged politically and have significant impacts on state budget resources. It was the intent of the Legislature that Washington Learns would be the forum to address these contentious issues and build bipartisan legislative support and broad public trust for making this commitment to our common future. Unfortunately the Washington Learns Final Report is profoundly deficient in that regard.

My greatest concern is that the Steering Committee failed to meet the mandate given it by the authorizing legislation, and largely dodged the difficult issues in K-12 finance whose resolution many legislators and members of the K-12 community intended as the study's highest priority.

While the Steering Committee was given some latitude by the bill to provide recommendations based on the findings of the early learning, K-12 education and higher education advisory sub-groups, the only specific work *product* required of the Committee by the authorizing legislation was prescribed in Sec. 3(1)(d) of the act:

> [The steering committee] shall develop recommendations about how the state can best provide stable funding for student learning for young children, students in the public schools, and students in the public colleges and universities.

Nowhere in the report is that mandate addressed. In my view as a lawmaker the Washington Learns Steering Committee, while making recommendations on a number of noteworthy issues, simply failed by choice to do what the law required.

Instead, after 18 months and $1.7 million in expenditures with time having run out the Steering Committee, at the direction of the Chair, proposes at the last hour to extend the Washington Learns study to undertake a "Phase II" on accountability and a "Phase III" on finance, deliverable by December 2008.

I am compelled to point out to Steering Committee members that there is no provision in the law under which we worked for findings and recommendations to be made after the date the *final* report is due on November 15, 2006. There is only one phase to this study mandated by law. Accountability and finance were part of that mandate. That mandate was not met, as acknowledged by the intent now to "extend" the study process.

On several occasions early in the process I stated publicly that if the Steering Committee anticipated that because of the large and complicated issues needing to be addressed, it would be unable to comply with the mandates of the law and meet the expectations of the Legislature, it should inform the Legislature of same and seek to amend the authorizing act. The Steering Committee chose not to do so and therein accepts full responsibility for meeting the requirements set forth in the law.

In addition to the central failure of the Steering Committee to meet its legal mandate, I have the following concerns about the report:

- The Committee failed to place its recommendations in the context of the efforts already underway to improve K-12 education through the Education Reform program or to improve higher education through the HECB Master Plan and related initiatives. Most recommendations are more programmatic budget "adds" than structural changes.

  For a study done pursuant to a finding that "Policies have been established creating new expectations and goals for students under education reform," reference to those expectations and goals is not to be found, with the significant exception of mathematics and science achievement. Identification of expectations for student achievement to be competitive in a global economy and maintain a culture of life-long learning is absent.

- The Committee failed to examine or provide recommendations on how current K-12 administrative structures and financial resources can be used more effectively to achieve the state's education goals. There are no recommendations to determine existing program effectiveness or to identify efficiencies in school district practices.

  There is a general acceptance by experts in the field that all existing education monies need to be "on the table" for reallocation to effectively address school financing issues. Even the Committee's K-12 finance consultants, Picus and Associates, state at the outset that in their cost analyses, "We assume that all dollars and programs currently in the system would be sunsetted, and that all extant dollars and any new dollars would be used for the (new) general strategies identified in the report. In that sense, we are assuming complete reallocation of current resources to the most effective and evidence-based strategies. . . ." In its report the Committee has evaluated the effectiveness of no current programs and recommended the reallocation of no current resources.

- The Committee failed to prioritize among investments it proposes based on determinations of their probable cost effectiveness in relation to other investments. While it declares that "We will invest only in programs that work," there is no indication of what that means.

- The Committee failed to link current or new program investments to specific student performance gains to be expected. For example, it does not indicate any anticipated gains in student achievement to be obtained from benchmarking expenditures to those of "Global Challenge States."

- The Committee's choice to spend $800,000 on a "K-12 finance adequacy study" appears to have resulted in more of a "wild-goose chase" than in a body of knowledge that the Legislature could use to evaluate finance policy options. It seems to this member of the Appropriations Committee a poor use of resources that could have been put toward intensive analysis of major issues in school finance so that the Legislature could be poised to act on a package of legislation in the 2007 session. The Legislature needs an examination of Washington-specific practices rather than the sort of generalizing from limited and selective evidence that was so strongly criticized by peer reviewers of the consultant study.

- Of equal concern is the use of language that defines issues in terms of political opinion rather than objective assessment. For example, the report states, "[M]ore than ever before our education system must prepare world citizens who respect cultural differences, understand political differences, and who can make informed choices among policy differences." Who would set the standards and curriculum to define appropriate cultural and political thinking and understanding? What would the appropriate achievement goals be and who would enforce them?

  How would low achievers be re-educated under this philosophy of educating individuals?
  On its rationale for requiring use of a kindergarten readiness assessment tool, the report states that "Preparing children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond is too important to leave to chance," "The assessment will acknowledge all aspects of development, including cultural differences among children . . . ," and "Our ability to tailor kindergarten to

the developmental and cultural needs of children will be improved." Apparently, and despite rhetoric to the contrary, responsibility for effective early child rearing is too risky for the government to leave to actual parents. It would also appear that emphasizing our common humanity, characteristics and unique American values is less important than emphasizing our "cultural identities" at an early age.

These examples of language are more representative of an emphasis on an ideology about the use of the education process to achieve a politically correct outcome than on ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge to be an educated and productive member of society.

After 25 years of concerns, at least 17 previous legislative studies, 18 months of additional investigation by Washington Learns costing $1.7 million, and the investment of time by hundreds of deeply concerned citizens across our state, this Committee owes the public more than good rhetoric and a list of vague policy options that do not address the fundamental issues about education finance in our state.

MINORITY REPORT ENDNOTES

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ENDNOTES

1. E2SSB 5441 and ESHB 1152.
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3. At the September 12, 2006 public hearing held in Olympia, the K-20 network was used to connect live with Wenatchee, Grays Harbor and Yakima.
4. Special Message to the Congress on Urgent National Needs, May 25, 1961.
5. National Commission on Excellence in Education, April 1983.
6. SB 5953 (1992) and HB 1209 (1993).
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8. Comparisons are made with the 30 member countries of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
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12. Hill, Kent, et al. The Value of Higher Education: Individual and Societal Benefits. L. William Seidman Research Institute, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, October 2005.
13. Lochner & Moretti (2003) found that a 1% increase in high school graduation rates nationally would save $1.4 billion, about $2,100 per high school graduate.
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16. The 2002 State New Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the States, available at http://www.neweconomyindex.org/states/2002/index.html.
17. Washington: 2002 State New Economy Index. The table on the next page shows how Washington ranks among the fifty states for the five major categories and for each of the 21 indicators.
18. D. Pavelchek, Student Readiness for Kindergarten: A Survey of Kindergarten Teachers in Washington State, Washington State University Social and Economic Research Center, 2005. Available at http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/pubdocs/kindergartenpreparednesssurveyRept.doc.
19. L.J. Schweinhart, J. Montie, Z. Xiang, W.S. Barnett, C.R. Belfield & M. Nores (2005) Lifetime Effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40, 2005.
20. 49.4% of students that go to a two-year college or 32% of students that go to any college must take remedial math classes before taking college level classes. Social and Economic Sciences Research Center: Washington State Graduate Follow-up Study. http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/gfs/GFS_Reports/class_2004.asp.

21. Picus and Associates, An Evidence-Based Approach to School Finance Adequacy in Washington, Final Report, September 11, 2006.

22. Washington Learns scholarships are intended to cover the gap between other types of state or institutional financial aid for tuition and fees, and the actual amount of tuition and fees at an eligible institution. Eligible institutions are public or private colleges, universities and career schools in Washington that are already eligible to participate in the State Need Grant program.

23. For a brief review of these cases, see Appendix VII of the Washington Learns 2005 Interim Report, available at www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov.

24. Picus and Associates, An Evidence-Based Approach to School Finance Adequacy in Washington, Final Report, September 11, 2006.

WASHINGTON: 2002 STATE NEW ECONOMY INDEX

INDICATOR	RANK	SCORE
Overall	2	86.21
Aggregated Knowledge Jobs	5	13.24
Information Technology Jobs: *Employment in IT occupations in non-IT industries as share of total jobs*	2	2.8%
Managerial, Professional & Tech Jobs: *Managers, professionals & technicians as a share of total workforce*	14	27.7%
Workforce Education: *A weighted measure of the educational attainment of the workforce*	11	53.1
Education Level of the Manufacturing Workforce: *A weighted measure of the educational attainment of the manufacturing workforce*	6	1.53
Aggregated Globalization Score	9	11.35
Export Focus of Manufacturing: *Manufacturing export sales per manufacturing worker*	3	$82,911
Foreign Direct Investment: *Percentage of each state's workforce employed by foreign companies*	33	3.7%
Aggregated Economic Dynamism Scores	1	19.83
"Gazelle" Jobs: *Jobs in gazelle companies (annual sales revenue that has grown 20% or more for four straight years) as a share of total employment*	1	16.5%
Job Churning: *Number of new start-ups and business failures, combined, as a share of all establishments in each state*	10	21.3%
Initial Public Offerings: *A weighted measure of the value and number of initial public stock offerings of companies as a share of gross state product*	1	11.78
Aggregated Digital Economy Scores	3	13.64
Online Population: *Percentage of adults with Internet access in each state*	7	61.3%
Commercial Internet Domain Names: *The number of commercial Internet domain names (".com") per firm*	15	0.97
Technology in Schools: *A weighted measure of five factors measuring computer and internet use in schools*	27	1.95
Digital Government: *A measure of the utilization of digital technologies in state government*	2	4.38
Online Agriculture: *A measure of the percentage of farmers with Internet access and who use computers for business*	10	3.90
Online Manufacturers: *The percentage of manufacturing establishments with Internet access*	19	87.0%
Broadband Telecommunications: *A measure of the use and deployment of broadband telecommunications infrastructure over telephone lines*	8	4.03
Aggregated Innovation Capacity	8	13.41
High-Tech Jobs: *Jobs in electronics manufacturing, software and computer-related services, telecommunications and biomedical as a share of total employment*	9	6.6%
Scientists and Engineers: *Civilian scientists and engineers as a percentage of the workforce*	11	0.59%
Patents: *Number of patents issued to companies or individuals per 1,000 workers*	9	1.03
Industry Investment in R&D: *Industry investment in reasearch and development as a percentage of Gross State Product (GSP)*	11	2.25%
Venture Capital: *Venture capital invested as a percentage of GSP*	5	1.34%

PHOTO CREDITS

Page 18. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Page 20. State Board for Community and Technical Colleges - Tacoma Community College

Page 23. Evergreen School District

Page 24. Educational Service District 122

Page 25. Evergreen School District

Page 27. Vancouver School District

Page 29. Evergreen School District

Page 31. Weldon Wilson - New Market Vocational Skills Center

Page 32. State Board for Community and Technical Colleges - North Seattle Community College

Page 36. Wenatchee Valley Community College Latino Agriculture Program

Page 37. Weldon Wilson - South Puget Sound Community College

Page 40. Evergreen School District

Page 42. State Board for Community and Technical Colleges - South Seattle Community College

Page 43. State Board for Community and Technical Colleges - South Seattle Community College

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