

Washington Learns

An Overview

Presented to

Western Interstate Commission
for Higher Education

by

Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles
Washington State

November 13, 2006

The New Global Challenge

“Knowledge is the new world currency and Washington’s education system must produce that currency in new ways if our children are to succeed.”

Goal

*Washington is committed to delivering
a world-class, learner-focused
education system.*

Imagine

An education system that gives every child the opportunity to succeed in school and life.

Imagine

An education system that entices people of all ages and abilities to seek more education and training to improve their lives and the lives of their children.

Imagine

Classes of thinkers who learn not just rote answers but also the skills of adapting to changing circumstances and using creativity to find solutions.

Imagine

An education system that stimulates our appetite for music and arts while it prepares us for productive careers.

Background

- Created by the 2005 Legislature at the request of Gov. Christine Gregoire
- Charged with conducting a thorough review of entire education system: early learning, K-12, and post-secondary education
- Recommendations due by November 2006

Principles

- Accountability
- Learner-focused system
 - ◇ Rigor
 - ◇ Relevance
 - ◇ Relationships
 - ◇ Resources
- Emphasis on people
- Emphasis on integrated strategies

Early Learning Imperative

- New cabinet-level department
- Support for parents, families, communities
- Expanded high-quality child care
- Expanded early education opportunities

Math and Science Initiative (K-12)

- New curriculum focus
- Strengthen math and science teaching
- Expand high-demand math/science education opportunities
- Encourage community interest, support

K-12 Initiatives Related To Higher Education

- Define world-class math/science high school graduation requirements.
- Offer more college math/science classes online.
- Increase college math/science course requirements for all prospective teachers.
- Increase access to alternative routes to certification for math/science teachers.

K-12 Initiatives (cont.)

- Increase access to loans and scholarships for math and science teacher preparation.
- Develop math and science training for early education teachers.
- Provide scholarships for students who excel in math and science to select math/science majors in college.
- Fund more spaces in colleges/universities for students seeking math/science degrees where student demand exceeds program capacity.

Technology: A Powerful Tool

- Provide online options for
 - completion of coursework
 - access to advance courses
 - practice, reinforcement of class lessons
 - tutoring, exploration of career options
- Update the technology requirements for teacher preparation and professional development.

Align Curriculum, Learning Expectations

- Support partnerships bringing K-12 teachers together with higher education faculty to align mathematics curriculum.
- Use commercial college placement tests in math and language arts to allow sophomores and juniors to assess their college readiness.
- Work with OSPI to align high school graduation requirements and minimum college admissions standards.
- Move to a system based on demonstrated competence for college-level work, not seat time.

Professional Development

- Deliver professional development programs to meet teacher needs.
- Rely on the latest research to improve instruction.
- Develop creativity institutes for teachers across all subjects.
- Emphasize state, regional and local education partnerships.
- Provide 10 days to engage in state-authorized professional development and planning.

Establish Higher Ed Investment Parameters

- Adopt ten Global Challenges States (GCS)* identified by NORED as peer states.
- Establish funding benchmarks.
- Establish the top tier of the GCS as the benchmark to determine the appropriate cost-per-student for our public colleges and universities.
- Gradually increase state support and tuition levels at four-year colleges and universities to reach the top tier of the GCS.

*GCS States: Massachusetts, Washington, California, Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey, Connecticut, Virginia, Minnesota and North Carolina.

UW / WSU To Launch Low-Income Scholarships in 2007

- **University of Washington Plan**
 - **Husky Promise**
 - ◇ Covers costs of all in-state tuition and fees for students who qualify for Pell or State Need grants.
 - ◇ Guaranteed, no matter how much tuition increases.
 - ◇ Will support 5,000 students per year at Seattle, Bothell, Tacoma
- **Washington State University Plan**
 - **Cougar Commitment**
 - ◇ Covers tuition for students who qualify for Pell or State Need Grants.

Strengthen College Transition

- Statewide web-based advising system
- More Major Ready Degree pathways
- Expanded dual-credit opportunities:
 - ◇ Running Start
 - ◇ Running Start for the Trades
 - ◇ Tech Prep
 - ◇ College in the High School
- First-semester tuition grants for high school graduates
- State scholarship program for low-income and first-time college students
- Additional Opportunity Grants for workforce education

Add Capacity

- Ten-year enrollment funding plan
 - ◇ Assess type and distribution of enrollments needed to accommodate new high school graduates, returning adults
 - ◇ Emphasis on increased degrees in high-demand fields
 - ◇ Global Challenge States as benchmarks
- Greater coordination with independent colleges, universities to meet need for high-demand degrees
- Grants for selected high-demand degree programs at independent institutions
- Direct contracts with independent colleges and universities for high-demand programs

Accountability

- All students will graduate from high school with multicultural and international perspectives and skills to live, learn and work in a global society.
- All students will complete a rigorous high school course of study and demonstrate proficiencies in core academic skills needed to enter a post-secondary education program or career pathway.
- All citizens will have access to affordable post-secondary education and training opportunities that provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive personally and professionally.
- Washington's research agenda will fuel discoveries and innovations that allow businesses to thrive and compete globally.

Accountability

- Develop performance agreements to describe measurable outcomes expected from colleges and universities.
e.g. improvements in high-demand degree production
- Fund institutions based on those outcomes.
- Establish and maintain a robust data system for the evaluation of student progress and indicators related to the 10-year goals.

Accountability

- Develop and test specific accountability measures for K-12 during 2007.
- Pilot programs will provide both baseline performance measurements and information needed to develop budget proposals.
- Determine appropriate levels of support needed to make rapid advances during 2008.
- Submit a 10-year funding and performance plan to the Legislature by the end of 2008.*

* The Governor has stated that funding for Washington Learns initiatives will have to be phased in over time.

Oversight

Establish a P-20 Education Council chaired by the Governor's designee with representation from the following organizations:

- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- State Board of Community and Technical Colleges
- State Board of Education
- Professional Educators Standards Board
- Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Department of Early Learning
- Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- Council of Presidents

Washington Learns

www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov