



COMMISSION MEETING

May 6-7, 2024 | Las Vegas, Nevada **AGENDA AND
MEETING MATERIALS**

Postsecondary Education
in the 21st Century Economy

Red Rock Canyon Conservation Area, Nevada

WICHE COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy

May 6-7, 2024
 JW Marriott Las Vegas Resort & Spa

Sunday, May 5, 2024

Noon <i>Marquis 7 & 8</i>	Optional Lunch for New Commissioners, Certifying Officers, and WICHE Staff	
1:00 - 4:00 p.m. <i>Marquis 1</i>	Certifying Officers Meeting	
1:00 - 4:00 p.m. <i>Marquis 2</i>	New Commissioner Orientation	
6:00 p.m. <i>Meet in Hotel Lobby</i>	Dinner for New Commissioners New Commissioners, WICHE Officers, and the Senior Leadership Team are invited to dinner at Vintner Grill. The group will depart together for the restaurant.	
6:00 p.m. <i>Meet in Hotel Lobby</i>	Dinner for Certifying Officers Certifying Officers and the Programs and Services staff are invited to dinner at a nearby restaurant.	

Monday, May 6, 2024

7:30 - 9:30 a.m. <i>Marquis 7 & 8</i>	Full Breakfast Available for Commissioners, Staff, and Guests	
8:00 - 9:00 a.m. <i>Marquis 1</i>	Executive Committee Meeting (Open and Closed Sessions)	1-1
9:15 - 9:30 a.m. <i>Marquis Ballroom</i>	Welcome and Opening Remarks Commissioner Antwan Jefferson, WICHE Chair	2-1
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. <i>Marquis Ballroom</i>	Plenary Session I – Economic Diversification in the West <i>Facilitator:</i> Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon (CA) <i>Speaker:</i> Tina Quigley, President and CEO, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance	3-1

10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Break

ROUNDTABLE SESSION 1: The WICHE Roundtables are facilitated, interactive discussions for commissioners aimed at providing the opportunity to leverage diverse perspectives to explore relevant topics aligned with WICHE's strategic priorities. *Those in the room who are not commissioners or facilitators, please observe only.*

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable 1 (Access & Success, Value & Accountability) – The Peril and Promise of Alternative Providers and Credentials 4-1
Marquis 1

Facilitators:

Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable 2 (Workforce & Society) – Diversifying Economies in the West 4-1
Marquis 2

Facilitators:

Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst
Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Roundtable 3 (Access & Success, Workforce & Society, Innovation) – Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy 4-1
Marquis 3

Facilitator:

Landon Pirius, President, Red Rocks Community College

11:45 - Noon Break

Noon - 1:00 p.m. Networking Lunch
Marquis 7 & 8

ROUNDTABLE SESSION 2: The WICHE Roundtables will be held again to allow commissioners the opportunity to attend another interactive discussion.

1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Roundtable 1 (Access & Success, Value & Accountability) – The Peril and Promise of Alternative Providers and Credentials 4-1
Marquis 1

Facilitators:

Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

1:00 - 2:00 p.m. <i>Marquis 2</i>	Roundtable 2 (Workforce & Society) – Diversifying Economies in the West <i>Facilitators:</i> Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, Policy Analysis and Research	4-1
1:00 - 2:00 p.m. <i>Marquis 3</i>	Roundtable 3 (Access & Success, Workforce & Society, Innovation) – Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy <i>Facilitator:</i> Landon Pirius, President, Red Rocks Community College	4-1
2:00 - 2:15 p.m.	Break	
2:15 - 3:30 p.m. <i>Marquis Ballroom</i>	Plenary Session II – The College Athletics Arms Race: Impacts and Implications for the West <i>Facilitator:</i> David Lassner, President, University of Hawai'i <i>Panelists:</i> Seth Bodnar, President, University of Montana Gloria Nevarez, Commissioner, Mountain West Conference Keith E. Whitfield, President, University of Nevada, Las Vegas	5-1
4:30 - 7:30 p.m. <i>Meet in Hotel Lobby</i>	Reception at the Atomic Museum The Atomic Museum (a Smithsonian affiliate) is a national science, history, and educational institution that tells the story of America's nuclear weapons testing program at the Nevada Test Site. The museum uses lessons of the past and present to better understand the extent and effect of nuclear testing on worldwide nuclear deterrence and geopolitical history.	
7:30 p.m.	Dinner On Your Own	

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

7:00 - 8:30 a.m. <i>Marquis Ballroom</i>	Full Breakfast Available for Commissioners, Staff and Guests State Delegations will caucus to discuss the Committee of the Whole – Action Items	
8:30 - 9:45 a.m. <i>Marquis 1</i>	Programs and Services Committee Meeting	6-1

8:30 - 9:45 a.m. <i>Marquis 3</i>	Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting	7-1
8:30 - 9:45 a.m. <i>Marquis 6</i>	Behavioral Health Committee Meeting	8-1
8:30 - 9:45 a.m. <i>Marquis 2</i>	EdTech Committee Meeting	9-1
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:00 - 11:30 a.m. <i>Marquis Ballroom</i>	Committee of the Whole – Business Session	10-1
11:45 a.m.	Closing Remarks Commissioner Antwan Jefferson, WICHE Chair	

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting

Monday, May 6, 2024
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
Marquis 1

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday

May 6, 2024

8:00 –
9:00 a.m.


Marquis 1

Committee Members

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair

Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Agenda (Open)

 **Approval of the March 20, 2024, Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes** 1-2

Other Business

Agenda (Closed)

 **Review of the WICHE President's Performance and Adoption of FY 2025 Performance Objectives** 1-8

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the March 20, 2024, Executive Committee Videoconference Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goepfing (AZ)
Bob Shireman (CA)
Jim Chavez (CO) *proxy for Antwan Jefferson*
Colleen Sathre (HI) *proxy for David Lassner*
Rick Aman (ID) *proxy for Matt Freeman*
Clayton Christian (MT)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Dale Erquiaga (NV) *proxy for Fred Lokken*
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair
David Lassner (HI)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Michael Meotti (WA)

Other Commissioners Present

Maryrose Beasley (MT)

Staff Present

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access Programs, Programs, and Services
Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and the Commission
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer
Shelley Plutto, Project Manager, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Russ Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education
Kate Springsteen, Assistant Director, Student Access Programs, Programs and Services

Guests

Louise Lynch, Certifying Officer (AZ)

Call to Order

Vice Chair Barbara Damron was the presiding officer of the meeting. She called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. MDT. A quorum was confirmed.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2024, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Vice Chair Damron requested comments or corrections to the Executive Committee meeting minutes from February 21, 2024. There were none. She declared the minutes approved as submitted.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF ALASKA'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Molly Hall-Martin presented the details of Alaska's State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) renewal application. Alaska has five total participating institutions, including three public, one private not-for-profit, and one for-profit, with one new institution added since its last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Alaska's SARA institutions enrolled 703 distance education students through SARA, and 7,594 students located in Alaska were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. Hall-Martin reported that as a part of the renewal process, W-SARA staff reviewed Alaska's compliance with SARA policy over the course of the renewal period and made a recommendation to the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) to approve the renewal based on the following information:

- ▶ During the renewal period, Alaska received no SARA-qualifying complaints and did not have any institutions on heightened cash monitoring. No institutions were denied renewal, nor did any see a change in ownership. One institution, Charter College, underwent a change of home state, moving to Alaska from Washington state.
 - Charter College was admitted to SARA participation through Alaska on provisional status and is under that status because the institution has a Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Score of 1.4. The provisional status conditions include regular financial reporting to Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) and saw an increased surety bond requirement for the institution.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Alaska to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger MOVED TO APPROVE Alaska's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Ann Millner SECONDED the motion.

DISCUSSION

The location of Charter College was discussed. Hall-Martin said it had initially been completely located in Alaska and, at one point, moved partially to Washington state, with its operations split between Alaska and Washington state. In the past year, the college moved all operations with a physical campus back to Alaska and it no longer had a presence in Washington state.

The motion passed to approve Alaska's SARA state renewal for an additional two years.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF COLORADO'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Hall-Martin presented the details of Colorado's SARA renewal application. Colorado has 45 total participating institutions including 28 public, 10 private not-for-profit, and seven for-profit, with three new institutions added since its last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Colorado's SARA institutions enrolled 59,742 distance education students through SARA, and 32,353 students located in Colorado were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. She reported that as a part of the renewal process, W-SARA

staff reviewed Colorado's compliance with SARA policy over the course of the renewal period and made a recommendation to the RSC to approve the renewal based on the following information:

- ▶ During the renewal period, Colorado had no SARA-specific statutory changes. Still, a 2021 misdemeanor reform bill impacting all state statutes downgraded each misdemeanor charge by one level, impacting the state's state authorization enforcement statutes. Over the course of the renewal period, Colorado did not have any institutions undergo changes of ownership, and no institutions were denied renewal.
- ▶ Two institutions are on provisional status. Naropa University is on provisional status for being on the U.S. Department of Education's heightened cash monitoring status and having a low financial responsibility composite score (FRCS). Naropa's provisional status designation was extended for a second year as it awaits an updated FRCS score. The other, Nazarene Bible College, is on provisional status because it is on probation with its accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The institution was returned to good standing by HLC and, as a result, the State Portal Entity (SPE) will review its provisional status designation.
- ▶ During the renewal period, the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) experienced a cyberattack that destroyed its student record database, including its complaint information. Based on NC-SARA complaint data, as reported by the SPE, Colorado received one complaint in 2022 and three complaints in 2023. While CDHE rebuilds its student record database, the SPE is using a form to collect and respond to complaints.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Colorado to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Jim Chavez MOVED TO APPROVE Colorado's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Bob Shireman SECONDED the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed to approve Colorado's SARA renewal for an additional two years with one abstention.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF HAWAII'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Hall-Martin presented the details of Hawaii's SARA renewal application. Hawaii has 16 total participating institutions including 10 public, four private not-for-profit, and two for-profit, with three new institutions added since its last renewal. (Since this meeting in February 2024, one additional new institution was admitted to SARA through Hawaii.) According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Hawaii's SARA institutions enrolled 1,757 distance education students through SARA, and 10,995 students located in Hawaii were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. Hall-Martin reported that as a part of the renewal process, W-SARA staff reviewed Hawaii's compliance with SARA policy over the course of the renewal period and made a recommendation to the RSC to approve the renewal based on the following information:

- ▶ During the renewal period, Hawaii received zero SARA-qualifying complaints, had no institutions on heightened cash monitoring or provisional status, had no institutions undergoing a change of ownership, and had no institution denied renewal.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Hawaii to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Colleen Sathre MOVED TO APPROVE Hawai'i's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Frankie Eliptico SECONDED the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed to approve Hawai'i's SARA renewal for an additional two years with one abstention.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF IDAHO'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Hall-Martin presented the details of Idaho's SARA renewal application. Idaho has 14 total participating institutions including eight public, five private not-for-profit, and one for-profit, with one new institution added since its last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Idaho's SARA institutions enrolled 15,371 distance education students through SARA, and 10,746 students located in Idaho were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. Hall-Martin reported that as a part of the renewal process, W-SARA staff reviewed Idaho's compliance with SARA policy over the course of the renewal period and made a recommendation to the RSC to approve the renewal based on the following information:

- ▶ During the renewal period, Idaho received no SARA-qualifying complaints, had no institutions undergo a change of ownership or home state, no institutions on heightened cash monitoring, and no institutions denied renewal.
- ▶ One institution, North Idaho College, is on provisional status because the institution is on show cause status with its accreditor related to governance issues. This is its second year on provisional status for this issue.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Idaho to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC has unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Rick Aman MOVED TO APPROVE Idaho's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Millner SECONDED the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed to approve Idaho's SARA renewal for an additional two years with one abstention.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF NEVADA'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Hall-Martin presented the details of Nevada's state renewal application. Nevada has 10 total participating institutions including seven public, one private not-for-profit, and two for-profit institutions, with one new institution added since its last renewal. According to the most recent data available (Fall 2022), Nevada's SARA institutions enrolled 789 distance education students through SARA, and 2,980 students located in Nevada were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories. Hall-Martin reported that as a part of the renewal process, W-SARA staff reviewed Nevada's compliance with SARA policy over the course of the renewal period and made a recommendation to the RSC to approve the renewal based on the following information:

- ▶ During the renewal period, Nevada received no SARA-qualifying complaints, saw no institutions on heightened cash monitoring or provisional status, and had no institutions undergo a change of home

state or denied renewal.

- ▶ One institution is undergoing a change of ownership per SARA policy due to the sudden passing of the sole owner. The SPE is working closely with the institution, the state regulator, and the institution's accreditor through the ongoing process.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Nevada to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC has unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Dale Erquiaga MOVED TO APPROVE Nevada's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Eliptico SECONDED the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed to approve Nevada's SARA renewal for an additional two years with one abstention.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF WASHINGTON'S SARA RENEWAL APPLICATION

Hall-Martin presented the details of Washington's SARA renewal application. Washington state has 46 total participating institutions including 29 public, 14 private not-for-profit, and three for-profit institutions, with one new institution added since its last renewal. According to the most recent SARA data available (Fall 2022), Washington's SARA institutions enrolled 4,908 distance education students through SARA, and 53,941 students located in Washington state were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories.

- ▶ During the renewal period, Washington state received no SARA-qualifying complaints. No institutions are on heightened cash monitoring or provisional status, none have undergone a change of ownership, and none were denied renewal.
- ▶ One institution, as noted when presenting Alaska's renewal information, underwent a change of home state and moved from Washington state to Alaska.
- ▶ W-SARA staff has found Washington to be fully compliant with SARA policy, and the RSC has unanimously recommended the state for renewal.

Commissioner Shireman MOVED TO APPROVE Washington's SARA renewal application, and Commissioner Ben Cannon SECONDED the motion.

There was no discussion. The motion passed to approve Washington's SARA renewal for an additional two years with one abstention.

Discussion Item

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM SUPPORT FEES FOR THE AY 2025-26 AND 2026-27 BIENNIUM

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos gave a presentation about the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) to provide context for the upcoming Action Item at the May 2024 Commission Meeting. The Commission sets the PSEP support fees for a biennium, or every two years. The PSEP support fee refers to the amount appropriated by the student's home state/territory to reduce their tuition for their

professional healthcare education. Burgman Gallegos reviewed the degree fields that are supported by each state, and noted that at the May 2024 Commission Meeting a support fee adjustment of 4.35% will be recommended based on the Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA). Staff have met with the Programs and Services Committee and the certifying officers to preview the PSEP fee increase. During the meetings, WICHE staff were told that the proposed increase was reasonable. It was recommended that the state workforce data should be reviewed to look for opportunities for programming in PSEP.

During the committee member discussion, it was noted how important the PSEP program was for recruitment and financial support for students. The Commission did not express concerns with the proposed increase.

Discussion Item

UPDATE ON WICHE'S BUDGET

President Demarée Michelau reported on the budget. The current budget had not changed much since its last presentation to the committee in February 2024 with several months to go until the close of FY 2024. She had no concerns with the General Fund or Non-General Fund; and indicated that the Commission Meeting agenda book would include the March 2024 actuals. The FY 2025 budgets by units were still in progress and would be presented at the May 2024 Commission Meeting. She has been meeting with the vice presidents of the WICHE units and noted that she would not present a deficit budget for FY 2025.

There were no budget questions for President Michelau.

Discussion Item

WICHE POSITION ON STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONSHIP

President Michelau gave additional information about the developing language to be presented as a discussion item during the Policy Analysis and Research Committee meeting at the May 2024 Commission Meeting. WICHE has historically and deliberately developed parsimonious federal positions on a relatively limited number of topics. Such positions are based on higher-level principles and designed to be fairly general so that staff can appropriately engage in complex issues and ideas. The positions are not intended to be tailored to specific legislation or regulations.

During the discussion, it was noted that it was important to address the issues in the language but not be too constrictive. It was also acknowledged that language development was needed to fully clarify the point of the position.

Other Business

Vice Chair Damron asked for other business, and there was none.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m. MDT.

ACTION ITEM

Review of the WICHE President's Performance in FY 2024 and Adoption of the FY 2025 Performance Objectives

Background

The WICHE Commission has three primary responsibilities: overseeing the fiduciary responsibility for the organization, providing strategic direction, and evaluating the WICHE President. As part of the third responsibility, the Executive Committee, led by the WICHE Chair, is expected annually to evaluate the President's performance. The purposes of the annual evaluation are threefold: to determine the extent to which the President has fulfilled the responsibilities of her position over the previous year and whether she should be retained; to assist the President in understanding what portions of the job have been accomplished well and what needs to be improved upon; and to help the Commission consider the President's remuneration for the coming year.

Evaluation of the WICHE President's Performance

According to the Commission policy established in May 2022, the annual performance review of the President is informed by the President's self-evaluation and the Commission's evaluation of the President. Once per year, at the May Commission meeting during the closed portion of the Executive Committee meeting, the Chair of the Commission, in concert with the Commission officers, presents (either in writing or verbally) an evaluation of the President's performance judged against the objectives that have been established and approved by the Commission at the previous May Commission meeting. Typically, they will invite input from all commissioners sitting in the closed Executive Committee meeting. The exception is during those years when the Commission chooses to secure an external consultant to review the President's performance, as was done this year. The following pages reflect four items:

1. The WICHE President's self-evaluation summary statement
2. The FY 2024 performance objectives for the WICHE President approved by the WICHE Executive Committee on May 8, 2023, and the status that briefly describes the extent to which those goals have been met
3. The summary of regional engagement
4. The proposed FY 2025 performance goals and objectives for the WICHE President

Action Requested

The following actions are requested:

- ▶ Determine the extent to which the President has fulfilled the responsibilities of her position over the previous year
- ▶ Assist the President in understanding what portions of the job have been accomplished well and what needs to be improved upon
- ▶ Determine the President's remuneration for the coming year
- ▶ Approve the FY 2025 performance goals and objectives for the WICHE President

WICHE President Demarée Michelau – FY 2024 Self-Evaluation

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The following pages outline my FY 2024 performance goals and objectives and the status of whether those goals have been met. While the next few pages are intended to provide a high-level description of my accomplishments over the past year, this summary statement provides additional reflections and context. For FY 2024, the WICHE Commission approved my annual goals and objectives that exist within four strategic priority areas:

1. Regional Engagement
2. Programmatic Relevance
3. Policy and Research Support
4. Internal Operations

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with commissioners and other partners in the WICHE region is critical to succeeding in my position and to WICHE's success generally. Through visits, phone and video calls, testimony, presentations, etc., I develop and strengthen relationships, learn about unique assets and challenges of the different states and Pacific Island jurisdictions, and identify ways WICHE can best serve the region. In the current legislative environment in which most legislative bodies are experiencing high turnover, it is especially important for WICHE to ensure that staff remain in tune to the needs of the West and to maintain the productive partnerships with the states that have been part of the higher education fabric of the West for decades.

I am pleased to share that as of December 2023, all eligible Pacific jurisdictions — American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau — now participate in the shared WICHE membership. We have submitted a request to the U.S. Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs to cover the cost of the dues through June 2025.

This past year, I have focused on my own leadership development in new and different ways. I am actively involved with a peer group of non-higher education CEOs who share strategies for leading medium to large nonprofit organizations. At the recommendation of Leah Bornstein, president of Aims Community College and former WICHE Commissioner, I joined the Alliance for Innovation & Transformation (AFIT), an association of innovative higher education CEOs, primarily leaders of two-year institutions, who are committed to transforming their organizations in the face of unprecedented challenges and change. And finally, I am working with an executive coach to think more deliberately about my leadership capabilities and target areas for improvement. Together, these leadership development efforts will enhance my ability to engage regionally and, when appropriate, nationally as a thought partner and leader.

PROGRAMMATIC RELEVANCE

WICHE's suite of programs and services are central to the value we provide Western states and the Pacific jurisdictions. To ensure that the programs stay relevant in a rapidly changing environment, we must continuously examine them for ways to improve their offerings and functionality. This past year, WICHE engaged the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) in a comprehensive assessment of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) to review the available fields and identify areas for improvement. Staff and the Commission will consider the recommendations that emerged from this work over the next several months and implement appropriate strategies for the next phase of PSEP.

In addition, other WICHE offerings, such as the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), and the joint purchasing programs are areas that are underutilized in some areas, especially in the Pacific. The vice president for programs and services and I are working to increase the opportunities for student access and institutional savings in the region.

A number of grants and contracts will be coming to a close in the next year or two. During the first two quarters of 2024, I have been focused on laying the groundwork with philanthropic partners to ensure continuity in impactful initiatives and partnerships. I will continue this work into FY 2025.

POLICY AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

Policy and research support has long been an area of focus for WICHE, as reflected in the great work of the Policy Analysis and Research unit, WCET, and the Behavioral Health Program. One of my priorities is to continue WICHE's leadership in policy and research, and I am pleased to share that this year was marked by impactful work in the states (e.g., healthcare workforce, demographics, state authorization and reciprocity, distance education, behavioral health on campus) as well as leadership nationally. Notably, we will release WICHE's seminal work, *Knocking at the College Door*, about projections of high school graduates, this coming December.

Our commitment to aligning postsecondary education to workforce spans both programmatic relevance and policy and research support, and it is demonstrated through our work tackling healthcare workforce shortages and mental health workforce needs through the Psychology Internship Consortia across the West.

INTERNAL OPERATIONS

This past year, WICHE experienced the usual amount of turnover, and we continue to attract diverse and highly qualified candidate pools while retaining a talented staff. We implemented a paid leave program that will help the organization remain competitive in the workplace and meaningfully support the staff. I am pleased to share that WICHE is in a solid financial position and received a clean audit for FY 2023. Our talented IT staff supports an exceptionally strong infrastructure, and we maintain a clear focus on cybersecurity. We have been strengthening our standard operating procedures across the board, including clarifying onboarding processes, and ensuring alignment between human resources and accounting. The years since the pandemic have created some challenges around expectations with remote work, but overall, WICHE staff have consistently, and not surprisingly, demonstrated their professionalism and commitment to their work.

Overall, I am proud of WICHE’s accomplishments this past year and owe a great deal of gratitude to the Commission, staff, and many partners across the region. The commitment that I see to the students, families, and communities in the West is remarkable, and it is an honor to serve as WICHE’s president.

WICHE President Demarée Michelau Self-Evaluation – FY 2024 Performance Objectives

The WICHE Chair approved the following FY 2024 performance objectives for the WICHE President after incorporating recommendations from the Executive Committee. The recommendations from the Executive Committee were to emphasize strategic vision and reduce the number of goals and objectives.

VISION: Position WICHE for long-term success through thought leadership, trusted and high-quality work, and meaningful partnerships.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 1: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT	
Goal: Ensure that WICHE is recognized as a trusted partner of WICHE members	
Annual Goals and Objectives	Status of Goals Met
1. Engage meaningfully with the commissioners and other key stakeholders to ensure a solid understanding of current challenges facing the region and anticipate what the West may face in years to come.	Accomplished. Maintained strong relationships with states and Pacific Island members in the region. As of December 2023, all eligible Pacific Island jurisdictions are now members of WICHE. In addition, staff convened regular meetings with chief academic officers in state and system offices, and key stakeholders focused on workforce shortages in the West.
2. Engage in official visits or WICHE-relevant occasions in at least six WICHE states, territories, and freely associated states.	Accomplished. Regional engagement continues to be my primary focus. See regional engagement summary.
3. Participate in and contribute to national and regional conversations in higher education.	Accomplished. With the support of W-SARA staff, I continued to represent the West and regional interests in conversations pertaining to the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). I participated in the SHEEO annual meeting and policy conference, as well as other meetings. After two years, a book edited by former WICHE Commissioner James Johnsen (AK) and published through Johns Hopkins University Press included a chapter I wrote on collaboration in higher education.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: PROGRAMMATIC RELEVANCE

Goal: Ensure that WICHE programs and services are relevant and innovative

Annual Goals and Objectives

Status of Goals Met

1. In collaboration with staff, examine the current suite of programs and services to make improvements and identify new strategies for serving the region.

Partially Accomplished. WICHE engaged NCHEMS in an assessment of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) and gained valuable insights into how it can be better utilized as a workforce development tool in the West. With guidance from the Commission and other key partners, the recommendations will be implemented over the next year. I have begun engaging with the Programs and Services unit to examine how we can enhance the value of the Western Academic Leadership Forum and the Western Alliance for Community College Academic Leaders, as well as encourage better utilization of the joint purchasing opportunities available to WICHE through the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

2. Engage with at least three philanthropic partners as part of the broader strategy to ensure stability in external financial support.

Accomplished. Met with Lumina Foundation, ECMC Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Jed Foundation, and the College Board to discuss mutual priorities and opportunities for funding.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: POLICY AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

Goal: Provide high-quality policy guidance, research, and technical assistance to constituents

Annual Goals and Objectives

Status of Goals Met

1. Further develop and sustain technical assistance capacity to support specific state and interstate needs for expertise on higher education and behavioral health policy issues.

Accomplished. The Policy Analysis and Research unit is continuing to partner with the Wyoming Community College Commission to provide project management for the Wyoming Innovation Partnership, and the Behavioral Health Program continues to demonstrate technical assistance expertise through its fidelity reviews and other initiatives

2. Ensure the successful development, implementation, management, and oversight of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) for the WICHE region.

Accomplished. The W-SARA director, W-SARA project manager, vice president for policy analysis and research, and I worked with the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) to effectively implement SARA and preserve the state and territorial voice in the agreement. We successfully engaged in the policy modification process during the first year and are now in the second year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Goal: Successfully administer the day-to-day WICHE operations

Annual Goals and Objectives	Status of Goals Met
1. Maintain a balanced budget for FY 2024 and find a way within a balanced budget to provide modest merit-based salary increases to staff.	Accomplished. The FY 2024 revenues exceeded expenditures, and while staying within a balanced budget, the Commission approved a 4% performance-based increase to staff who performed at exceptionally high levels over the past year.
2. Maintain the morale of WICHE staff to achieve the highest possible level of productivity and professionalism.	Partially Accomplished. Continued to engage in a servant leadership role to promote a team-oriented approach to WICHE's work. The President's Office hosted numerous staff events throughout the year to support morale and promote cooperation among the staff. I continued convening monthly all-staff meetings, during which we recognized staff accomplishments, provided updates, and highlighted initiatives.
3. Implement continuous improvement principles to ensure our internal operations meet the needs of a complex organization.	Partially Accomplished. Through various internal committees, such as the Senior Leadership Team, Administrative Policy Advisory Committee (APAC), HR/Accounting Alignment Team, and the Onboarding Team, we work to identify areas of improvement and solutions. This collaborative approach works well within the organization's culture and results in overall smoother internal operations.
4. Prepare for and complete the annual financial audit resulting in "no material" findings.	Accomplished. Audit completed with "no material" findings.

WICHE President Demarée Michelau Self-Evaluation – FY 2025 Goals and Objectives

The following performance objectives for the WICHE President are proposed for FY 2025. They are intended to build upon the foundation of the president's goals, objectives, and performance from FY 2024.

VISION: Position WICHE for long-term success through thought leadership, trusted and high-quality work, and meaningful partnerships.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 1: REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Ensure that WICHE is recognized as a trusted partner of the WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions

Objectives

- 1. Engage meaningfully with the commissioners and other key stakeholders to understand and respond to the region's needs and anticipate what the West may face in years to come.
- 2. Engage in official visits or WICHE-relevant occasions in at least six WICHE states, territories, and freely associated states.
- 3. Participate in and contribute to national and regional conversations in higher education.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 2: PROGRAMMATIC RELEVANCE

Goal: Ensure that WICHE programs and services are relevant, forward-thinking, and meet the needs of the West

Objectives

- 1. In collaboration with staff, examine the current suite of programs and services to make improvements and identify new strategies for serving the region.
- 2. Engage with at least three philanthropic partners as part of the broader strategy to ensure stability in external financial support.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: POLICY AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

Goal: Provide high-quality policy guidance, research, and technical assistance to WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions

Objectives

- 1. Further develop and sustain technical assistance capacity to support specific state and interstate needs for expertise on higher education and behavioral health policy issues.
- 2. Ensure the successful development, implementation, management, and oversight of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) for the WICHE region.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Goal: Successfully administer the day-to-day WICHE operations

Objectives

1. Maintain a balanced budget for FY 2025 and find a way within a balanced budget to provide modest merit-based salary increases to staff.
2. Maintain the morale of WICHE staff to achieve the highest possible level of productivity and professionalism.
3. Implement continuous improvement principles to ensure our internal operations meet the needs of a complex organization.
4. Prepare for and complete the annual financial audit resulting in “no material” findings.

President’s Regional Engagement – FY 2024

2023

JULY

18-20 SHEEO Annual Meeting **Portland, OR**

AUGUST

8 Lunch with Commissioner Jim Chavez (CO) **Denver, CO**
7-8 SHEEO Higher Education Policy Conference **Denver, CO**
18 WICHE’s 70th Anniversary Celebration **Boulder, CO**
28-29 NC-SARA Board Meeting **Chicago, IL**

SEPTEMBER

1 Lunch with Former Colorado Commissioner David Skaggs **Niwot, CO**
11-13 Arizona State Visit & Legislative Advisory Committee **Phoenix, AZ**
22 Together with Veterans Summit **Westminster, CO**
25-27 DC Outreach – SARA, Pew Charitable Trusts, and other Meetings **Washington, D.C.**

OCTOBER

2 Meeting with Project ECHO University of New Mexico **Albuquerque, NM**
3 Behavioral Health Summit **Denver, CO**
11-12 Colorado Mountain College LIFT Meeting **Aspen, CO**
18-19 Northern Arizona University Site Visit **Flagstaff, AZ**
23-25 NC-SARA Board Meeting **New Orleans, LA**

NOVEMBER

8-10 WICHE Commission Meeting **Riverside, CA**

DECEMBER

3-10 Pacific Behavioral Health Coordinating Council Meeting and Other Outreach **CNMI, Guam, Honolulu, HI**

2024

JANUARY

4-5 Officers' Retreat **Denver, CO**
10 Arizona Senate Committee on Education Hearing **Phoenix, AZ**
30 Meeting with Executive Director Ben Mortiz (Wyoming Community College Commission) **Nederland, CO**
21-23 South Dakota State Visit **Pierre, SD**

FEBRUARY

21-23 Peer Network and DC Outreach – SAMHSA, HRSA, and Jed Foundation **Washington, D.C.**

MARCH

22 Lunch with Commissioner Jim Chavez (CO) **Denver, CO**

APRIL

4 Western Academic Leadership Forum **Honolulu, HI**
7-14 WICHE Officers' Trip to the Pacific **CNMI, Guam, Palau**
17 Presentation to Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education **Virtual**

MAY

1-3 NC-SARA Board Meeting **Washington, D.C.**
5-7 WICHE Commission Meeting **Las Vegas, NV**
20-21 Compact Presidents' Philanthropic Outreach **New York, NY**
22-23 SARA Regional Steering Committee and State Portal Entity Meeting **Westminster, CO**

WELCOME

and Opening Remarks

Monday, May 6, 2024
9:15 – 9:30 a.m.
Marquis Ballroom

WELCOME

Monday

May 6, 2024

**9:15 –
9:30 a.m.**

*Marquis
Ballroom*

Agenda

Opening Remarks

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

Land Acknowledgement

Commissioner Fred Lokken (NV)

Introduction of New Commissioners, Staff, and Guests

NEW COMMISSIONERS



Maryrose Beasley (MT)

Dr. Maryrose Beasley is a rural, mixed animal practice veterinarian in Roundup, Montana. She grew up on a dairy farm in Little Falls, Minnesota, and moved to Montana in 1975. In Helena, Montana, she worked full-time as a telephone operator and later as an installer/technician for US West Communications while earning her bachelor's degree in accounting, business finance, and a minor in chemistry from Carroll College. Shortly after graduation, she left the phone company to become a legislative auditor for the state of Montana. She returned to college to earn her doctorate in veterinary medicine in 2000 from Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. Helping veterinarian students gain on-the-job experience has been her passion for years.

Dr. Beasley and her daughter operate a small black Angus and Quarter Horse ranch outside Roundup, Montana, where she enjoys spending time with her family.



Llew Jones (MT)

Llew Jones was born in 1962 and raised on a sheep ranch before attending Conrad High School in Conrad, Montana. He earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural business and a master's degree in applied economics from Montana State University. Jones has been married for over four decades to his wife, Carole, and the couple has four successful children. His political career began in 2004 when he was elected to the Montana State Legislature where he has served for 20 years. Currently the House Appropriations Committee chairman, Jones has been instrumental in shaping Montana's education budget and financial policies. He previously chaired the influential Senate Finance and Claims Committee for four years. Jones has spearheaded major legislative initiatives in education, energy, and agriculture over the past decade while helping establish Montana's rainy-day and modern-fire funds. His peers selected him for an extensive study of the world's top education systems, demonstrating his commitment to evidence-based policies. Alongside his political work, Jones and his wife own successful business ventures, including farm, ranch, and retail operations across 11 Montana communities.



Nathan Lukkes (SD)

Nathan Lukkes is the executive director and CEO of the South Dakota Board of Regents. Lukkes has been a part of the Board of Regents since 2014, beginning as the system assistant vice president for research and economic development and later becoming chief of staff and general counsel. Prior to working for the Board of Regents, Lukkes served as the deputy commissioner of the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development. He also served in the South Dakota Army National Guard for 10 years, deploying to Afghanistan in 2010-11 to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

Lukkes obtained his undergraduate degree and juris doctorate from the University of South Dakota. He resides with his wife, Kate, and daughters Betty and Sophie in Pierre, South Dakota, where he enjoys spending time with family, hunting, and the outdoors. Lukkes also volunteers for Junior Achievement of South Dakota, teaching ethics and business to local youth and serves on the local Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation board.



Geoffrey Landward (UT)

Geoffrey Landward was appointed Utah's Commissioner of Higher Education in March 2024 after serving as interim commissioner since September 2023. He previously served as deputy commissioner and secretary to the Utah Board of Higher Education. In addition to over a decade of public policy work, Landward has extensive executive leadership experience and 20 years of legal expertise in administrative law, education law, and employment law. He is a graduate of the Brigham Young University (BYU) J. Reuben Clark Law School. Landward also engages in freelance writing and editing. He recently started using only one space after periods, which has had astonishingly little impact on his life. He has four children, including two who are applying to college this year, and three cats who mistakenly believe they can pay rent with dead mice and unending looks of disdain.

PLENARY SESSION I

Economic Diversification in the West

Monday, May 6, 2024
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Marquis Ballroom

PLENARY SESSION I

Monday

May 6, 2024

9:30 –
10:30 a.m.

*Marquis
Ballroom*

Economic Diversification in the West

Communities throughout the West are seeking to strike a healthy balance between exploring ways to diversify their local economies for future growth while honoring the legacy industries that sustained them in the past. Our host state of Nevada, and specifically the City of Las Vegas, has historically relied on gaming and hospitality as primary sources of revenue. Yet, the city has become a model of economic transformation by embracing innovative and deliberate strategies to attract new business, create high-quality jobs, and grow in sustainable ways. Tina Quigley, the first woman to lead the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance, will share both the challenges and triumphs of building a globally competitive community.

FACILITATOR

Comissioner Christopher Cabaldon (CA)

SPEAKER

Tina Quigley, President and CEO, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION



Facilitator, Christopher Cabaldon (CA)

Christopher Cabaldon is a partner at Capitol Impact LLC, and a professor at Sacramento State University. His professional career in education policy in California spans more than two decades. He served as Mayor of West Sacramento from 1998 to December 2020 and was the first mayor elected directly by the city's voters after serving three terms on the city council. His local and regional leadership on school facilities, effective governance, universal preschool, research-based reform, and workforce/education alignment

have resulted in scholarly recognition and improved student outcomes. After serving as Director of the Assembly Higher Education Committee and then Chief of Staff to the Assembly Appropriations Committee chairwoman, Mr. Cabaldon served five years as Vice Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, with executive responsibility for policy, strategic initiatives, planning, technology, data systems, governmental advocacy and intersegmental relations, and public affairs.

Cabaldon's work on transportation, land use, water, air quality and climate change, housing, and economic development at the local, regional, and statewide scales has won numerous awards and it has become the model for effective regional collaborative action. He chaired the groundbreaking Blueprint for the Future land use-transportation-air quality project of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments and the development of all three of the region's pioneering transportation investment plans since 1998. He chaired the region's Partnership for Prosperity project.

Mr. Cabaldon earned his B.S. in environmental economics from UC Berkeley, where he later served on the alumni association board, and a Master of Public Policy & Administration degree from CSU Sacramento, where he received the Distinguished Alumni Award.



Speaker, Tina Quigley

Tina Quigley joined the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA) in February 2022. Her priorities for the agency include strengthening partnerships with regional economic development stakeholders and workforce training programs. Prior to the LVGEA, Tina served as CEO for the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada. She oversaw the region's public transportation, traffic management center, road construction and funding, and regional planning. During her tenure, Quigley embraced and fought for sweeping technological advances, advocated for comprehensive future planning, and built critical partnerships to position the Las Vegas Valley for ongoing and sustained economic vitality. She believes firmly in approaching regional projects with collaborative, multiagency communication, and public inclusion. Many of the RTC's successes during her tenure can be credited to this collaborative approach. Specific examples include the Transportation Resource Advisory Committee (TRAC), the Fuel Revenue Indexing (FRI) tax initiative, and the execution of the Southern Nevada Strong regional plan. Quigley began her career as a planner at Harry Reid International Airport where, over 15 years, she grew to oversee the major capital projects program. She is a licensed pilot and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Airport Planning & Development from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and is an alumnus of Harvard Business School's Program for Leadership Development. She is active on several boards, including Workforce Connections, NV GrantLab, Fulfillment Fund of Las Vegas, Desert Research Institute, and the Nevada Chapter of the International Women's Forum.

ROUNDTABLE

Discussion

Monday, May 6, 2024

10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

**Marquis 1
Roundtable 1**
(Access & Success, Value & Accountability)
The Peril and Promise of Alternative Providers and Credentials

**Marquis 2
Roundtable 2**
(Workforce & Society)
Diversifying Economies in the West

**Marquis 3
Roundtable 3**
(Access & Success, Workforce & Society, Innovation)
Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Monday

May 6, 2024

Session 1

10:45 –

11:45 a.m.

Session 2

1:00 –

2:00 p.m.

Roundtable 1 (Access & Success, Value & Accountability) – The Peril and Promise of Alternative Providers and Credentials

► *Marquis 1*

Traditional and alternative providers offer new and different types of credentials in an increasingly complex marketplace. Depending on the state and Pacific Island jurisdiction, these new credentials are often aimed at high-need workforce areas, but they may operate outside of higher education’s traditional regulatory “triad” of state oversight, federal laws and regulations, and accreditation. While this allows for flexibility and innovation, it can also expose students to risks like costly/unsubsidized tuition, wide-ranging academic quality, poor workforce outcomes, and unplanned provider closures. Alternatively, there may be times when a state may wish to invest in students participating in these programs. This roundtable discussion aims to identify policy and practice gaps in this regulatory gray area and find solutions that balance the need for consumer protection, flexibility, and promoting innovative education models.

FACILITATORS

Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations

Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research

Roundtable 2 (Workforce & Society) – Diversifying Economies in the West

► *Marquis 2*

For decades, many Western states and Pacific Island jurisdictions have relied on economies with limited income sources such as extraction, oil and gas, tourism, and gaming. These types of economies tend to be volatile and vulnerable to external shocks, leading state and Pacific Island jurisdiction to consider strategies for diversifying their economies. Postsecondary education plays a crucial role in this diversification by making communities more attractive to businesses looking to expand or relocate, fostering an environment for entrepreneurship, and supporting people’s ability to adapt to changing labor markets. For example, the Wyoming Innovation Partnership is a major statewide effort that aims to align education and workforce development to drive and diversify the state’s economy. This roundtable discussion is an opportunity to learn about and share various state and local strategies that intentionally connect postsecondary education and workforce development.

FACILITATORS

Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research
Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, Policy Analysis and Research

Roundtable 3 (Access & Success, Workforce & Society, Innovation) – Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy

► Marquis 3

Today's economy is driven by rapid advancements in technology, including artificial intelligence and automation. Jobs that exist today may not exist tomorrow, while simultaneously colleges and universities are preparing students for unknown jobs in the future. In some fields, technology is advancing faster than colleges and universities can respond — some students may even learn skills and knowledge that become obsolete by the time they graduate. This roundtable discussion is an opportunity to brainstorm strategies that postsecondary education should consider ensuring its continued relevance and value for individuals and society.

FACILITATOR

Landon Pirius, President, Red Rocks Community College

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

ROUNDTABLE 1



Facilitator, Cheryl Dowd

Cheryl Dowd is the senior director of the State Authorization Network (SAN) and WCET Policy Innovations and serves as a cyber fellow for WICHE. Dowd directs the activities and research to manage state and federal regulatory compliance requirements for the out-of-state activities of SAN member institutions. As a WICHE cyber fellow, Dowd is cultivating relationships with national education and security agencies to develop institutional data protection, privacy resources, and training opportunities to share with the WICHE community. Dowd earned a bachelor's degree in political science from James Madison University, a master's degree in criminal justice from Bowling Green State University, and a juris doctor degree from the University of Richmond.



Facilitator, Patrick Lane

Patrick Lane is the vice president of WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit. He previously was its director of data initiatives, a role that included managing the Multistate Longitudinal Data Exchange, which seeks to improve linkages between state data systems to provide better information to students and their families while also improving education, workforce, and economic development policy. He also coordinated WICHE's Adult College Completion Network and worked extensively on the *Non-Traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners* project; both focused on identifying policy and practice solutions to help adults with prior college credit return to postsecondary education to complete their degrees. Lane also coordinated WICHE's College Access Regional Network, which focused on increasing the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. He came to WICHE after spending several years working in education policy in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). Lane received a master's degree from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University in 2007 and completed a doctorate in public administration from the University of Colorado Denver in 2015.

ROUNDTABLE 2



Facilitator, Colleen Falkenstern

Colleen Falkenstern serves as a senior research analyst in WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit. In her role, she supports the development of WICHE's annual data resources *Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West*, *Benchmarks* (of access and success), and *Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West*. She also provides analytical support for WICHE's quadrennial projections of high school graduates, *Knocking at the College Door*. She received a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from the University of South Carolina-Columbia and a master's degree in higher education from the University of Denver.



Facilitator, Christina Sedney

Christina Sedney is the director of policy and strategic initiatives in WICHE's Policy Analysis and Research unit, where she works on a variety of topics, including the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA), approaches to serving underrepresented student populations, higher education governance issues, and policy solutions for adult learners. Prior to WICHE, Sedney worked for the international nonprofit, Teach For All, and completed a fellowship with the Kenneth Rainin Foundation. She also held multiple roles with the AmeriCorps program, City Year, ranging from a classroom-based corps member to a project manager on the public policy team. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia and a master's degree in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley.

ROUNDTABLE 3



Facilitator, Landon Pirius

Landon Pirius is the president at Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) in Colorado, which is a comprehensive community college offering certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, and a master's degree. Prior to RRCC, Pirius was the vice chancellor for academic and student affairs for the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) where he oversaw academic affairs, student affairs, online education, workforce development, and equity and inclusion. Pirius also served as vice president for academic and student affairs at North Hennepin Community College in Minnesota, as well as in a variety of leadership roles at Inver Hills Community College, Minnesota State University, Mankato, and Walden University. Pirius completed a bachelor's degree in Russian studies and environmental studies from Gustavus Adolphus College, as well as both a master's degree and doctorate in educational policy and administration from the University of Minnesota.

PLENARY SESSION II

The College Athletics Arms Race:
Impacts and Implications for the West

Monday, May 6, 2024
2:15 – 3:30 p.m.
Marquis Ballroom

PLENARY SESSION II

Monday

May 6, 2024

**2:15 –
3:30 p.m.**

*Marquis
Ballroom*

The College Athletics Arms Race: Impacts and Implications for the West

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) “name, image, and likeness” rule, known as NIL, allows college athletes to make money from sponsorships, public appearances, advertisements, etc., which previously was prohibited. NIL, combined with the transfer portal no longer requiring athletes to sit out of competition for one year after transferring, has created what some are referring to as the “Wild West” of college athletics. This new landscape where some student-athletes can earn tens of thousands of dollars, sometimes from NIL collectives that are structurally independent of a college or university, is creating uncertainty at the region’s postsecondary institutions. Questions from how these changes will affect degree completion of student-athletes to what the impacts on Title IX and sports other than football and basketball, to how they might affect institutional budgets, and what the appropriate role of state policy, are top of mind as the U.S. Congress simultaneously wrestles with the appropriate federal role. Expert panelists will dive into these key questions and provide a forum for commissioners to engage in a discussion about impacts and implications for the West.

FACILITATOR

David Lassner, President, University of Hawai‘i

PANELISTS

Seth Bodnar, President, University of Montana

Gloria Nevarez, Commissioner, Mountain West Conference

Keith E. Whitfield, President, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION



Facilitator, David Lassner (HI)

David Lassner has served for more than 10 years as the 15th president of the University of Hawai'i (UH), where he leads the 10-campus UH system, the state's sole provider of public postsecondary education, and Hawai'i's flagship research university, UH Mānoa.

Lassner has an ongoing focus on helping more Hawai'i residents, particularly those who have historically been left behind, earn college degrees and credentials with a focus on critical areas of workforce shortage such as in education, health care, technology, energy, and the skilled trades. He is committed to strengthen the state's economy by leveraging UH research and innovation to create and fill more high-quality jobs locally. Lassner is advancing UH's commitment to become a model Indigenous-centered university that cares for Hawai'i, Native Hawaiians and all of Hawai'i's people as it weaves together modern science and education with the traditional Indigenous wisdom, values and practices that made the Hawaiian islands a model of self-contained sustainability before western contact.

Under Lassner's leadership, metrics of student success have shown steady improvement across the UH System and enrollment has remained strong. A restructuring of the relationship with UH has led to record philanthropic investment. A focus on research that matters to and is grounded in Hawai'i has led to record extramural funding. And strong management practices have ensured financial stability through recessions and a pandemic.

Lassner began working at UH in entry-level roles in information technology (IT) in 1977, eventually becoming UH's first chief information officer and then its first vice president for IT. He was appointed interim president in September 2013, and the "interim" was removed in June 2014. Lassner is also a member of the university's cooperating graduate faculty and has taught both online and in-person at UH Mānoa in computer science, communications, business, and education.

Lassner is a current commissioner and former chair of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), as well as a member of the Board of Governors of the East-West Center. He serves on the National Science Foundation (NSF) Advisory Committee on Cyberinfrastructure and on the boards of Internet2, the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR), the Maui Economic Development Board (MEDB), the 'Iole Stewardship Center, and the Blood Bank of Hawai'i. He serves on the boards of the Mountain West and Big West intercollegiate athletic conferences and is the current Big West Chair.

In prior positions, Lassner played an active leadership role in a variety of local, national, and international information and communications technology organizations, and has been recognized numerous times for his service and leadership. He chaired Hawai'i's Broadband Task Force and served on the boards of Hawai'i's High Technology Development Corporation and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) affiliate. Lassner chaired the boards of the Pacific Telecommunications Council (PTC) and EDUCAUSE and was a founding steering committee member and past-chair of WICHE's Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET).

An active principal investigator for more than 25 years, Lassner led Hawai'i's major statewide project funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce that interconnected all public schools, libraries, and campuses on six islands with fiber optics, and he has had NSF support for more than 25 years focused on research and

education networking and cyberinfrastructure in Hawai'i and the Pacific. He is principal investigator for the Maui High Performance Computing Center and for the Pacific Disaster Center, major long-term U.S. Department of Defense programs based on Maui. In all, Lassner has served as principal investigator for more than \$540 million of extramural funding.

Lassner earned a bachelor's degree in economics summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa followed by a master's degree in computer science while supported by a university fellowship at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). He earned his doctorate degree in communication and information sciences at the University of Hawai'i.



Panelist, Seth Bodnar

Seth Bodnar serves as the 19th president of the University of Montana (UM), where his primary objective can be captured by two words: inclusive prosperity. During his tenure, UM has significantly improved rates of student success, achieved record research growth and received designation as an R1 research university, created innovative workforce training programs through public-private partnerships with employers across the state, launched UM's largest infrastructure renewal ever, and completed the most successful fundraising campaign in campus history.

Before joining UM, Bodnar had a distinguished military and business career. He was a senior executive at the General Electric Company, where he served as GE Transportation's first chief digital officer. As a U.S. Army Ranger and Green Beret, he served on multiple overseas deployments as part of the 101st Airborne Division and the U.S. Army's First Special Forces Group. He later taught as a faculty member at West Point.

Bodnar graduated first in his class from West Point and earned two master's degrees from the University of Oxford, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar. He and his wife, Chelsea, have three children.



Panelist, Gloria Nevarez

A 26-year veteran of intercollegiate athletics, Gloria Nevarez is in her second year at the helm of the Mountain West (MW) Conference. In addition to representing the MW as a member of the College Football Playoff's Management Committee, she sits on the board of directors for both USA Basketball and Women Leaders in Sports, serving the latter as president-elect for 2023-24.

After teaching sports law for five years at the University of San Francisco's sport management master's program, Nevarez embarked on her current career in athletics administration, holding numerous roles at both the university and conference levels with previous stops at San José State University, the University of California, the University of Oklahoma, the Pac-12 Conference, and the West Coast Conference.

Nevarez graduated cum laude from the University of Massachusetts, where she was a four-year scholarship athlete and letter-winner in basketball, and she received her juris doctorate from the University of California.



Panelist, Keith E. Whitfield

Keith E. Whitfield is an experienced university administrator and prolific scholar in the fields of psychology, health, and aging. Whitfield joined the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (UNLV) as president in August 2020 from Wayne State University in Michigan after serving there as provost, senior vice president of academic affairs, and professor of psychology. He previously served as vice provost for academic affairs at Duke University, where he was also a professor in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience and a co-director of

the Center on Biobehavioral and Social Aspects of Health Disparities.

A student success-focused leader, Whitfield is guiding UNLV forward on its path to becoming a top public urban research university through focused growth in undergraduate and graduate student success, economic diversification, community engagement, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. He has brought energy and innovation to a vibrant university through things like an interdisciplinary approach to faculty hiring and research and being the first-ever “digital president” to connect with and meet the needs of students.

Whitfield earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the College of Santa Fe, a master’s degree in psychology and a doctorate in lifespan developmental psychology from Texas Tech University, and completed postdoctoral training in quantitative genetics from the University of Colorado Boulder.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Meeting

Tuesday, May 7, 2024
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
Marquis 1

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday

May 7, 2024

8:30 –
9:45 a.m.

Marquis 1

Committee Members

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair
Diana VanderWoude (SD), Committee Vice Chair
Sean Parnell (AK)
Todd Haynie (AZ)
Ellen Junn (CA)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Maryrose Beasley (MT)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Danita Bye (ND)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Geoffrey Landward (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Agenda

PRESIDING

Commissioner Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair



STAFF

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director, Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Kate Springsteen, Assistant Director, Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Olivia Tufo, Manager, Community Engagement and Development, Programs and Services

GUESTS

WICHE Certifying Officers

Action Item

- | | | |
|---|--|-------------|
|  ACTION ITEM | Approval of November 9, 2023, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes | 6-3 |
|  ACTION ITEM | Approval of March 5, 2024, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes | 6-10 |



**Approval of the Professional Student Exchange
Program Support Fees for the AY 2025-26 and
AY 2026-27 Biennium**

6-15



**Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to
Approve the FY 2025 Workplan Section Pertaining to
the Programs and Services Unit**

6-48

Information Items

Student Access Programs Update

Margo Colalancia

Academic Partnerships and Update

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos

Cost-savings Initiatives Update

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the November 9, 2023, Programs and Services Committee Minutes

Committee Members Present

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair
Diana VanderWoude (SD), Committee Vice Chair
Todd Haynie (AZ)
Ellen Junn (CA)
Matt Freeman (ID)
Laurie Bishop (MT)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Danita Bye (ND)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam) *proxy for Rodney Jacob*
John Carmichael (WA)
Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Sean Parnell (AK)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)
David Woolstenhulme (UT)

Staff Present

Demarée Michelau, President, WICHE
Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Kay Hulstrom, Associate Director of Operations and Leadership Initiatives, Programs and Services
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

Guests

Brian Prescott, President National Center of Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)
Sarah Torres Lugo, Research Associate, NCHEMS

Call to Order

Committee Chair Patricia Sullivan called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. Kay Hulstrom called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 8, 2023, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Hilda Rosselli MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes and Commissioner Ellen Junn SECONDED. The motion was approved.

Information Items

STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAM UPDATE

Margo Colalancia reported a 2.3% increase in the number of students who used the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) during the academic year (AY) 2022-23, which resulted in

approximately 1,000 additional students receiving the WUE benefit. There were 47,180 students participated in WUE in the Fall 2023 semester. Staff are still vetting the WUE participation numbers, so the final numbers may change. AY 2021-2022 WUE tuition savings were \$520 million, and 168 institutions participated.

Colalancia stated that several California community colleges have joined WUE, including Lake Tahoe Community College, Feather River College, Lassen Community College, and College of the Siskiyous. Barstow Community College will join shortly. Outside of California, Oregon State University-Cascades also joined WUE.

Colalancia said the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) experienced a 12% decrease, which is approximately 400 students. WRGP increased by 11% during AY 2022-23. The region-wide participation in WRGP is 2,877 students. The tuition savings were \$58 million, and 67 institutions participated in WRGP.

The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) participation is stable at 559 students. State support for PSEP students totaled \$14.5 million in AY 2023-24, compared to \$14.2 million in AY 2022-23. Support fees usually increase by about 2% per year. Guam has certified eight applicants for the Fall semester 2024.

Commissioner Rosselli asked about the decrease in WRGP students. Colalancia responded that Student Access Programs (SAP) staff will investigate the decline. The number of participating students for WUE and WRGP are reported once a year, in the fall.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos explained that several initiatives fall under the category of Academic Partnerships. These include the Western Academic Leadership Academy (Academy), the WICHE Institute for Leaders in the Humanities, the Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum), and the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance). Any grant-funded work is also included in this category because the partners in these groups can come together for grant opportunities to further their institutional goals.

The 2023 Academy hosted a cohort of 18 participants in July 2023 that included aspiring leaders from both the two-year and four-year sectors. The Academy is sponsored by both the Alliance and the Forum. The yearlong Academy consists of a three-day intensive program, mentoring circles with the primary faculty, and a culmination at the Forum's annual meeting the following spring.

The WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities is a new program funded by the Mellon Foundation. It is a two-year professional development program that includes an on-campus fellowship for humanities faculty aspiring to be leaders. The participants can shadow academic leaders in academic affairs. Mentorship is also provided on-campus and by an external mentor selected by WICHE. The mentors and the faculty fellows met in Boulder, Colorado, this past summer. The cohort consists of eight participants.

The Forum hosted its annual meeting in April 2023 in Tucson, Arizona. The next meeting will take place in Honolulu, Hawai'i, April 3-5, 2024, with the theme of *Bridging Place and Purpose*. There are 63 members in the Forum listed in the agenda book; a new member, the Washington Council of Presidents, has since been added, bringing the total number of Forum members to 64.

The Alliance hosted its annual meeting in October 2023 in Tacoma, Washington, with the theme of *Trailblazing a New Pathway: Challenging Assumptions about Community Colleges*. A preconference workshop was held regarding administrative holds coming out of the *No Holding Back* initiative. There were 61 attendees. There are 75 paid memberships with two invoices outstanding.

Burgman Gallegos reported on the *No Holding Back* project that was funded by Ascendium Education Group and Lumina Foundation. This was an 18-month project with 12 institutions that delved into their student information systems to discover the number, types, and demographics of holds that are assessed on student accounts. WICHE presented a hybrid webcast event in October 2023 at Metropolitan State University of Denver that included 25 participants in the room and 150 people online. Students were included as panelists in the webcast to explain the impact of holds on their student success; other panelists were administrators representing four institutions that participated in the project. Lessons learned included that first-year, transfer, male, older, and/or lower-income students, as well as students of color, are more likely to experience holds that impede their academic success. The institutions looked at meaningful ways to improve their administrative practices that would benefit both institutional finance and student success. This work is timely given the new regulations from the U.S. Department of Education requiring institutions to provide transcripts to students who paid for credits with Title IV aid. Available resources produced by WICHE include a technical guide for institutions with four different student information system types to assess the administrative holds on their students.

Committee Chair Sullivan asked if the project discovered specific trends (e.g. financial holds, academic holds, etc.). Burgman Gallegos stated that each institution had different trends. For example, some institutions had no policies regarding holds, and some had no thresholds in their policies. Some institutions have raised their thresholds and put students on payment plans. WICHE created a community of practice, and some institutions created their own communities of practice that included the bursar's and registrar's offices. Committee Chair Sullivan encouraged committee members to look at the *No Holding Back* report.

COST-SAVINGS INITIATIVES UPDATE

Burman Gallegos reported on the three cost-savings programs offered by WICHE in conjunction with the Midwestern Higher Education Commission (MHEC), which includes student health care, cyber insurance, and technology contracts.

The Master Property Program (MPP), which offered insurance to institutions, is no longer offered by MHEC. WICHE is investigating starting a similar program for the WICHE region. During this investigation, vendor Marsh contacted WICHE regarding some institutions that could not secure insurance quotes after the dissolution of MPP. WICHE worked quickly with five institutions to create group property insurance for these campuses. All the institutions were part of the College Liability Insurance Company (CLIC). WICHE will continue to gather information regarding setting up a property insurance program. Commission Chair Matt Freeman asked if these institutions were from Washington and Oregon. Burgman Gallegos stated they were and that these are small institutions consisting of an insurance value of \$100 million to \$200 million per institution. The five institutions saved from \$1 million to \$2 million.

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE (PSEP) ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW/COMMISSION FOCUS GROUP

Brian Prescott, president, and Sarah Torres Lugo, research associate, both from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), presented their findings from the PSEP assessment.

Torres Lugo presented data for states that both send and receive PSEP students. The purpose of the study was to assess participation in PSEP and to analyze workforce projections for the 10 professional healthcare fields offered through PSEP. To provide information about gaps that PSEP might address, NCHEMS looked at workforce projections and educational supply data. NCHEMS also interviewed several groups, including WICHE staff, certifying officers, commissioners, professional association leaders, and leaders from the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States.

PSEP participation peaked in 1986 and has since declined an average of 2% per year; this has resulted in 24% fewer graduates in 2022 than in 2003. WICHE region participation (sending and receiving students) has varied both over time and by healthcare field. For example, Arizona has participated in PSEP the most in terms of the number of graduates from Arizona. Other states with the most graduates between 2018 and 2022 include Montana, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. Among states that are funding PSEP students, Colorado has the largest percentage growth (80%, or four students) in resident graduates from 2018 to 2022, while Hawai'i experienced the largest growth in the number of PSEP students (33%, or four more students). Nevada had the largest percentage decline (-24%, or four fewer students) during this same period, while Arizona experienced the largest decline in the number of students (-15%, or seven fewer students). Torres Lugo noted that while some of the percentage change numbers seem large, the number of students is relatively small.

With regard to states that are receiving students, Arizona graduated the most PSEP students (211 total) from 2018 to 2022. Utah has the largest percentage growth (700%) in graduating students, while Oregon experienced the largest percentage growth (33%) and graduated more students (six) from its PSEP institutions. Colorado had the largest percentage of decline in graduating students (-36%) during this period. Washington also experienced a decline in the number of students (-19%) that graduated from its PSEP institutions.

Torres Lugo then presented data about workforce demand and educational supply in the PSEP healthcare fields. Workforce projections data and the most recent five years of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) completion data suggest a misalignment between academic program capacity and projected workforce demand. The data shows several WICHE states with five-year maximum completions less than 75% of projected average annual openings in PSEP-eligible fields. NCHEMS also analyzed which WICHE states have 2021 completions less than 90% of five-year maximum completions, possibly opening some opportunities for PSEP.

The states that appeared in both sets of data (Utah, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, and South Dakota) have the underutilized capacity to graduate their own residents or could offer space to other WICHE-region students. For example, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming participate in the University of Washington's WWAMI program, which assists with the projected workforce gap in medicine. Idaho, Montana, and Utah participate in Washington State University's WIMU program for veterinary medicine. Commissioner Laurie Bishop asked if NCHEMS looked at a potential matchup between the WWAMI and

WIMU programs. Torres Lugo responded that they did not research those numbers. Committee Chair Sullivan reminded the commissioners that they are responsible for caucusing among their states to determine how funds are allocated for PSEP.

Committee Chair Sullivan asked if NCHEMS examined instances where states might have a workforce demand in certain fields but are not funding PSEP seats in those high-need fields. Prescott noted that some of the answers would be in the presentation, but that NCHEMS was limited by the availability of some data. Committee Chair Sullivan reminded fellow commissioners of the importance of reviewing workforce needs regularly and adjusting the allocation of PSEP seats by healthcare field as state workforce projections indicate.

Torres Lugo then presented opportunities for adding new healthcare fields to PSEP. The request for proposal (RFP) asked for professional areas worth considering and to include overlapping workforce needs among states. These occupations have an average annual opening greater than or equal to 20 and lacking 2021 graduates in public institutions at the typical entry-level of that occupation. The report offered examples of programs that are offered online and different initiatives offered at the state level to increase interest in these occupations.

Torres Lugo began with occupations that required postsecondary non-degrees, which include heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, nursing assistants, and hairdressers. The associate degree-level occupations included paralegals, dental hygienists, veterinary technicians, and life, physical, and social science technicians. The master's degree-level occupations included nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and rehabilitation counselors. The doctoral or professional degree-level occupations included physical therapists, pharmacists, physicians, ophthalmologists, and veterinarians. Commissioner Joseph Schaffer asked why no bachelor's degree-level occupations were listed, and Torres Lugo responded that none of those occupations met the criteria set by the RFP.

Prescott reported there is not a clear connection between occupational codes and academic programs. However, some in the healthcare fields make it easier to identify the PSEP fields. Engineering, for example, has many Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes that could have been aggregated, but the question becomes, at what point should aggregating stop. This is true of other occupations outside the scope of work for this project. Committee Chair Sullivan commented that the SOC codes in engineering are out of sync with the degree backgrounds because of the blurring of the occupational fields. She also asked if licensure requirements help to align SOC codes with degrees. Prescott acknowledged that licensure requirements help, but some states have massive regulatory structures for licensure, while others do not. Commissioner Schaffer stated that the WICHE region has some unique opportunities where some of these issues might not cause problems in identifying workforce needs. For example, accountants don't appear on the master's degree-level list, but there is a need across the West. Committee Chair Sullivan also cited surveyors as a field that requires licensure, and there is a huge shortage across the country. Prescott noted that this analysis is difficult to simplify because PSEP had to set certain requirements that apply across all the WICHE region so that the program could function.

Torres Lugo addressed overlapping workforce needs at the master's degree level or higher. PSEP offers eight of the Top 20 occupations, suggesting an opportunity to add new fields to PSEP that are not healthcare fields.

Commissioner Schaffer asked where the licensed counselors are in the data. Prescott responded that behavioral health fields also have multiple SOC codes, and Torres Lugo clarified that licensed counselors fell under rehabilitation counselors. Committee Chair Sullivan noted that some fields, e.g. nurse anesthetists, have accreditation limits and, without additional funding, programs cannot accept additional students. She asked how a state can increase its cohort size when it can't afford to address the accreditation requirements to do so. Prescott noted that one of the complications of adding fields to PSEP is that the SAP team needs to have more information on how a new program under consideration operates. Prescott noted that NCHEMS was not asked to analyze the business models that would include competitors.

Torres Lugo reported on her conversations with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). CNMI has a tremendous need for nurses, but the requirements for foreign-born nurses with visas require these practitioners to leave CNMI and return to their home country for 30 days so that they can reapply for a work permit. CNMI predicts they will lose 20 nurses who must return to their home countries. This creates a big gap in nursing and in other healthcare fields, including behavioral health.

Torres Lugo also shared her conversations with the CNMI's Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The CHCC has a grant to assess CNMI's healthcare needs; CHCC is looking at the existing training opportunities that local CNMI residents could take advantage of to grow the territory's workforce.

NCHEMS also analyzed workforce needs in behavioral health. The Health Resources and Services Administration describes behavioral health as an umbrella term for care that addresses any behavioral health issue, including mental health and substance use disorder conditions, stress-linked physical symptoms, patient activation, and health behaviors. The anticipated increase in behavioral health workforce needs from 2020 to 2030 includes nurse practitioners and physician assistants, as well as substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors.

Prescott then summarized the assessment's findings. He noted that there was still workforce demand in nine of the 10 fields that are offered through PSEP. There was excess capacity to educate students in these high-demand areas in some state programs. In the states that are closer to capacity, PSEP offered an avenue, along with a service payback requirement for PSEP-funded students, for a WICHE state to meet its workforce needs. Commissioner Diana VanderWoude noted that it's important to note that excess seat capacity doesn't necessarily mean sufficient clinical capacity. Prescott responded that finding data on clinical capacity was difficult, but interviews by NCHEMS with professional associations confirmed that clinicals continue to delay or prevent students moving through the pipeline. Commissioner VanderWoude stated that another challenge in nursing was the requirement to increase clinical faculty credentials. She noted there needed to be a transformational shift to competency-based learning in clinicals.

Prescott noted that NCHEMS looked at WRGP majors offered and how they might help address the WICHE region's workforce needs. President Demarée Michelau added that although WRGP provides tuition savings, the programs are available in the hope that some students will take advantage of them. PSEP provides a more intentional approach for a state or territory to address its workforce needs. Committee Chair Sullivan underlined that these are two different concepts: WUE and WRGP students

pay their own tuition (at a reduced rate), but PSEP requires that a state or territory's legislature make a specific dollar investment in healthcare programs for which it needs professionals. She commented that the PSEP assessment report gives data and justification for her to go to the legislature and ask for more money to address the state's workforce needs. Prescott stated that there will always be states or territories in the WICHE region that cannot afford to start their own programs, and PSEP can address those areas. The commissioners need to know what the workforce demands are in their home states or territory and how PSEP can help to fill them. Is there existing capacity in the WICHE region rather than starting new programs in their states? Workforce needs are competing for limited state funds. Committee Chair Sullivan advocated for PSEP graduates' service payback requirement, which increases the number of practitioners in the state at a relatively low cost.

Prescott gave final recommendations, which include gathering and employing actionable data that lead to strategic decisions; elevating focus on workforce needs in regularly scheduled Commission discussions about PSEP; engaging more occupation-specific advisory groups for other PSEP fields, like the one where doctors of veterinary medicine who advise WICHE through its Veterinary Medicine Advisory Committee (VMAC); and conducting a comprehensive assessment of PSEP every five years, at a minimum.

Commissioners Schaffer and Rosselli suggested raising PSEP awareness among the Forum, Alliance, and Legislative Advisory Committee. Committee Chair Sullivan suggested developing an action item to start thinking strategically regarding all the SAP programs for the next Commission meeting.

There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of March 5, 2024, Programs and Services Committee Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair

Sean Parnell (AK)

Ellen Junn (CA)

John Morton (HI)

Dale Erquiaga (NV)

Hilda Rosselli (OR)

John Carmichael (WA)

Joseph Schaffer (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Diana VanderWoude (SD), Committee Vice Chair

Todd Haynie (AZ)

Angie Paccione (CO)

Matt Freeman (ID)

Maryrose Beasley (MT)

Danita Bye (ND)

Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/Guam)

Vacancy (UT)

Staff Present

Demarée Michelau, President

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President,
Programs and Services

Margo Colalancia, Director, Student Access
Programs, Programs and Services

Cherie Curtin, Senior Administrative Coordinator,
Programs and Services

Onnika Hanson-White, Administrative Assistant
III, Programs and Services

Kay Hulstrom, Associate Director, Operations
and Program Implementation, Programs and
Services

Camelia Naranjo, Interim Assistant Director –
Academic Partnerships Learning and
Development, Programs and Services

Olivia Tufo, Manager, Community Engagement
and Development, Programs and Services

Kate Springsteen, Assistant Director, Student
Access Programs, Programs and Services

Call to Order

Committee Chair Patricia Sullivan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Kay Hulstrom called the roll. A quorum was not established.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2023, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Due to a lack of quorum, the November 9, 2023, minutes could not be approved.

Margo Colalancia reported on a correction to the minutes. At the previous committee meeting in November 2023, Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) enrollment numbers were not yet vetted. It was later discovered that an institution had double-counted its WRGP enrollment by 187 students in the prior academic year (AY) 2022-23. After the enrollment counts were corrected for AY 2022-23 and calculations were revised, the decrease in WRGP enrollment from AY 2022-23 to AY 2023-24 was only 7% — not 12% — as was previously reported.

Discussion Item

PROPOSED SUPPORT FEE INCREASES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR AY 2025-26 AND 2026-27, OR THE FY 2026 AND FY 2027 BIENNIUM

Committee Chair Sullivan reminded committee members of PSEP funding states to notify Colalancia and their certifying officer about changes in the healthcare fields and/or the number of students that the state plans to support in each healthcare field.

Colalancia described the history of PSEP as beginning in the early 1950s. After World War II, there were not enough healthcare-related programs available in the West to meet the demand to educate healthcare professionals, especially physicians, dentists, and veterinarians. States with public programs in some of these healthcare fields agreed to make those programs available to nonresident students in other WICHE compact states. State legislatures in the states without these healthcare programs agreed to appropriate funds to help buy down the tuition rates for their students to enroll in the programs that states were willing to make available to nonresident students from other Western states. Enrollment in PSEP was most robust in the 1980s. Since then, enrollments have declined because many public programs have been established, but it is still a valuable program, especially for lesser-populated WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions where it doesn't make fiscal sense to establish a public program.

Colalancia reported that WICHE analyzes the tuition and fee increases in the cooperating programs every two years, and staff then propose support fee increases for the next biennium. The AY 2023 and AY 2024 support fees were approved in May 2022. The proposed increases are for AY 2025-26 and AY 2026-27. The HECA (Higher Education Cost Adjustment) is a cost inflationary index developed by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) and is used by many institutions to set their tuitions. The HECA index comprises 75% personnel costs and 25% other goods. In the past, WICHE has used HECA to inform the proposed PSEP support fee increases. Over the past 16 years, the HECA index increases have been lower than the tuition and fees increases of WICHE's cooperating PSEP programs. However, the opposite was true for the most recent analysis. The HECA index average increase for AY 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 was 4.35%. In contrast, the tuition and fees at participating PSEP institutions have increased less: an average of 2.4% from 2021 to 2022 and 2.7% from 2022 to 2023.

Commissioner Joseph Schaffer inquired about the reasoning behind benchmarking inflation against tuition and fees versus other metrics like total revenues. President Demarée Michelau responded that WICHE has done this for a long time, and it possibly started because of the way the support fee interacts with the student's tuition. She invited Colalancia to explain how the support fee works. Colalancia explained that a component of the support fees analysis includes examining the percent that the support fee covers the nonresident/private tuition and fees in each field. As of AY 2023-24, PSEP support fees cover 37.1% of cooperating programs' tuition and fees for all PSEP fields except pharmacy. However, the outliers are allopathic medicine and veterinarian medicine, which are covered at an average of 54%.

Colalancia then demonstrated how the PSEP support is applied to the student's tuition and fees. Private institutions subtract the support fee from the student's tuition, and the student pays the difference.

For public programs, PSEP students typically pay resident tuition, but if the support fee doesn't cover the difference between resident and nonresident tuition, the program applies the PSEP support to the nonresident tuition, and the student pays the balance. Some programs' difference between nonresident and resident tuition is less than the support fee. In the past, those programs were allowed to keep that extra amount as an incentive to enroll PSEP students. However, in 2018, the Commission decided to cap the amount of incentive that a program can retain to 20% of the support fee for that profession. Any funds more than the 20% cap must be applied to further reduce the PSEP student's resident tuition.

Committee Chair Sullivan commented that if a New Mexico student accepts PSEP support, they must return to New Mexico after graduation and practice in New Mexico for a set number of years. Some students attending Washington State University's (WSU) veterinary medical program have been offered the option to start as a nonresident tuition in Year 1, file for Washington State residency, and then pay resident tuition for their Years 2, 3, and 4. This benefits the student financially, and they don't have a service payback obligation in their home state. Committee Chair Sullivan asked if that happens in other states and the impact on support fees. Colalancia commented that if a student chooses the PSEP program, they must remain a resident of their home state and remain a PSEP student for the duration of their studies. WICHE cannot control what options programs may offer students, but regarding WSU, it typically only offers the option to establish Washington residency to its top-tier applicants. Committee Chair Sullivan offered this scenario to commissioners to ensure the program was still relevant to the fee structures in other states.

Burgman Gallegos then read the first discussion question on the meeting agenda:

- 1. WICHE staff has used SHEEO's Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) as a guide to propose PSEP support fee increases for the last eight biennia or the past 16 years. For those biennia, the HECA index increase was consistently lower than the average tuition increases of cooperating PSEP programs. However, the inverse is true for this PSEP support fee-setting cycle. The average HECA index increase from 2021 to 2023 was 4.35%, whereas tuition and fees of cooperating programs increased by 2.4% from 2021 to 2022 and by 2.7% from 2022 to 2023. The proposed fees for each healthcare field are on page 1 of the Discussion Item (or draft Action Item). What are your thoughts on continuing to use the HECA as a guide for proposing support fee increases, and proposing a 4.35% increase in the PSEP support fees for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 biennium?*

Committee Chair Sullivan asked, if the support fees were increased by 4.35%, would there be concerns by the state legislatures? And would some states have to reduce the number of PSEP students to accommodate the increase?

Burgman Gallegos reported that WICHE looked at the potential impact on various states and territories. Colalancia reported that projections have been made and shared, but the real impact depends on the number of students supported in a state, and which fields they are enrolled. President Michelau commented that the support fees are set in advance so that legislatures have sufficient notice to set their budgets in response to needed increases.

Committee Chair Sullivan emphasized to commissioners that their state factsheets provided at the Commission meeting include enrollment data and estimated savings from WICHE's Student Access Programs. New Mexico has had a shortage of veterinarians and dentists. Therefore, it intentionally focused on supporting these two fields and eliminated other fields where it wasn't experiencing workforce shortages.

Commissioner Ellen Junn asked why the estimated fiscal impact of the proposed PSEP support fee increases do not list California. Colalancia responded that California does not support its residents through PSEP. However, healthcare programs in California do enroll students through PSEP. Similarly, Washington no longer supports students through PSEP, but programs located in Washington enroll PSEP students.

Commissioner Hilda Rosselli inquired if WICHE knew why the PSEP program tuition and fees increases were less than the average HECA increase for this PSEP support fees setting cycle. Colalancia stated that staff asked WICHE's Policy and Analysis unit, as it produces the annual *Tuition and Fees in the West* report for public undergraduate and graduate institutions. Policy staff theorized that there has not been a lot of tolerance from students for tuition increases and that institutions have had to absorb rising costs, but how long it's sustainable for them to absorb these increases is unknown. Institutions are also concerned with enrollment numbers, so they try to keep their tuition rates as low as possible.

Commissioner John Carmichael commented that tuition and fees don't cover all program costs. The HECA index covers a broader range of costs. He supported continuing to use the HECA index to include those other costs.

Commissioner Schaeffer commented that every few years, there is debate regarding the use of these inflation-driven indices. Wyoming is a very conservative state, and its legislators already think higher education tuition is running rampant. It becomes more difficult to persuade the legislature to agree to these higher support fees.

Commissioner John Morton commented that, in the past, resident tuition used to be kept low because the state supported it. In response, institutions would increase their nonresident tuition substantially. He asked, in cases where the support fee does not cover the difference between resident and nonresident tuition, if the student is responsible for paying that uncovered amount. Colalancia affirmed that the student would be responsible for that uncovered difference. Committee Chair Sullivan commented that that would add to the student's debt. Colalancia said that if a state needs healthcare professional graduates to serve in rural areas — practice locations that are typically less lucrative — states should consider ways to keep student debt as low as possible. Committee Chair Sullivan stated that in New Mexico, when students went out-of-state to study veterinary medicine, they would return with significant student debt, requiring them to practice in small animal vet clinics in larger cities instead of rural areas where there was substantial workforce need. New Mexico has tried to incentivize opportunities for residencies or internships for interested students so they don't come out with large student debt and can practice in rural areas. New Mexico legislators are more motivated to accept these support fee increases if they can be tied to workforce needs.

Burgman Gallegos then posed the second discussion question:

- 2. The percentage of the nonresident and private tuition and fees (T&F) covered by each field's PSEP support fee for 2023 is listed on Page 1 of the Discussion Item (except Allopathic and veterinary medicine fields are covered at an average of 54% whereas the T&Fs for all other fields (except pharmacy) are only covered at 34.8%). The support fees for allopathic and veterinary medicine were intentionally set higher several decades ago as an incentive for cooperating programs to give preferential admission to qualified WICHE PSEP applicants and to help build the healthcare workforce in states that did not have their own public programs in those fields. Do you think WICHE should aim for a certain level of fee coverage as a*

target? If so, what percentage of fee coverage across all fields do you think is feasible? Do you believe the percentage could or should differ by field? If yes, why and by how much?

Commissioner Dale Erquiaga commented that he fully supports using the HECA. However, he was not sure that having some fields covered at a higher percentage should be continued. For example, when PSEP started, Nevada had no dental or medical schools. They now have two public medical schools and a dental school. Keeping these support fee amounts standard at the regional level prevents him from being able to convince the legislature with the workforce development argument. He would like to have state-level differentials but realizes it would be an administrative nightmare. He does agree with the PSEP assessment that it is time to look at the offered fields and the covered percentages, but workforce needs will vary from state to state.

Committee Chair Sullivan re-emphasized that commissioners should review the estimated fiscal impact spreadsheet provided by WICHE to determine a state's needed fields and number of students supported. She then asked Colalancia what lead time was needed to make changes in the fields and the number of students supported. Colalancia responded that veterinary medicine would be earlier because PSEP vet med applicants receive preferential admission by the WICHE's cooperating programs. Vet med applicants are notified of their PSEP awards prior to the national acceptance date of April 15. For other fields, awards are made later, and the timing varies by state. It's best to discuss with the state certifying officer from January to April. And some states don't finalize their numbers until after the governor has signed off on the budget. Regarding Commissioner Erquiaga's comment, Colalancia noted that it would be difficult for both WICHE and the cooperative states and institutions to differentiate PSEP support fees by state. Commissioner Erquiaga acknowledged that it would require the commissioner to work with the legislature to set the number of slots needed.

President Michelau commented that the question posed to this committee regarding the average percentage coverage rationale was hers. Some certifying officers expressed concerns regarding the higher coverage percentages for veterinary medicine and allopathic medicine. She asked whether the commissioners thought WICHE should have a rationale for a targeted percentage of coverage of the support fees by field. She also encouraged those who have not reviewed the PSEP assessment to use the PSEP workforce data report to assist in deciding which fields and number of students should be supported by your state.

Burgman Gallegos noted that the remaining questions that were listed on the agenda for this meeting may be brought to the May 2024 Commission meeting. In addition, the Commission's Executive Committee will receive this same presentation on March 20. Therefore, about two-thirds of each state's delegation will have received this information prior to the May 2024 Commission Meeting.

There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the Professional Student Exchange Program Support Fees for the AY 2025-26 and 2026-27 Biennium

Summary

The Commission sets the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) support fees for a biennium, or every two years. The PSEP support fees refers to the amount appropriated by the student's home state/territory to reduce their tuition for their professional healthcare education.

- ▶ Staff evaluates several factors (e.g. higher education costs, tuition variance by field and program, and historical fee levels) when recommending support fee levels.
- ▶ The fee varies by PSEP field, but the amount is standard for each profession.
- ▶ Accelerated programs receive a slightly higher fee to compensate for the shorter study program.

Staff recommends an increase of 4.35% per support fee for each year of the biennium for all 10 PSEP fields, as noted in the chart below.

Proposed Support Fees for AY 2025 and AY 2026 (or FY 2026 and FY 2027 Biennium)

FIELD	APPROVED FEES FOR AY 2023	AVERAGE % OF NONRESIDENT & PRIVATE TUITION & FEES COVERED BY AY 2023 FEE	APPROVED FEES FOR AY 2024	RECOMMENDED FEES FOR AY 2025	RECOMMENDED FEES FOR AY 2026
Group A					
Dentistry	\$29,250	31.2%	\$29,900	\$31,200	\$32,550
Allopathic Medicine	\$34,950	55.1%	\$35,700	\$37,250	\$38,875
Occupational Therapy	\$15,300	34.2%	\$15,625	\$16,300	\$17,025
Optometry	\$20,125	37.0%	\$20,575	\$21,475	\$22,400
Osteopathic Medicine	\$25,050	36.0%	\$25,600	\$26,725	\$27,875
Physical Therapy	\$16,850	34.8%	\$17,225	\$17,975	\$18,750
Physician Assistant	\$19,950	36.6%	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$22,225
Podiatry	\$17,375	33.7%	\$17,750	\$18,525	\$19,325
Veterinary Medicine	\$34,650	52.9%	\$35,400	\$36,950	\$38,550
Group B					
Pharmacy	\$8,925	19.3%	\$9,125	\$9,525	\$9,925
Average % of NR & PRIV T&F Covered by AY 2023 Support Fee		37.1%			

Staff sought feedback on the recommended increases from the commissioners and certifying officers of the states/territories that provide financial support to students participating in PSEP, as well as the institutions that receive students through the exchange.

Relationship to WICHE's Mission

Ensuring that the West has access to professional education has been central to WICHE's mission since its inception, as stated in the Western Regional Education Compact (the agreement that established WICHE in 1953).

In the academic year (AY) 2023-24, 557 students participated in the 10 healthcare professional degree programs offered through PSEP. Students paid significantly reduced tuition while enrolled through PSEP, and their home states/territories invested a total of \$14.5 million to reduce their tuition.

PSEP helps WICHE states/territories to:

- ▶ Develop a professional healthcare workforce
- ▶ Provide students affordable access to a wide range of professional programs that otherwise may not be available in some states/territories
- ▶ Offer students tuition assistance for healthcare programs located out of state when a public program is not available within their home state/territory
- ▶ Enhance the quality and prestige of participating programs by attracting qualified students from around the West
- ▶ Avoid the costs of establishing new professional programs and schools

It is important to note that funding students through PSEP significantly minimizes the administrative burdens of state/territory offices, while still allowing residents access to professional programs aligned with their goals. Staff handle critical and time-consuming administrative details such as invoicing, payments, refunds, tracking student progress, leaves of absence, and graduation dates. Staff are also committed to responsible stewardship of each state/territory's investment of taxpayer dollars to grow the healthcare workforce. State/territory offices that administer similar programs acknowledge the value of WICHE's portal and administrative infrastructure in lessening their administrative load and providing a good return on investment.

Balancing Multiple Needs

Setting support fees involves balancing the various needs of states, students, and institutions. States face mounting budgetary pressures to fund many initiatives in the current economic environment. There is also an increasing need to provide residents with access to professional education in high-need fields.

TUITION DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT STUDENTS

The costs to both public and private institutions enrolling students continue to rise. Public institutions need some financial incentive to secure slots for nonresident students. Before 2000, the support fees met or exceeded the resident and nonresident tuition differential. However, for more than 20 years,

support fee increases have not kept pace with tuition increases. As tuition has increased, the support fees have proportionately decreased.

Most allopathic and veterinary medicine public programs continue to receive a financial incentive to enroll PSEP students. However, in AY 2023-24, the support fees in five fields (dentistry, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, and physician assistant) no longer cover the full differential for many public programs. As a result, PSEP students enrolled in “no-incentive” programs must pay the differential shortfall. When the support fee fully covers the difference between resident and nonresident tuition, PSEP students pay resident tuition. The institution can retain up to a certain amount of the support fee funds that exceed the differential.

About 10 years ago, concern was voiced that the incentives received by some schools were disproportionate. While some public schools received little to no incentive to enroll PSEP students, others received significant incentives. To best serve Western states/territories, participating students, and the enrolling programs’ needs, the Commission approved a policy in 2017 to cap the maximum incentive for each PSEP public program at 20% of the respective field’s support fee. Amounts over the 20% cap are now applied to reduce PSEP students’ resident tuition. This policy covered students who enrolled in Fall 2019 and later. Private programs do not receive an incentive to enroll PSEP students and were not affected.

Recommended Action

WICHE proposes to increase the support fee for the next biennium by 4.35% each year, consistent with the Higher Education Cost Adjustment (HECA) index developed by the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association. Between 2021 and 2023, the HECA index increased an average of 4.35% each academic year.

WICHE staff have used the HECA index as a guide to propose PSEP support fee increases for the last eight biennia, or 16 years. For those biennia, the HECA increase was consistently lower than the average tuition and fees increases of participating PSEP programs. However, for this PSEP support fees setting cycle, the inverse is true: The average HECA increase from 2021 to 2023 was 4.35%, whereas tuition and fees of participating programs increased by 2.4% (pooled average) from 2021 to 2022 and by 2.7% (pooled average) from 2022 to 2023. [NOTE: This includes all cooperating, in-region programs, except newly added programs or programs for which abnormal increases or decreases in tuition and fees were reported.]

The percentage of the nonresident and private tuition and fees covered by each field’s PSEP support fee for 2023 is listed on page 6-15. The fields of allopathic and veterinary medicine are covered at an average of 54%, whereas the tuition and fees for all other fields (except for pharmacy) are only covered at 34.8%. The support fees for allopathic and veterinary medicine were intentionally set higher several decades ago as an incentive for cooperating programs to give preferential admission to qualified PSEP applicants and to help build the healthcare workforce in states/territories that did not have their own public programs in those fields. Pharmacy is only covered at 19.3%; its support fee was intentionally set low.

Certifying Officers' Feedback

Certifying officers met on February 28, 2024, to discuss the proposed increase. Most of the states/territories concurred that the proposed 4.35% increase was reasonable considering recent inflation trends, but they did have concerns.

First, several certifying officers anticipate either a flat budget or budget cuts within their states/territories in the coming years, and for any percentage of increase, they will likely have to reduce the number of students supported through PSEP. Others said the timing of the increase was good because they could work it into their next budget proposal.

Second, some certifying officers raised a concern about the incentives that some public programs receive to enroll PSEP students. Staff explained that the incentives encouraged schools to consider qualified PSEP applicants over the larger pool of nonresident applicants. In veterinary medicine, for example, PSEP applicants receive preferential consideration for admission. One certifying officer commented that the incentives that some programs received may help them increase their tuition and fees at a slower rate. The certifying officer from Wyoming noted that their contract programs receive some incentive to enroll Wyoming residents.

Third, one certifying officer pointed out the extreme imbalance in tuition and fees support fee coverage for allopathic and veterinary medicine (covered at 54%) versus an average coverage of 34.8% for all the other fields (except pharmacy, which is only covered at 19.3%). There was concern that some could perceive that taxpayers are paying a larger percentage of a student's tuition and fees than the student themselves. She suggested that the Commission freeze the allopathic and veterinary support fees for the next biennium and into the future, until those fields are covered at a lower rate (somewhere in the 35% range).

Finally, there was also concern that the field of osteopathic medicine's coverage is only 36% and allopathic medicine is 54%. Staff commented that years ago, for fields where a major adjustment was needed, the Commission would make a one-time adjustment to that field's fee, in addition to the increase. However, for that to happen, all the states/territories currently funding in that field would have to agree to the adjustment to maintain funding for continuing PSEP students in that field.

Programs and Services Committee's Feedback

Staff also consulted with commissioners on the Programs and Services Committee on March 5, 2024. Several of the states/territories supported using the HECA index to guide the proposed increase of 4.35% and thought it was reasonable. One commissioner inquired about the reasoning behind benchmarking inflation against tuition and fees versus other metrics like total revenues. Staff explained that this had been the practice for a long time and showed how the support fee reduces private and public programs' tuition in various scenarios.

Another commissioner asked if staff knew why, for this PSEP fees setting cycle, the average HECA increase was higher than the cooperating programs' recent tuition increases. Staff responded that their colleagues in the Policy Analysis and Research unit surmised students had shown little tolerance for tuition and fees increases. With concerns over enrollment declines in some healthcare professions, institutions had been willing to absorb rising costs in recent years. However, it was unknown how long programs could continue absorbing these cost increases.

A commissioner who supports the HECA increase questioned whether some fields like allopathic and veterinary medicine should continue to be covered at a higher percentage. He also noted that, as states/territories' workforce needs differ, keeping the PSEP support fees standard by field at the regional level prevented him from convincing his state legislature with a workforce development argument. He recognized if support fees were tailored for each supporting state/territory that it would be an administrative nightmare for the program, and Colalancia concurred.

President Michelau asked the commissioners whether they thought WICHE should have a rationale for a targeted percentage of coverage of the support fees by field. One commissioner noted that historically, public institutions tended to increase the nonresident tuition to keep it more affordable for residents. He asked what effect escalating nonresident tuition could have on PSEP students if the support fee did not cover the resident/nonresident differential. Colalancia responded that in cases where the support fee was not enough to cover the difference between resident and nonresident tuition, the PSEP student must pay any unmet difference. She noted that one of the program's goals was to keep the student's debt as low as possible, making it feasible for graduates to consider practicing their healthcare profession in the West's rural areas, where there was a persistent dearth of healthcare services.

Committee Chair Sullivan encouraged fellow commissioners to examine their state/territory's workforce needs in partnership with their certifying officer and to notify staff in advance of any changes to the number of students to be funded and the composition of the fields that will be supported. President Michelau noted that the reason WICHE asks the Commission to set support fees more than a year in advance is so that states have plenty of time to work with their state legislatures to request necessary increases.

Executive Committee's Feedback

Staff met with the Executive Committee on March 20, 2024. Burgman Gallegos explained the support fees setting process and staff's decision to use the HECA index as a guide to propose the increase. She also commented that two fields, allopathic medicine and veterinary medicine, have historically received a higher fee coverage than the other healthcare fields. One commissioner requested an offline discussion of why his state wasn't using PSEP to help his students in more healthcare fields than it currently did and how the state might be able to add additional fields. Another commissioner noted that PSEP funding was critical to reduce students' tuition in the healthcare fields and that it was an important recruitment tool for participating PSEP programs.

Program Deans and Directors' Feedback

Staff sent a survey to the deans and program directors of approximately 135 participating programs on the proposed support fee increases and trends related to their program field. As of March 12, 2024, 21 responses were received. Regarding projected tuition and fees increases for AY 2024-25, three respondents said they did not plan on increases, one said they would increase fees but not tuition, and one said the increase was yet to be determined. Most of the respondents anticipated a 3% to 5% increase. Oregon State University's (OSU) veterinary program anticipates a 7% increase and Oregon Health Sciences University's (OHSU) dental program projected a 20% increase.

Most of the responding programs stated that the proposed increase was sufficient. However, the dean

of Midwestern University's College of Osteopathic Medicine pointed out that PSEP support fees for osteopathic medicine were lower than those for allopathic medicine. She would like to see increased support for doctor of osteopathic medicine students, as osteopathic medicine typically graduates more primary care physicians and should be valued at the same level as allopathic medicine.

Some program innovations mentioned in the survey included adding rural and additional community clinical rotations; students beginning clinical education earlier in their programs; a new student retention program; a move toward hybrid options in physical therapy; and an accelerated dental program (from four years to three years). This year, the University of Utah rolled out its new mission-driven medical doctor program designed to serve rural and underserved populations and meet physician workforce needs in the Mountain West (Montana, Utah, and Wyoming, specifically). Colorado State University's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences will roll out a new curriculum and add 30 new seats to its doctor of veterinary medicine program, starting in Fall 2026.

Some challenges noted in the survey include declining applicant pools, despite a continued demand for healthcare professionals (e.g., doctor of physical therapy, doctor of pharmacy); a shift from private practice to corporate dentistry (also seen in veterinary medicine for several years now); and a competitive environment to find sufficient clinical rotations and preceptors in the fields of osteopathic medicine and occupational therapy. The University of Hawai'i's medical school noted that more students are taking a leave of absence for their research in the fourth year of their studies, which was extending the time-to-degree from the standard four years to now five years.

Several respondents to the survey said that they were grateful for the support that PSEP provides students. Roseman University's Dr. William Harman, who is an associate dean, commented: "We applaud the WICHE model and celebrate each student who returns to their home state to provide care for its citizens."

Action Requested

Approval of the proposed increases for support fees for all PSEP fields for the AY 2025-26 and 2026-27 biennium.

PSEP Support Fee Analysis tables begin on next page.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023

DENTISTRY

Supporting states: Alaska, Arizona, CNMI, Hawai'i, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$29,250	\$29,900	\$31,200	\$32,550

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUICTION & FEES	RESIDENT TUICTION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
U.C. Los Angeles	3	\$84,574	\$72,329	\$12,245	34.6%
U.C. San Francisco	1	\$84,738	\$72,493	\$12,245	34.5%
U. Colorado Denver, Anschutz	13	\$83,163	\$57,860	\$25,303	35.2%
Oregon Health & Science U. †	3	\$92,408	\$62,356	\$30,052	31.7%
U. of Utah †	8	\$94,149	\$54,212	\$39,937	31.1%
U. Washington	0	\$97,530	\$69,134	\$28,396	30.0%
U. Missouri, Kansas City † (OOR)	6	\$94,249	\$53,631	\$40,618	31.0%
U. Nebraska † (OOR)	2	\$97,702	\$52,292	\$45,410	29.9%
Total Public	36				
Average		\$91,064	\$61,788	\$29,276	32.2%
Median		\$93,279	\$60,108	\$29,224	31.4%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUICTION & FEES	TUICTION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUICTION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
A.T. Still U., Mesa	18	\$103,302	\$74,052	28.3%
Midwestern U.	25	\$110,327	\$81,077	26.5%
Loma Linda U.	1	\$93,701	\$64,451	31.2%
U. of the Pacific *	2	\$148,576	\$109,576	26.2%
U. Southern California	1	\$132,131	\$102,881	22.1%
Western U. Health Sciences	2	\$98,087	\$68,837	29.8%
Roseman U. of Health Sciences *	8	\$105,512	\$76,262	37.0%
Creighton U. (OOR)	22	\$85,843	\$56,593	34.1%
Marquette U. (OOR)	0	\$79,450	\$50,200	36.8%
Total Private	79			
Average		\$106,325	\$75,992	31.2%
Median		\$103,302	\$74,052	31.2%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	115	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	31.2%
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ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference	RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$17,005	\$11,155	\$5,850	\$61,174	\$90,424
\$17,005	\$11,155	\$5,850	\$61,338	\$90,588
\$3,947	\$0	\$3,947	\$57,860	\$87,110
(\$802)	\$0	\$0	\$63,158	\$92,408
(\$10,687)	\$0	\$0	\$64,899	\$94,149
\$854	\$0	\$854	\$68,280	\$98,384
(\$11,368)	\$0	\$0	\$64,999	\$94,249
(\$16,160)	\$0	\$0	\$68,452	\$97,702
-\$26	\$2,789		\$63,770	\$93,127
\$26	\$0		\$64,029	\$93,279

† The PSEP support fee does not cover the resident/nonresident tuition differential.

* U. of the Pacific and Roseman operate three-year accelerated programs; student receives four years of support over a three-year period, thus a higher rate of \$39,000 in AY 2023.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

ALLOPATHIC MEDICINE

Supporting states: CNMI, Guam, Montana, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$34,950	\$35,700	\$37,250	\$38,875

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUITION & FEES	RESIDENT TUITION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
U. Arizona/Tucson	0	\$59,755	\$41,583	\$18,172	58.5%
U. Arizona /ASU Phoenix	0	\$56,786	\$38,614	\$18,172	61.5%
U.C. Davis	1	\$59,054	\$46,809	\$12,245	59.2%
U.C. Irvine	0	\$58,959	\$46,714	\$12,245	59.3%
U.C. Los Angeles	0	\$56,088	\$43,843	\$12,245	62.3%
U.C. San Diego	0	\$57,132	\$44,887	\$12,245	61.2%
U.C., San Francisco	0	\$52,465	\$40,220	\$12,245	66.6%
U. Colorado Denver, Anschutz	8	\$70,971	\$45,016	\$25,955	49.2%
U. Hawai'i	1	\$74,883	\$40,227	\$34,656	46.7%
U. Nevada, Reno	1	\$63,278	\$36,028	\$27,250	55.2%
U. New Mexico	0	\$52,469	\$23,773	\$28,696	66.6%
U. North Dakota	4	\$65,312	\$36,074	\$29,238	53.5%
Oregon Health & Science U.	7	\$77,124	\$51,840	\$25,284	45.3%
U. Utah †	12	\$88,672	\$48,735	\$39,937	39.4%
Total Public	34				
Average		\$63,782	\$41,740	\$22,042	56.0%
Median		\$59,405	\$42,713	\$21,728	58.8%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Loma Linda U.	2	\$69,479	\$34,529	50.3%
Mayo Clinic Arizona	1	\$64,000	\$29,050	54.6%
U. Southern California	0	\$73,475	\$38,525	47.6%
Total Private	3	\$68,985		
Average			\$34,035	50.8%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	37	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	55.1%
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ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference	RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$16,778	\$9,788	\$6,990	\$31,795	\$66,745
\$16,778	\$9,788	\$6,990	\$28,826	\$63,776
\$22,705	\$15,715	\$6,990	\$31,094	\$66,044
\$22,705	\$15,715	\$6,990	\$30,999	\$65,949
\$22,705	\$15,715	\$6,990	\$28,128	\$63,078
\$22,705	\$15,715	\$6,990	\$29,172	\$64,122
\$22,705	\$15,715	\$6,990	\$24,505	\$59,455
\$8,995	\$2,005	\$6,990	\$43,011	\$77,961
\$294	\$0	\$294	\$40,227	\$75,177
\$7,700	\$710	\$6,990	\$35,318	\$70,268
\$6,254	\$0	\$6,254	\$23,773	\$58,723
\$5,712	\$0	\$5,712	\$36,074	\$71,024
\$9,666	\$2,676	\$6,990	\$49,164	\$84,114
(\$4,987)	\$0	\$0	\$53,722	\$88,672
\$12,908	\$7,396	\$5,869	\$34,701	\$69,651
\$13,222	\$6,232	\$6,990	\$31,445	\$66,395

† The PSEP support fee does not cover the resident/nonresident tuition differential.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Supporting states: Alaska, CNMI, Guam, Hawai'i, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$15,300	\$15,625	\$16,300	\$17,025

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUITION & FEES	RESIDENT TUITION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Northern Arizona U.	0	\$44,503	\$29,839	\$14,664	34.4%
Idaho State U. †	0	\$48,013	\$20,546	\$27,467	31.9%
U. New Mexico †	1	\$33,532	\$17,703	\$15,829	45.6%
U. North Dakota	0	\$36,664	\$25,828	\$10,836	41.7%
U. South Dakota †	2	\$34,515	\$18,492	\$16,023	44.3%
U. Utah †	0	\$64,948	\$35,738	\$29,210	23.6%
Eastern Washington U. †	1	\$33,676	\$18,331	\$15,345	45.4%
U. Washington †	0	\$44,240	\$25,436	\$18,804	34.6%
Total Public	4				
Average		\$42,511	\$23,989	\$18,522	37.7%
Median		\$40,452	\$22,911	\$15,926	38.2%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
A. T. Still U.	4	\$39,532	\$24,232	38.7%
Midwestern U.	1	\$50,764	\$35,464	30.1%
Loma Linda U.	0	\$43,120	\$27,820	35.5%
Samuel Merritt U.	1	\$49,193	\$33,893	31.1%
U. So. California	0	\$84,630	\$69,330	18.1%
Touro U., Nevada	9	\$47,734	\$32,434	32.1%
Pacific U.	3	\$43,149	\$27,849	35.5%
U. Puget Sound	1	\$61,720	\$46,420	24.8%
Total Private	19	\$52,480		
Average			\$37,180	30.7%
Median		48,464	\$33,164	31.6%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	23	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	34.2%
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ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference	RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$636	\$0	\$636	\$29,839	\$45,139
(\$12,167)	\$0	\$0	\$32,713	\$48,013
(\$529)	\$0	\$0	\$18,232	\$33,532
\$4,464	\$1,404	\$3,060	\$24,424	\$39,724
(\$723)	\$0	\$0	\$19,215	\$34,515
(\$13,910)	\$0	\$0	\$49,648	\$64,948
(\$45)	\$0	\$0	\$18,376	\$33,676
(\$3,504)	\$0	\$0	\$28,940	\$44,240
-\$3,222	\$176	\$462	\$27,673	\$42,973
-\$626	\$0	\$0	\$26,682	\$41,982

† The PSEP support fee does not cover the resident/nonresident tuition differential.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

OPTOMETRY

Supporting states: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawai'i, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$20,125	\$20,575	\$21,475	\$22,400

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Midwestern U.	56	\$55,140	\$35,015	36.50%
Marshall B. Ketchum University	12	\$56,510	\$36,385	35.6%
Western U. Health Sciences	3	\$51,143	\$31,018	39.4%
Pacific U.	34	\$55,107	\$34,982	36.5%
Out-of-region schools	2			
Average		\$54,475	\$34,350	37.0%
Median		\$55,124	\$34,999	36.5%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	107	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (PRIVATE)	37.0%
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Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Supporting states: Arizona, CNMI, Guam, Montana, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$25,050	\$25,600	\$26,725	\$27,875

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
A.T. Still U., Mesa	6	\$67,064	\$42,014	37.4%
Midwestern U.	25	\$82,414	\$57,364	30.4%
Touro U., California	0	\$68,381	\$43,331	36.6%
Western U. Health Sciences	6	\$68,883	\$43,833	36.4%
Rocky Vista U.	12	\$67,739	\$42,689	37.0%
Touro U., Nevada	2	\$71,029	\$45,979	35.3%
Pacific Northwest U. of Health Sciences	6	\$63,720	\$38,670	39.3%
Average		\$69,890	\$44,840	36.0%
Median		\$68,381	\$43,331	36.6%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	57	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (PRIVATE)	36.0%
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Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

PHARMACY

Supporting states: Alaska, CNMI, Guam, Nevada

ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference
RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident
SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)
STU: Student
PROG: Program
T&F: Tuition and fees

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$8,925	\$9,125	\$9,525	\$9,925

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUITION & FEES	RESIDENT TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
U. Arizona	0	\$49,461	\$29,889	\$40,536	18.0%
U.C. San Francisco	0	\$62,891	\$50,646	\$53,966	14.2%
U. Colorado Denver, Anschutz	0	\$41,629	\$32,834	\$32,704	21.4%
U. Hawai'i, Hilo	0	\$42,884	\$25,940	\$33,959	20.8%
Idaho State U.	0	\$46,082	\$21,904	\$37,157	19.4%
U. Montana	0	\$39,912	\$16,442	\$30,987	22.4%
U. New Mexico	0	\$51,003	\$27,993	\$42,078	17.5%
North Dakota State U.	0	\$33,465	\$22,891	\$24,540	26.7%
Oregon State U.	0	\$47,997	\$30,285	\$39,072	18.6%
U. Washington	0	\$58,336	\$36,682	\$49,411	15.3%
Washington State U.	0	\$32,429	\$27,203	\$23,504	27.5%
U. Wyoming	0	\$34,451	\$24,191	\$25,526	25.9%
Total Public	0				
Average		\$45,045	\$28,908	\$36,120	20.6%
Median		\$44,438	\$27,598	\$35,558	20.1%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Midwestern U.*	0	\$70,977	\$59,077	16.8%
U. of the Pacific*	0	\$84,518	\$72,618	14.1%
U. Southern California	0	\$68,357	\$59,432	13.1%
Western U. Health Sciences	0	\$57,226	\$48,301	15.6%
Regis U.	0	\$41,274	\$32,349	21.6%
Roseman U.*	10	\$62,284	\$50,384	19.1%
Pacific U.*	0	\$58,772	\$46,872	20.2%
Total Private	10			
Average		\$63,344	\$52,719	17.2%
Median		\$62,284	\$50,384	16.8%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	10	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	19.3%
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* Accelerated three-year programs; student receives four years of support over a three-year period, thus a higher rate of \$11,900 per year in AY2023.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 *(continued)*

PODIATRY

Supporting states: Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Utah and Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$17,375	\$17,750	\$18,525	\$19,325

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Midwestern U.	11	\$54,519	\$37,144	31.9%
Samuel Merritt U.	1	53,648	\$36,273	32.4%
Western U. of Health Sciences	3	47,285	\$29,910	36.7%
Total Private	15			
Average		\$51,817	\$34,442	

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	15	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (PRIVATE)	33.7%
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Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Supporting states: Alaska, CNMI, Guam, Hawai'i, Nevada, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$16,850	\$17,225	\$17,975	\$18,750

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUITION & FEES	RESIDENT TUITION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Ca. State U. Fresno †	0	\$37,023	\$27,521	\$9,502	45.5%
U.C. San Fran/San Fran State U.	0	\$47,532	\$35,287	\$12,245	35.4%
U. Colorado Denver, Anschutz †	1	\$60,159	\$29,705	\$30,454	28.0%
Idaho State U. †	1	\$56,815	\$22,306	\$34,509	29.7%
U. Montana †	4	\$49,089	\$19,503	\$29,586	34.3%
U. Nevada Las Vegas †	1	\$48,096	\$30,340	\$17,756	35.0%
U. New Mexico	0	\$36,346	\$22,247	\$14,099	46.4%
U. North Dakota	2	\$36,633	\$25,797	\$10,836	46.0%
U. South Dakota †	1	\$43,904	\$22,523	\$21,381	38.4%
U. Utah †	3	\$64,945	\$34,219	\$30,726	25.9%
Eastern Washington U.	0	\$39,525	\$23,898	\$15,627	42.6%
U. Washington †	1	\$55,824	\$36,688	\$19,136	30.2%
Total Public	14				
Average		\$47,991	\$27,503	\$20,488	36.5%
Median		\$47,814	\$26,659	\$18,446	35.2%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
A. T. Still U.	0	\$42,092	\$25,242	40.0%
Midwestern U.	2	\$49,366	\$32,516	34.1%
Chapman U.	0	\$55,581	\$38,731	30.3%
Loma Linda U.	0	\$50,830	\$33,980	33.1%
Mt. St. Mary's U.	0	\$60,273	\$43,423	28.0%
Samuel Merritt U.	0	\$60,742	\$43,892	27.7%
U. of St. Augustine (San Marcos, CA)	0	\$51,381	\$34,531	32.8%
U. Southern California**	0			
U. of the Pacific (accel. 2-year prog)*	0	\$77,862	\$52,587	31.1%
Western U. Health Sciences	2	\$49,514	\$32,664	34.0%
Regis University	4	\$58,930	\$42,080	28.6%

ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference	RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$7,348	\$3,978	\$3,370	\$16,195	\$40,393
\$4,605	\$1,235	\$3,370	\$34,052	\$50,902
(\$13,604)	\$0	\$0	\$43,309	\$60,159
(\$17,659)	\$0	\$0	\$39,965	\$56,815
(\$12,736)	\$0	\$0	\$32,239	\$49,089
(\$906)	\$0	\$0	\$31,246	\$48,096
\$2,751	\$0	\$2,751	\$22,247	\$39,097
\$6,014	\$2,644	\$3,370	\$23,153	\$40,003
(\$4,531)	\$0	\$0	\$27,054	\$43,904
(\$13,876)	\$0	\$0	\$48,095	\$64,945
\$1,223	\$0	\$1,223	\$23,898	\$40,748
(\$2,286)	\$0	\$0	\$38,974	\$55,824
-\$3,638	\$655	\$1,174	\$31,702	\$49,165
-\$1,596	\$0	\$0	\$31,743	\$48,593

PRIVATE INSTITUTION (cont.)	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
George Fox U.	1	\$42,070	\$25,220	40.1%
Pacific U.	6	\$43,872	\$27,022	38.4%
Touro U. - Nevada	7	\$48,334	\$31,484	34.9%
Rocky Mtn. U. of Health Professions	6	\$53,027	\$36,177	31.8%
U. Puget Sound	1	\$46,860	\$30,010	36.0%
Total Private	29	\$52,716	\$35,304	33.4%
Average		\$50,830	\$33,980	33.1%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT 43 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE) 34.8%

* A two-year accelerated program; student receives three years of support over a two-year period, thus a higher rate of \$25,275 per year in AY 2023.

** Program did not respond to tuition and fees survey.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Supporting states: Alaska, CNMI, Nevada, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$19,950	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$22,225

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUITION & FEES	RESIDENT TUITION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Red Rocks Comm. College	1	\$53,492	\$45,347	8,145	37.3%
U. Colorado Denver, Anschutz †	0	49,147	22,949	26,198	40.6%
Idaho State U. †	1	76,193	47,213	28,980	26.2%
U. North Dakota	0	39,890	28,414	11,476	50.0%
Oregon Health & Science U.*	0	49,478	49,478	0	40.3%
U. Utah †	0	65,437	35,217	30,220	30.5%
U. Washington *	1	48,795	48,795	0	40.9%
Total Public	3				
Average		\$54,633	\$39,630	\$15,003	38.0%
Median		\$49,478	\$45,347	\$11,476	40.3%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUITION & FEES	TUITION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUITION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
A. T. Still U.	1	\$55,031	\$35,081	36.3%
Midwestern U.	0	67,890	\$47,940	29.4%
Loma Linda U.	0	56,160	\$36,210	35.5%
Marshall B. Ketchum	0	46,662	\$26,712	42.8%
Samuel Merritt College	0	67,679	\$47,729	29.5%
Touro U. - California	0	42,928	\$22,978	46.5%
U. Southern California**	0			
Western U. Health Sciences	0	52,226	\$32,276	38.2%
Idaho State U/College of Idaho	0	76,399	\$56,449	26.1%
Touro U., Nevada	9	54,999	\$35,049	36.3%
Pacific U.	0	54,384	\$34,434	36.7%
Total Private	10			
Average		\$57,436	\$37,486	35.7%
Median		\$55,015	\$35,065	36.3%

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	13	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	36.6%
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ABBREVIATION KEY

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OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$11,805	\$7,815	\$3,990	\$37,532	\$57,482
(\$6,248)	\$0	\$0	\$29,197	\$49,147
(\$9,030)	\$0	\$0	\$56,243	\$76,193
\$8,474	\$4,484	\$3,990	\$15,456	\$43,880
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$49,478	\$49,478
(\$10,270)	\$0	\$0	\$35,217	\$65,437
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$48,795	\$48,795
-\$753	\$1,757	\$1,140	\$38,845	\$55,773
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$37,532	\$49,478

† The WICHE support fee does not cover the resident/nonresident tuition differential.

* OHSU and U. WASH tuition is the same for residents and nonresidents; support fee is credited and the student pays the balance.

** Program did not respond to tuition and fees survey.

Support Fee Analysis AY 2023 (continued)

VETERINARY MEDICINE

Supporting states: Arizona, CNMI, Hawai'i, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Wyoming

APPROVED SUPPORT FEES		PROPOSED INCREASE (4.35%)	
AY 2023	AY 2024	AY 2025	AY 2026
\$34,650	\$35,400	\$36,950	\$38,550

PUBLIC INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	NONRESIDENT TUIION & FEES	RESIDENT TUIION & FEES	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NR AND RES T&F	PERCENTAGE OF NR T&F COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Colorado State U.	50	\$65,203	\$40,834	\$24,369	53.1%
Oregon State U.	23	\$58,310	\$31,103	\$27,207	59.4%
Washington State U. †	52	\$66,306	\$30,702	\$35,604	52.3%
Total Public	125				
Average		\$63,273	\$34,213	\$29,060	54.9%
Median		\$65,203	\$31,103	\$27,207	53.1%

PRIVATE INSTITUTION	PSEP STUDENTS ENROLLED	TUIION & FEES	TUIION & FEES PAID BY STUDENT	PERCENTAGE OF TUIION & FEES COVERED BY SUPPORT FEE
Midwestern U. (Glendale)	12	\$73,774	\$39,124	47.0%
Total Private	12			

TOTAL PSEP ENROLLMENT	137	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF COVERAGE (NONRESIDENT AND PRIVATE)	52.9%
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ABBREVIATION KEY

DIFF: Difference	RES: Resident
NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
OOR: Out of region (not in a WICHE state)	STU: Student
PROG: Program	T&F: Tuition and fees

AMT SPT FEE EXCEEDS NR/RES DIFF, OR AMT STU PAYS (IN ADDITION TO RES T&F) IF SPT FEE DOESN'T COVER NR/RES DIFF	ADDITIONAL \$ APPLIED TO STUDENT RES TUITION	INCENTIVE TO PROG CAPPED AT 20% OF SPT FEE (PER STU)	STUDENT T&F RESPONSIBILITY WITH CAPPED INCENTIVE	TOTAL REVENUE RECEIVED BY PROGRAM (PER STUDENT)
\$10,281	\$3,351	\$6,930	\$37,483	\$72,133
\$7,443	\$513	\$6,930	\$30,590	\$65,240
(\$954)	\$0	\$0	\$31,656	\$66,306
\$5,590	\$1,288	\$4,620	\$33,243	\$67,893
\$7,443	\$513	\$6,930	\$31,656	\$66,306

† The WICHE support fee does not cover the resident/nonresident tuition differential.

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees: AY 2025 and 2026, State/Territory Summaries

STATE/ TERRITORY	NO. OF STUDENTS AY 2023	APPROVED FEES AY 2024	PROPOSED FEES AY 2025	PROJECTED INCREASE FROM AY 2024 TO 2025	PROPOSED FEES AY 2026	PROJECTED INCREASE FROM AY 2025 TO 2026
Alaska	0	\$0	\$0	\$0 0.00%	\$0	\$0 0.00%
Arizona	143	\$4,030,975	\$4,207,200	\$176,225 4.37%	\$4,388,925	\$181,725 4.32%
Colorado	19	\$390,925	\$408,025	\$17,100 4.37%	\$425,600	\$17,575 4.31%
CNMI	1	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$875 4.29%	\$22,225	\$950 4.47%
Hawai'i	55	\$1,353,600	\$1,412,675	\$59,075 4.36%	\$1,473,825	\$61,150 4.33%
Montana	91	\$2,791,900	\$2,913,625	\$121,725 4.36%	\$3,040,075	\$126,450 4.34%
Nevada	41	\$720,050	\$751,275	\$31,225 4.34%	\$784,125	\$32,850 4.37%
New Mexico	59	\$1,923,125	\$2,007,125	\$84,000 4.37%	\$2,094,000	\$86,875 4.33%
North Dakota	38	\$1,014,500	\$1,058,750	\$44,250 4.36%	\$1,104,500	\$45,750 4.32%
Utah	30	\$586,175	\$611,800	\$25,625 4.37%	\$638,175	\$26,375 4.31%
Wyoming	80	\$2,161,025	\$2,255,325	\$94,300 4.36%	\$2,353,075	\$97,750 4.33%
Total	557	\$14,992,675	\$15,647,075	\$654,400 4.36%	\$16,324,525	\$677,450 4.33%

Note: The numbers presented are estimates; each state/territory must verify its own numbers to account for fee variations at institutions where its students are enrolled; fees for accelerated programs are higher. The projected increases are in some instances slightly more or less than the proposed 4.35 percent increase because support fees were rounded. The number of students supported in each field also affects the total percentage increase. These estimates do not include Guam; the exact number of students they will award for AY 2024 is TBC.

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees by State/Territory: AY 2025 and 2026

Important: The estimated fiscal impact of the proposed PSEP support fees presented here is based on current year enrollments, using standard support fee levels for each field. For year-round or accelerated programs, higher support fees apply. These estimates do not include Guam; the exact number of students they will award for AY 2024 is TBC.

ALASKA						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Occupational Therapy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Optometry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Physical Therapy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Physician Assistant	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Podiatry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pharmacy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Percent Change				0%		0%

ARIZONA						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	45	\$1,345,500	\$1,404,000	\$58,500	\$1,464,750	\$60,750
Optometry	21	\$432,075	\$450,975	\$18,900	\$470,400	\$19,425
Osteopathic Medicine	41	\$1,049,600	\$1,095,725	\$46,125	\$1,142,875	\$47,150
Podiatry	4	\$71,000	\$74,100	\$3,100	\$77,300	\$3,200
Veterinary Medicine	32	\$1,132,800	\$1,182,400	\$49,600	\$1,233,600	\$51,200
Total	143	\$4,030,975	\$4,207,200	\$176,225	\$4,388,925	\$181,725
Percent Change				4.37%		4.32%

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees by State/Territory: AY 2025 and 2026 *(continued)*

COLORADO						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Optometry	19	\$390,925	\$408,025	\$17,100	\$425,600	\$17,575
Total	19	\$390,925	\$408,025	\$17,100	\$425,600	\$17,575
Percent Change				4.37%		4.31%

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Medicine	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Occupational Therapy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Osteopathic Medicine	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Physical Therapy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Physician Assistant	1	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$875	\$22,225	\$950
Veterinary Medicine	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pharmacy	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	1	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$875	\$22,225	\$950
Percent Change				4.29%		4.47%

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees by State/Territory: AY 2025 and 2026 *(continued)*

HAWAII						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	8	\$239,200	\$249,600	\$10,400	\$260,400	\$10,800
Occupational Therapy	5	\$78,125	\$81,500	\$3,375	\$85,125	\$3,625
Optometry	12	\$246,900	\$257,700	\$10,800	\$268,800	\$11,100
Physical Therapy	15	\$258,375	\$269,625	\$11,250	\$281,250	\$11,625
Veterinary Medicine	15	\$531,000	\$554,250	\$23,250	\$578,250	\$24,000
Total	55	\$1,353,600	\$1,412,675	\$59,075	\$1,473,825	\$61,150
Percent Change				4.36%		4.33%

MONTANA						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	16	\$478,400	\$499,200	\$20,800	\$520,800	\$21,600
Medicine	28	\$999,600	\$1,043,000	\$43,400	\$1,088,500	\$45,500
Occupational Therapy	5	\$78,125	\$81,500	\$3,375	\$85,125	\$3,625
Optometry	9	\$185,175	\$193,275	\$8,100	\$201,600	\$8,325
Osteopathic Medicine	12	\$307,200	\$320,700	\$13,500	\$334,500	\$13,800
Podiatry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Veterinary Medicine	21	\$743,400	\$775,950	\$32,550	\$809,550	\$33,600
Total	91	\$2,791,900	\$2,913,625	\$121,725	\$3,040,075	\$126,450
Percent Change				4.36%		4.34%

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees by State/Territory: AY 2025 and 2026 *(continued)*

NEVADA						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Occupational Therapy	8	\$125,000	\$130,400	\$5,400	\$136,200	\$5,800
Pharmacy	10	\$91,250	\$95,250	\$4,000	\$99,250	\$4,000
Physical Therapy	8	\$137,800	\$143,800	\$6,000	\$150,000	\$6,200
Physician Assistant	11	\$224,400	\$234,025	\$9,625	\$244,475	\$10,450
Veterinary Medicine	4	\$141,600	\$147,800	\$6,200	\$154,200	\$6,400
Total	41	\$720,050	\$751,275	\$31,225	\$784,125	\$32,850
Percent Change				4.34%		4.37%

NEW MEXICO						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	22	\$657,800	\$686,400	\$28,600	\$716,100	\$29,700
Optometry	3	\$61,725	\$64,425	\$2,700	\$67,200	\$2,775
Veterinary Medicine	34	\$1,203,600	\$1,256,300	\$52,700	\$1,310,700	\$54,400
Total	59	\$1,923,125	\$2,007,125	\$84,000	\$2,094,000	\$86,875
Percent Change				4.37%		4.33%

NORTH DAKOTA						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	17	\$508,300	\$530,400	\$22,100	\$553,350	\$22,950
Optometry	16	\$329,200	\$343,600	\$14,400	\$358,400	\$14,800
Veterinary Medicine	5	\$177,000	\$184,750	\$7,750	\$192,750	\$8,000
Total	38	\$1,014,500	\$1,058,750	\$44,250	\$1,104,500	\$45,750
Percent Change				4.36%		4.32%

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed PSEP Support Fees by State/Territory: AY 2025 and 2026 *(continued)*

UTAH						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Optometry	19	\$390,925	\$408,025	\$17,100	\$425,600	\$17,575
Podiatry	11	\$195,250	\$203,775	\$8,525	\$212,575	\$8,800
Total	30	\$586,175	\$611,800	\$25,625	\$638,175	\$26,375
Percent Change				4.37%		4.31%

WYOMING						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	7	\$209,300	\$218,400	\$9,100	\$227,850	\$9,450
Medicine	9	\$321,300	\$335,250	\$13,950	\$349,875	\$14,625
Occupational Therapy	5	\$78,125	\$81,500	\$3,375	\$85,125	\$3,625
Optometry	8	\$164,600	\$171,800	\$7,200	\$179,200	\$7,400
Osteopathic Medicine	4	\$102,400	\$106,900	\$4,500	\$111,500	\$4,600
Physical Therapy	20	\$344,500	\$359,500	\$15,000	\$375,000	\$15,500
Physician Assistant	1	\$20,400	\$21,275	\$875	\$22,225	\$950
Podiatry	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Veterinary Medicine	26	\$920,400	\$960,700	\$40,300	\$1,002,300	\$41,600
Total	80	\$2,161,025	\$2,255,325	\$94,300	\$2,353,075	\$97,750
Percent Change				4.36%		4.33%

Estimated Fiscal Impact of the Proposed Support Fees for the AY 2025 and AY 2026 Biennium by Academic Field

TOTALS BY ACADEMIC FIELD						
Field	No. of Students AY 2023	Approved Fees AY 2024	Projected Fees AY 2025	Projected Increase from AY 2024 to 2025	Projected Fees AY 2026	Projected Increase from AY 2025 to 2026
Dentistry	115	\$3,438,500	\$3,588,000	\$149,500	\$3,743,250	\$155,250
Medicine	37	\$1,320,900	\$1,378,250	\$57,350	\$1,438,375	\$60,125
Occupational Therapy	23	\$359,375	\$374,900	\$15,525	\$391,575	\$16,675
Optometry	107	\$2,201,525	\$2,297,825	\$96,300	\$2,396,800	\$98,975
Osteopathic Medicine	57	\$1,459,200	\$1,523,325	\$64,125	\$1,588,875	\$65,550
Physical Therapy	43	\$740,675	\$772,925	\$32,250	\$806,250	\$33,325
Physician Assistant	13	\$265,200	\$276,575	\$11,375	\$288,925	\$12,350
Podiatry	15	\$266,250	\$277,875	\$11,625	\$289,875	\$12,000
Veterinary Medicine	137	\$4,849,800	\$5,062,150	\$212,350	\$5,281,350	\$219,200
Pharmacy	10	\$91,250	\$95,250	\$4,000	\$99,250	\$4,000
Total	557	\$14,992,675	\$15,647,075	\$654,400	\$16,324,525	\$677,450
Percent Change				4.36%		4.33%

Survey of Cooperating Programs

The table below summarizes by PSEP field: state and territory investment, current coverage of the support fees, national workforce projections, earning potential, and average student debt for new graduates.

WICHE PSEP Fast Facts AY 2023-2024

ABBREVIATION KEY

BLS: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	NR: Nonresident	SPT: Support
DIFF: Differential	PROG: Programs	STU: Students
INV: Investment	RES: Resident	T&F: Tuition and fees

FIELD	AY 2023 # STU; # STATES; \$ INV	PROPOSED INCREASE; SPT FEES AY 2025 AND AY 2026	% NR/ PRIV TUITION THAT AY 2023 SPT FEE COVERS	# OF PUBLIC PROG WHERE SPT FEES COVER RES/NR DIFF	AVG T&F INCREASE, AY 2020 TO AY 2021	EST. GROWTH %; EMPLOYMENT CHANGE, 2020- 2030 (BLS)	MEDIAN PAY 2020 (BLS)	AVG STU DEBT; CLASS YEAR, SOURCE
Dentistry	115; AK, AZ, CNMI, HI, MT, NM, ND, WY; \$3,422,250	4.35%; \$31,200 \$32,550	31.2%	4 out of 8	3.55%	4%; 6,800	\$159,530	\$280,700; 2023, American Dental Education Association (ADEA)
Medicine (Allopathic)	37; CNMI, GU†, MT, WY; \$1,231,989	4.35%; \$37,250 \$38,875	55.1%	13 out of 14	2.24%	3%; 24,600	\$229,300	Public: \$197,843 Private: \$222,381 2022, Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Occupational Therapy	23; AK, CNMI, GU†, HI, MT, NV, WY; \$321,300	4.35%; \$16,300 \$17,025	34.2%	2 out of 8	1.48%	12%; 16,100	\$93,180	No student debt info available.; American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

FIELD	AY 2023 # STU; # STATES; \$ INV	PROPOSED INCREASE; SPT FEES AY 2025 AND AY 2026	% NR/ PRIV TUITION THAT AY 2023 SPT FEE COVERS	# OF PUBLIC PROG WHERE SPT FEES COVER RES/NR DIFF	AVG T&F INCREASE, AY 2020 TO AY 2021	EST. GROWTH %; EMPLOYMENT CHANGE, 2020-2030 (BLS)	MEDIAN PAY 2020 (BLS)	AVG STU DEBT; CLASS YEAR, SOURCE
Optometry	107; AK, AZ, CNMI, CO, HI, MT, NV, NM, ND, UT, WY; \$2,125,512	4.35%; \$21,475 \$22,400	37.0%	N/A	3.71%	9%; 3,800	\$125,590	\$187,075 ; 2022, Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO)
Osteopathic Medicine	57; AZ, CNMI, GU†, MT, WY; \$1,377,750	4.35%; \$26,725 \$27,875	36.0%	N/A	3.80%	3%; 24,600	\$229,300	Public: \$236,175 Private: \$259,652; 2023, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM)
Physical Therapy	43; AK, CNMI, GU†, HI, NV, WY; \$724,550	4.35%; \$17,975 \$18,750	34.8%	4 out of 12	2.96%	15%; 37,300	\$97,720	\$116,183; 2020, American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)
Physician Assistant	13; AK, CNMI, NV, WY; \$259,350	4.35%; \$21,275 \$22,225	36.6%	4 out of 7	2.87%	27%; 39,300	\$126,010	\$112,500; National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)

FIELD	AY 2023 # STU; # STATES; \$ INV	PROPOSED INCREASE; SPT FEES AY 2025 AND AY 2026	% NR/ PRIV TUITION THAT AY 2023 SPT FEE COVERS	# OF PUBLIC PROG WHERE SPT FEES COVER RES/NR DIFF	AVG T&F INCREASE, AY 2020 TO AY 2021	EST. GROWTH %; EMPLOYMENT CHANGE, 2020- 2030 (BLS)	MEDIAN PAY 2020 (BLS)	AVG STU DEBT; CLASS YEAR, SOURCE
Podiatry	15; AK, AZ, MT, UT, WY; \$243,250	4.35%; \$18,525 \$19,325	33.7%	N/A	3.13%	1%; 100	\$148,720	\$196,030; 2020, National Center for Education Statistics
Veterinary Medicine	137; AZ*, CNMI, HI, MT, NV**, NM, ND, WY; \$4,695,075	4.35%; \$36,950 \$38,550	52.9%	2 out of 3	2.11%	20% 17,700	\$103,260	\$147,258; 2022, American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
Pharmacy	10; AK, GU†, CNMI, NV; \$119,000	4.35%; \$9,525 \$9,925	19.3%	N/A	2.11%	3%; 8,700	\$132,750	\$158,000; 2023, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP)

* Funding for new Arizona DVM students enrolling summer/fall 2024 very limited; applicants must meet special requirements to be considered.

** Support for Veterinary Medicine was discontinued in 2021 but was reinstated in the 2023 Nevada legislative session. Currently all four slots for Nevada Veterinary Medicine have been filled and there are no new slots available.

† Guam will begin funding students in Medicine (Allopathic), Osteopathic Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Pharmacy starting AY 2024.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the FY 2025 Workplan Section Pertaining to the Programs and Services Unit



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Academic Leaders Toolkit	A/S	Western	(included in Forum and Alliance)	Forum and Alliance members
MHECare Student Health Solutions	A/F, A/S	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.1	Four vendors offering student, faculty, and staff health insurance and behavioral health services for students
MHECtech Technology Contracts	A/F	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.88	21 vendors offering hardware, software, printers and peripherals, data and networking, security services, and other technology services
Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)	A/F, A/S, W/S	Western	1.2	All WICHE states, CNMI, and Guam fund and/or enroll students through PSEP's 130+ cooperating programs
Western Academic Leadership Academy (Academy)	W/S, V/A	Western	.10 and consultants	Forum and Alliance members
Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) • Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting • Collaborative Projects	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 52 institutions, 9 systems
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) • Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting • Collaborative Projects	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 68 institutions, 8 systems
Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 67 participating institutions
Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 169 participating institutions

The **ACADEMIC LEADERS TOOLKIT**, jointly funded by the Alliance and Forum, is a peer-reviewed, searchable online repository of decision-making tools that college, university, and system-level academic leaders contribute. Tools in various categories — program evaluation, creation, and elimination; faculty recruitment and retention; and learning-outcomes assessment — help academic leaders address various challenges.

MHECARE STUDENT HEALTH SOLUTIONS, a MHEC partnership available to WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions offers institutions and systems a student health insurance plan underwritten by UnitedHealthcare Student Resources (UHCSR). UHCSR was selected through a competitive bid process, enabling member institutions to avoid a time- and resource-consuming request-for-proposal (RFP) process. MHECare now includes META Teletherapy and TAOConnect, which offers teletherapy services for students seeking counseling services. The most recent addition to MHECare is a whole health program for students, their dependents, graduates, and faculty and staff through HealthMarkets.

MHEC TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTS enables institutions to purchase off competitively bid master purchasing agreements for an array of hardware, software, and technology services. Several agreements are available to K-12 districts; state, county, local governments; and education-related nonprofits. More than 1,600 institutions and other entities in the WICHE region benefit from aggregated volume purchases that lower product costs and save institutions money and time.

The **PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM** (PSEP) provides affordable access for students to 130+ healthcare professional programs at more than 60 institutions and in 10 healthcare fields. In academic year (AY) 2023-24, 557 students from 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) received \$14.5 million (reflecting investment by their home-state legislatures) in tuition benefits through PSEP. Since its 1953 inception, PSEP has helped more than 15,900 students, many of whom return to their home states to fill key healthcare positions. Staff are working with the Commission to implement recommendations from the 2023 PSEP Field Assessment and Review to ensure the program is an effective tool to meet the workforce needs of the West.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** (Academy) is a yearlong professional development program to expand the qualified chief academic leadership pipeline for two- and four-year institutions in the West. Academy activities focus on understanding the context of academic leadership, setting academic goals and priorities, and developing specific skill sets required of chief academic officers. Its seventh cohort, nominated by Forum and the Alliance members, commenced in July 2023.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM** (Forum) brings together WICHE-region chief academic leaders from four-year institutions, associated systems, and state coordinating and governing boards to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. The Forum is funded primarily by membership dues, with additional funding provided by annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS** (Alliance) brings together academic leaders at community colleges and technical schools and related systems and state agencies to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives supporting the two-year higher education sector. Like the Forum, the Alliance is funded by membership dues and annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM** (WRGP) allows WICHE-region residents to pay reduced nonresident tuition rates for approximately 2,000 master’s degrees, graduate certificate, and doctoral programs at 67 participating public universities. In AY 2023-24, 2,877 students saved an estimated \$39.2 million in tuition through WRGP. Structured similarly to the WUE, Western public universities may make any graduate program eligible at the WRGP tuition rate at their discretion, which has significantly increased the number of students who can benefit. Participating institutions may also now have the option to charge WRGP students up to 150% of resident tuition, but the vast majority continue to charge students resident tuition.

The **WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE** (WUE) is WICHE’s signature undergraduate tuition savings program and the nation’s largest of its kind, saving 47,248 students an estimated \$559.1 million in tuition in AY 2023-24. Currently, 167 public two- and four-year WICHE-region institutions allow WUE students to pay no more than 150% of resident tuition instead of nonresident tuition. The Programs and Services unit will continue to expand the marketing of WUE and WRGP to benefit more students and institutions through targeted, state-specific publicity and activities, as well as increased outreach to high school counselors and admissions advisers.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Interstate Passport®	A/S, I	U.S.		.1 FTE	72 institutions in 21 states across the country are members. Institutions in these and several other states are in the exploratory stage.
WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities	A/S, W/S	Western	Mellon Foundation \$1.5 million grant	1.30 FTE	Western postsecondary institutions

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It was the only nationwide network of institutionally accredited, nonprofit, public, and private two- and four-year institutions dedicated to general education attainment block transfer. It also provided institutions in the network with an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students, designed by registrars and institutional researchers in conjunction with the National Student Clearinghouse. The goal of Interstate Passport was to eliminate transfer students’ unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved.




The **WICHE ACADEMY FOR LEADERS IN THE HUMANITIES** offers leadership development to tenured humanities faculty members. WICHE is collaborating with the Mellon Foundation and other key stakeholders to develop a two-year, campus-based immersive experience for faculty leaders. These leaders attend a three-day WICHE Institute for Leaders in the Humanities in Boulder, Colorado, focused on three key competencies: career planning and development, project management, and organizational design and agility. They will collaborate with upper-level academic administration to learn more about day-to-day operations, craft a campus project, receive internal and external mentoring, and develop a new network with the fellows appointed at other institutions.


New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Compact for Faculty Diversity	A/S, W/S		National	TBD	TBD	MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
No Holding Back - Assessing the Use of Administrative Holds	A/S, A/F		U.S.	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), National Association of Collegiate and University Business Officers (NACUBO), members of the Alliance and Forum, Policy Analysis and Research, MHEC, SREB, NEBHE		
Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice	A/S		U.S.	Seeking additional external funding to assist NASNTIs further and sustain an institutional network	TBD	NASNTI's Tribal colleges, Tribal education departments, higher education organizations

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	I, W/S		Western	In-kind	.05 FY 2025	WCET, DHS, FEMA

The **COMPACT FOR FACULTY DIVERSITY:** Staff members are collaborating with the other three higher education regional compacts to seek funding to reinvigorate the Compact for Faculty Diversity and its associated Doctoral Scholars Program. The programs would address the significant imbalance that continues nationwide in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of faculties. The goals of the initiative are to increase faculty diversity in all ranks and across all institution types to equal or exceed the diversity of the nation by engaging postsecondary systems, institutions, and leaders in concrete commitments to increase the hiring of faculty of color, supported by specific action plans.

NO HOLDING BACK – ASSESSING THE USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HOLDS: WICHE's Programs and Services unit and Policy Analysis and Research unit collaborated with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions to provide institutions in the West with tools to (re)evaluate their administrative hold policies to improve student success and to use their data in policy formation better. We will continue disseminating these resources and seek new partners interested in continued application of the tools and policy implications.

REDUCING THE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GAP FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES: Linking policy and practice, an initiative begun in late 2017 with funding from Lumina Foundation, continues to have strong relevance in light of the persistent postsecondary attainment gap of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students compared to other student populations. Staff will seek funding to continue efforts to reduce or eliminate these gaps at Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) by supporting culturally relevant high-impact practices and fostering institutional and tribal collaborations to share and expand sustainable student support systems on campuses. Another major objective going forward is to continue to strengthen the NASNTI presence and impact in state and federal higher education policy arenas and to create a collaborative network of institutions serving large numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

CYBERSECURITY TRAINING FOR SENIOR NONTECHNICAL LEADERS: As an additional component of the cybersecurity initiative, WICHE is continuing to develop partnerships with cyber experts and conducting outreach to WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to provide training for institutional nontechnical leaders for cyber protection.

Projects to be Removed from Workplan

Work that staff previously considered pursuing but now propose to remove from the Workplan.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
MHEC Cyber Insurance	A/F	■ ■ ■ ■	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB		0.1	All WICHE members are eligible
Online Course Exchange – FlexPATH Alliance	A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	U.S.	Grant request pending: \$1,416,883 National Science Foundation sub-award (5 years) The FlexPATH grant was not funded.	1.9	University of Nevada, Reno; New Mexico State University; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; and their respective community colleges
Online Course Exchange	A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	U.S.		0	1 consortium serving 16 institutions

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

The **ALLIANCE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** would identify, develop, and prepare aspiring academic leaders for career advancement and success in progressively more complex administrative roles at community, junior, and technical colleges across the West.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

The **PSEP FIELD ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW** conducted in 2023 studied the healthcare professions (dentistry, allopathic medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, and veterinary medicine) currently served by the PSEP program. The final assessment, delivered to the Programs and Services Committee in November 2023, reported how well these health fields are meeting regional workforce needs. It also recommended other professional areas that may help meet the region’s current or future workforce needs.

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria.

STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAMS UPDATE

The annual report, *Student Access Programs: By the Numbers*, for academic year (AY) 2023-24 was published in March 2024 and is available online at <https://www.wiche.edu/resources/student-access-programs-by-the-numbers-ay-2023-24/>.

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)

The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is the largest regional tuition savings program in the nation, in terms of the number of participating states and Pacific jurisdictions, the largest number of participating institutions that offer the discounted tuition rate, and the largest number of students that use the program to save money on tuition costs. Students from a WICHE state or Pacific jurisdiction can choose from 169 two- or four-year public colleges or universities and pay no more than 150% of that institution's resident tuition.

In AY 2023-24, 47,248 students and their families saved \$559.1 million in tuition. Compared to AY 2022-23, overall WUE enrollments increased by 2.5%, WUE enrollment at four-year universities increased by 3%, and WUE enrollment at two-year colleges dropped by less than 1%.

WUE enrollment for this academic year was somewhat the inverse of national trends when split by sector (two-year and four-year). According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, undergraduate enrollment grew by 1.2%, with community college enrollment seeing the highest growth at 2.6%, and four-year institutions experiencing increases of only 0.6%.

Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) allows graduate certificate, master's, and doctoral students who are residents of WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to affordably enroll in more than 2,000 graduate programs at 67 public institutions in the West. Students can enroll as nonresidents and pay up to 150% of resident tuition, though the majority of WRGP institutions charge students resident tuition.

In AY 2023-24, 2,877 students saved \$39.2 million in tuition through WRGP. WRGP enrollment dropped by 7%, or 205 students, from the previous year. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, graduate enrollment grew nationally by 0.6%, but it was not enough to offset last year's decline of 0.9%.

Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)

The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) has been a critically important mechanism for WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to increase the supply of physicians, dentists, optometrists, veterinarians, and other healthcare professionals. Since 1953, WICHE has supported the education of more than 15,900 Western residents with affordable access to professional healthcare degrees through PSEP. More than 130 accredited programs are offered through PSEP at 63 institutions.

In AY 2023-24, 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) invested more than \$14.5 million to grow their healthcare workforce by reducing the educational costs

of 557 students. In AY 2022-23, a total of 586 students received PSEP support after two states made late awards in Spring 2024.

The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) conducted a study on PSEP in 2023 and reported its findings to the Programs and Services Committee at the November 2023 Commission Meeting in Riverside, California. The purpose of the study was to assess participation in the PSEP program and analyze workforce projections for the professional healthcare programs offered through PSEP. NCHEMS looked at workforce projections and educational supply data to provide information regarding gaps that PSEP might address. For additional detail on the assessment findings, please see the November 9, 2023, minutes for the committee meeting earlier in this tab, beginning on page 6-3. Conversations are underway about the next steps to respond to the assessment findings.

Certifying Officers Meeting

Certifying officers, who are staff members of higher education agencies or institutional systems in that do not have a higher education agency, play an essential role in the participation of the WICHE region in the Student Access Programs. In states, as well as Guam and CNMI, that fund students through PSEP, certifying officers review prospective students' applications for certification to determine whether they meet residency criteria and are eligible to be considered for support. Certifying officers administer all aspects of PSEP for their residents and serve as liaisons for the WUE and WRGP programs. Certifying officers will meet May 5, 2024, just before the WICHE Commission meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council Meeting

The Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council (VMAC) serves as a forum for communication and as a liaison among WICHE staff, states (no Pacific jurisdictions participate currently), and the region's schools of veterinary medicine, with the aim of ensuring that the region's workforce needs are met. Each WICHE state may appoint two members to the council. Candidates are nominated by the respective state's Executive Committee member on the Commission, in consultation with each state's higher education agency and its state veterinary association.

Members of the council may include legislators with expertise in the profession, state veterinarians, and practicing veterinarians, all of whom are members of state veterinary associations. Deans of the colleges of veterinary medicine and WICHE's director of Student Access Programs and vice president of Programs and Services are ex officio, nonvoting members. Council members will meet in Las Cruces, New Mexico, on May 29-31, 2024, hosted by New Mexico State University's Department of Extension Animal Sciences and Natural Resources.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

Interstate Passport® and Credit Mobility Efforts

In May 2023, WICHE announced that it would stop recruiting Interstate Passport Network members and cease network support on December 31, 2023. This decision was made after surveying member institutions and consulting with the Passport Review Board. Since then, WICHE staff have produced the program's final annual report, convened a group to develop an interstate transfer articulation agreement, and worked on the planned online resource center. The final Interstate Passport annual report was published in March 2024. WICHE staff will continue building the online resource center (<https://www.wiche.edu/interstate-passport/>) to preserve the lessons learned from this 10-year project and provide access to Interstate Passport Network members.

Interest in transfer and credit mobility initiatives remains high among postsecondary leaders and professionals. In November 2023, WICHE staff were invited to attend a meeting hosted by the U.S. Department of Education that focused on transfer and credit mobility. The *Raise the Bar: Lead the World* initiative has several key focus areas, one of which is college excellence and equity; the meeting's theme was *Tackling Transfer to Increase Access, Improve Completion, and Prepare Today's Workforce* and focused on conducting a state transfer policy audit, convening statewide transfer councils, implementing an effective state transfer policy, avoiding policy pitfalls, and employing transfer as a workforce development strategy. Attendees also previewed new measures of postsecondary education transfer performance. The [data](#) are available online in an ED.gov blog post.

WICHE received funds from an anonymous granting agency in August 2022 to support the technology capacity and student-facing support for the Network and others working on new transfer practices. In November 2023, WICHE revised the focus of these funds to support technological innovations that address credit mobility and student success in the WICHE region. Institutional partners will develop technology innovations that improve their communication and student success. A request for proposals was developed to find interested institutions in the WICHE region. The RFP closed on March 17, 2024.

Alliance and Forum

The Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (two-year institution academic leaders) and the Western Academic Leadership Forum (four-year institution academic leaders) provide support and networking for senior academic leaders at colleges and universities across the West. Known as the Alliance and the Forum, respectively, these membership organizations offered by WICHE serve as incubators for collaborating and problem solving. Annually, both groups meet to discuss current issues and trends of interest to academic leaders in the West. The table below lists recent and upcoming meetings.

Annual Meeting Information

ORGANIZATION	THEME	HOST/LOCATION	DATE	ATTENDEES (INCLUDING STAFF)
Alliance	Trailblazing a New Pathway: Challenging Assumptions about Community College	Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, Tacoma, WA	October 4-6, 2023	61
Forum	Bridging Place and Purpose	University of Hawai'i System, Honolulu, HI	April 3-5, 2024	69 attendees
Alliance and Forum Joint Meeting	TBD	Reno, NV	April 23-25, 2025	100 (budgeted)

Over the last decade, 198 postsecondary institutions paid membership dues to WICHE to enable their chief academic officers, provosts, and others to participate in the Forum and/or the Alliance. At the start of fiscal year (FY) 2024, Alliance membership was 69 institutions and eight systems, while the Forum had 53 institutions and 10 systems. Though membership has remained steady, lower meeting attendance and higher meeting expenses have impacted the overall budgets of both groups in recent years. WICHE staff are discussing with the Alliance and Forum Executive Committees about developing member engagement and programming, boosting membership, and increasing the number of sponsors. The April 2025 joint meeting will allow the leadership of both groups to collaborate on programming of interest to leaders in both the two-year and four-year postsecondary sectors.

No Holding Back: Assessing the Use of Administrative Holds

WICHE, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and 12 public universities and colleges in the West concluded their original collaboration as the 2022-23 No Holding Back community of practice in January 25–26, 2024, with a final learning event and collaborative discussion about the forthcoming need to comply with new federal transcript withholding regulations by July 1, 2024.

Initially funded by Ascendium Education Group and Lumina Foundation through January 31, 2024, WICHE continues fundraising and activities to increase understanding and reform of the use of holds that restrict registration or official transcripts to get college student action or payment on student accounts. The ongoing focus is on highlighting student experiences and enabling institutions to (re) evaluate their hold policies and practices to support institutional and student success, through public appearances, workshops, and an online resource center (<https://www.wiche.edu/administrative-holds/>) with video content, student features, institutional case study examples, and tools for reforming the use of holds.

The Western Academic Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy started in 2015. Since its inception, 121 individuals from 57 institutions have participated in the program that prepares aspiring leaders already working in academic affairs for the

provost or chief academic officer role. The four-day in-person program is supplemented by a yearlong mentorship from postsecondary leaders. Program participants first meet in Boulder, Colorado, and have their last session during the Forum annual meeting. Drawing participants from the Forum and the Alliance, 18 academic leaders have been nominated to participate in the 2024 Leadership Academy.

The WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities

In July 2022, the Mellon Foundation granted WICHE \$1.5 million in funding to support the WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities. The program launched in August 2023. The Academy is a two-year fellowship program experience and includes a three-day leadership workshop, as well as an on-campus mentor and leadership development. Each fellow also has an external advisor.

Eight faculty leaders and eight institutional mentors across seven WICHE states were selected to participate in the inaugural leadership development program; 23 people applied for the eight available fellowships. (WICHE staff running the program did not serve on the selection committee.) The mentors attended a one-and-a-half-day workshop in Boulder, Colorado, to discuss their roles as mentors in the program. The main discussion topics included being an active listener and guide, building trust between the mentor and mentee, setting goals, encouraging and empowering the mentee, and giving actionable feedback. Every quarter, mentors will meet as a community of practice to discuss progress and challenges.

The fellows participated in a three-day workshop, called the WICHE Institute for Leaders in the Humanities, about program development and process improvement, career planning and development, and organization design and agility. The fellows began meeting virtually once a month in Fall 2023 to further their development and discuss their progress and experience. The fellows also meet with their external advisors quarterly. For the first cohort, external advisors are certified executive coaches.

Applications for the second cohort of the WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities was open through March 2024. Staff are discussing how to sustain the faculty leadership program after the grant's conclusion on June 30, 2025.

COST-SAVINGS INITIATIVE UPDATES

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) cost-savings programs are competitively awarded contracts that leverage the benefits and potential volume of the region's purchasing power while saving institutions and other entities time and money by simplifying the procurement process. WICHE-region educational institutions, nonprofits, and public education entities can participate in and benefit from these MHEC programs.

Cyber Insurance

In Fall 2023, MHEC discontinued the Cyber Insurance program. The program was established in 2018 to provide an option to institutions in the four regional compact regions to purchase cyber insurance coverage tailored to deliver the right mix of risk transfer and advisory solutions for institutions to assess, manage, and respond to their risk. Though higher education institutions continue to face significant and increasing cyber threats due to the valuable information stored on their networks, and challenges for administrators to effectively secure the networks because of the size of the networks and the need for multiple campus stakeholders to access the information, the Cyber Insurance program administered by insurance broker Marsh never found a sustainable number of subscribers.

MHECare Student Health Solutions

MHECare offers campuses with a school-sponsored student health insurance plan the flexibility to tailor injury and sickness plans specifically for domestic and international students with national carrier UnitedHealthcare StudentResources (UHCSR). Emergency medical travel services, vision and dental plans, and insurance for specific groups like study abroad and special summer programs are also available from UHCSR. Public and private not-for-profit postsecondary institutions in areas served by MHEC, New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and WICHE, under the MHECare Student Health Solutions umbrella, have access to two mental health counseling services at prenegotiated, affordable rates for their students. META Teletherapy provides access to a nationwide network of licensed mental health providers. MHEC also added TAO Connect Inc., which offers institutions of higher education access to over 150 brief, effective, evidence-based educational sessions covering more than 50 common topics and skills related to mental health, wellness, and substance use issues.

The most recent addition to MHECare is HealthMarkets Insurance Agency, Inc. HealthMarkets offers institutions of higher learning an easy avenue for students and their dependents to find health insurance that meets their needs. As one of the largest health insurance agencies in the United States, HealthMarkets is licensed to market and sell health insurance in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. HealthMarkets partners with over 200 insurance carriers, bringing choice and convenience to the insurance buying process.

Institutions of higher education interested in offering access to this service will be provided an institution-specific website that connects students, their dependents, and graduates searching for health insurance to HealthMarkets services. Users can shop online or receive personal assistance from a licensed insurance agent, at no cost to them. HealthMarkets offers access to health insurance plans, injury and sickness plans, and supplemental plans like dental and vision. HealthMarkets can also help

shoppers determine possible eligibility for premium tax credits and subsidies. In addition, institutions can provide faculty and staff not eligible for employee benefits access to HealthMarkets where appropriate.

MHEC Technologies

MHEC's Technologies Committee and staff use extensive competitive procurement processes to select and negotiate favorable agreements with several vendors, reducing the duplication of procurement processes and helping eligible campuses and other entities save money and increase their purchasing options. The MHEC Technologies website details vendors and eligible entities and links to the vendor contracts. For example, the Dell Technologies contract offers innovative and cost-effective virtualization and data center modernization solutions to assist higher education institutions of all sizes, K-12 districts, and state and local governments throughout 47 states to transition their infrastructure to data centers and networks across various public and private cloud providers. In the suite of cost-saving programs, MHEC Technologies is one of the most accessed programs. Across the West, over 1,000 entities used these contracts to save on technology-contracted services. To learn more about the technology contracts: <https://www.mhec.org/sites/default/files/resources/MHEC-Technologies-Contract-Savings-Explanation.pdf>.

WICHE Group Property Program

On November 18, 2022, MHEC notified WICHE and those serving on its property insurance advisory group that the Master Property Program (MPP) was ending July 1, 2023. On November 21, 2022, MHEC held a virtual meeting to update participating institutions on the program's status. WICHE received assurances that Marsh Inc., the MPP program administrator and insurance broker, would secure quotes for the six institutions and one system participating in MPP. On June 23, 2023, WICHE staff met with Marsh to discuss the challenge of securing a quote for five of the six institutions, which included needing a sponsor organization. As a result, since July 1, 2023, WICHE has assisted five independent colleges and universities that could not secure property insurance quotes and policies by sponsoring the WICHE Group Property Program. These institutions are College Liability Insurance Company (CLIC) members. WICHE staff consulted with then-Commission Chair Matt Freeman on whether WICHE could serve as the group sponsor. These institutions secured a policy and may have collectively saved \$2 million to \$3 million.

In February 2023, the Executive Committee approved an action item for WICHE staff to discuss and design a property program for institutions and systems in the West. These conversations are ongoing.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Meeting

Tuesday, May 7, 2024
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
Marquis 3

Agenda

1 Executive

2 Welcome

3 Plenary I

4 Roundtable

5 Plenary II

6 Programs

7 Policy

8 Behavioral

9 EdTech

10 Business

11 References

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday

May 7, 2024

8:30 –
9:45 a.m.

Marquis 3

Committee Members

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair
John Arnold (AZ), Committee Vice Chair
Tom Begich (AK)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Dave Lent (ID)
Llew Jones (MT)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Bill Soules (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Lisa Skari (OR)
Nathan Lukkes (SD)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)
Patricia Jones (UT)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Kevin Carman (WY)

Agenda




PRESIDING

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair

STAFF

Colleen Falkenstern, Senior Research Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, Policy Analysis and Research

Action Item

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------|
|  | Approval of November 9, 2023, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Meeting Minutes | 7-3 |
|  | Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the FY 2025 Workplan Section Pertaining to the Policy Analysis and Research Unit | 7-10 |
|  | Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Montana’s Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA | 7-18 |



**Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole
to Approve Utah’s Renewal Application to Continue
Participation in W-SARA**

7-34

Discussion Items

**Potential WICHE Position on Federalism and Federal and State
Roles in Postsecondary Education**

7-50

Focusing WICHE Contributions on the Value of Higher Education

Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) Agenda

Information Items

*Tuition and Fees, Appropriations, and Financial Aid in the West: Trends and
Implications, 2023-24*

**Behavioral Health in Postsecondary Education: “Policy Snapshots”
Release**

Update on Other Activities

Other Business

Adjournment

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the November 9, 2023, Policy Analysis and Research Committee Minutes

Committee Members Present

Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair
John Arnold (AZ), Committee Vice Chair
Tom Begich (AK)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Bill Soules (NM)
Lisa Skari (OR) *proxy for Ben Cannon*
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Kevin Carman (WY)

Other Commissioners Present

Robert Shireman (CA)
Barbara Damron (NM)

Staff Present

Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Christina Sedney, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives, Policy Analysis and Research
Liliana Diaz, Senior Policy Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research

Committee Members Absent

Dave Lent (ID)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)
Patricia Jones (UT)

Call to Order

Committee Chair Christopher Cabaldon called the meeting of the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee to order at 10:45 a.m. and asked Patrick Lane to call roll. A quorum was established.

Action Items

APPROVAL OF THE POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 8, 2023

Committee Chair Cabaldon asked if there were any corrections to the May 8, 2023, Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee meeting minutes. There were no corrections requested. Commissioner Gerry Pollet MOVED TO APPROVE and Commissioner Kevin Carman SECONDED the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE TO APPROVE A PROJECT TITLED “TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOCUSED ON STATE AND SYSTEM GOVERNANCE MODELS FOR THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION”

Committee Chair Cabaldon asked Patrick Lane to share his background on the project. Lane noted that what was originally meant to be a straightforward action item (related to providing technical assistance to Nevada on questions about governance) had evolved into responding to a request for proposal (RFP) on the state’s funding formula. The state’s legislative counsel determined that funding for this work must focus on the funding formula alone and, therefore, WICHE was invited to respond to the funding formula RFP instead of conducting work on governance questions. Lane asked Christina Sedney to share additional details on the RFP.

Sedney described the RFP, which called for an examination of other states’ funding allocation models to derive lessons learned for Nevada, as well as an examination of how other states approach the reporting and use of self-supporting accounts at public institutions. She added that WICHE was partnering with researchers from the InformED States group on the proposal, which has collected a nationwide database of state funding and governance models. Lane added that the updated budget for this work was approximately \$300,000 and would increase staff time as a result of the expanded scope compared to the originally proposed governance work.

Commissioner Pollet asked if a component of the work would include interviewing legislators. Sedney said that staff had written this into their proposal; however, staff would ultimately defer to the Nevada System of Higher Education’s guidance on stakeholder engagement strategy. Commissioner John Arnold asked if the results of the work would be public so that other states might benefit from reading them, and Sedney replied that the results would be publicly available at the conclusion of the work. Several commissioners agreed that this type of research could be valuable to review in their states, and Commissioner Arnold asked that staff share the results with the Commission if WICHE was selected.

Sharing from his experience in Nevada, Commissioner Carman said all documents would be public and noted that it was interesting that the state was revisiting the issue. Commissioner Barbara Damron added that WICHE had assisted New Mexico in governance work in the past and was helpful in this effort, highlighting Complete College America’s upcoming *Completion Funding* formula work that will be unveiled in December 2023.

Committee Chair Cabaldon asked for clarification on the differences in proposed budgets between the original and amended proposals, and Lane said that the longer timeline for the funding formula work and the need for external subcontractors largely contributed to the budgetary discrepancies between the two proposals.

Commissioner Tom Begich MOVED TO APPROVE the action item as amended, and Commissioner Carman SECONDED the motion. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed.

Information Items

STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT POLICY MODIFICATION PROCESS UPDATE

Lane provided a summary of the steps and results of the new State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) policy process. He shared that of the five approved proposals, two came from the WICHE region: The first puts into policy a requirement to ensure everyone is appropriately aware of the removal of institutions, including the public, and the second would require institutions to disclose to their state portal entity (SPE) any adverse actions or investigations by oversight entities. He went on to describe the additional approved proposals — all supported by the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA) Regional Steering Committee (RSC) — which harmonized the deadline by which states must remove institutions due to unstable finances; improved communication between National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and the states when institutions are placed on provisional status; and clarified that institutions may not utilize mandatory arbitration agreements for SARA complaints.

Lane also provided some additional background on a proposal that was not approved, in which the PAR Committee had previously expressed interest. This proposal, as amended, would have allowed states to request permission from their compacts to enforce some education specific authorization requirements.

Lane reminded the committee of the Commission-approved process for considering SARA policy proposals, which delegates authority over WICHE's vote on most proposals to the RSC but brings especially important or impactful proposals to the Commission. WICHE's president — in consultation with the Commission officers and the chair of the PAR committee — decides whether to bring a proposal to the Commission for its vote.

Lane noted that this committee had requested that the W-SARA RSC give this proposal due consideration and report back. Committee Chair Cabaldon joined one of the RSC meetings where this proposal was discussed and shared his views of the discussion with the committee via email. Following the recommendation of the W-SARA RSC, the Executive Committee voted against the proposal, with three commissioners supporting it. The other three regions also rejected the proposal, so it was not moved forward to the NC-SARA Board of Directors.

Lane added that W-SARA had strongly supported some proposals that would have increased the floor for institutional participation and given states new tools to handle problematic institutions. These were not approved by all the other regions and, therefore, W-SARA was taking feedback from the other regions on why they did not support the proposals and will continue to refine them and work on some other underlying issues that will hopefully pave the way for these to move forward in the coming years. Lane concluded by taking a moment to reflect on the progress that has been made in the last two years to develop and implement a strong, state-led SARA policy process.

Committee Chair Cabaldon echoed the sentiment and noted that the dramatic increase in transparency and the expansion of eligible participants has been a change and generated good faith engagement from stakeholders, including consumer advocates, institutions, and states, reflecting a shared belief in what is possible through the process. He noted that the new process represented extraordinary progress but has significant room for improvement over future iterations. He highlighted much work

to be done in terms of addressing bigger questions about the agreement and developing a more open and innovative process that includes a broader range of voices.

Commissioner Pollet noted his disappointment in the outcomes of the policy process for the record and asked Lane to comment on the impact of the recent U.S. Department of Education's rulemaking efforts on SARA. Lane noted that WICHE had submitted an official comment, which had previously been shared with commissioners, to the department asking for clarification on how the rules impact SARA. The department replied that the specific language in question does not change the rules about how SARA operates, and that it will be addressed in an upcoming rulemaking specific to the topic of state authorization. Lane offered to provide additional details on the topic to anyone who needed them.

Commissioner Robert Shireman commented that he was also disappointed in the outcome of the process while recognizing the positive structural changes that had occurred. He expressed concern that the minimal number of proposals that did get through the process might discourage future participation from consumer advocates and suggested early and robust outreach to these groups to keep them engaged. He further highlighted opportunities that might exist to improve the policy process, including more time for working together on proposal refinement. Lane responded that WICHE has made an intentional effort to engage with these groups and will continue these efforts moving forward. He shared that W-SARA Director Molly Hall-Martin leads the implementation working group for year two of the policy process and will be focused on building opportunities to get formal feedback on proposals with the option to make amendments.

Commissioner Damron applauded the leadership of staff to catalyze positive change to SARA and asked for clarification about how SARA SPEs would ensure institutional compliance with the newly passed policy on disclosing adverse actions. Lane said that addressing a former shortcoming in policy which allowed action on publicly announced investigations and provide SPEs with additional information needed sooner. He added that a component of the federal rulemaking that WICHE publicly supports is enhanced information sharing among regulatory groups and that this action would support the efforts, although additional work is needed.

Commissioner Begich asked for clarification on future federal actions that might impact SARA. Lane described the possibility of a new negotiated rulemaking effort would directly address state authorization and could raise questions beyond the scope of SARA about how the federal government regulates the manner in which states authorize postsecondary education.

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Sedney provided a summary of the Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) 2023 annual meeting that took place in September 2023 in Phoenix, Arizona, and explored the concept of value in higher education with a focus on costs and benefits to states, institutions, and students. She noted that a record 27 legislators attended, representing 12 WICHE states and territories. Commissioner Pollet added that it was a great meeting and that he and his legislative colleagues appreciated that discussions were conceptual and drilled down on specific policy considerations.

TUITION AND FEES IN THE WEST, 2023-24

Lane shared key takeaways from the latest *Tuition and Fees* report, which was provided to members electronically, highlighting recent trends as well as trends over time in the region.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ROUNDTABLE UPDATE

Liliana Diaz shared an update on WICHE's October Behavioral Health Policy Roundtable, funded by Lumina Foundation, that focused on how state agencies, institutions, and the federal government can work together to promote behavioral health and wellness on college campuses. She said the two overarching goals for the meeting were to build meaningful cross-state networks that facilitate peer-to-peer learning and to focus on state-level policy solutions that can catalyze progress and leverage economies of scale to ensure institutions have what they need to serve students. She noted that the roundtable included representatives from California, Montana, and Utah, as well as nonprofit partners, funders, and federal policymakers. Highlights included the opportunity to have conversations between groups that are not typically in the same rooms and a student panel that focused on sharing student voice and perspective.

Discussion Items

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PERTAINING TO THE POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH WORKPLAN ACTIVITIES FOR FY 2025 (FOR CONSIDERATION IN MAY 2024)

Committee Chair Cabaldon opened the discussion, explaining that the Commission plays a key role in setting WICHE's policies and priorities but that they do not determine everything in the Workplan; rather, the Workplan exists in the context of demand and available funding. He added that staff rely on the PAR Committee members to bring forward issues in their states that are not being addressed and where WICHE might have a unique contribution to make. The New Directions section reserves a space for issues that WICHE has identified as important to their members, but for which there might not be funding. However, he noted that it was important to winnow the topics in this section to keep it manageable and relevant and that the role of the committee is to help guide WICHE in terms of where to focus. He encouraged members of the committee to consider the value and relevance of listed issues to their states as well as to think about areas not listed where WICHE's capabilities could be useful if resources were available.

Lane then shared that the New Directions section of the Workplan has grown to an unmanageable size, and staff welcome direction from the Commission on prioritizing PAR projects. The goal was to thoughtfully prioritize the New Directions section and move projects that staff are not actively working on to the Potential Future Projects section.

Some of the projects in the New Directions section represent specific funding opportunities that staff received Commission approval to pursue but were ultimately not selected and should be removed, while other projects are outdated.

Commissioner Colleen Sathre agreed that winnowing is needed. She shared that in her professional experience, this type of effort can be a challenge, and she lauded the staff's efforts and noted that she felt strongly that their recommendations should be followed and that they were on the way to improving the PAR section of the Workplan.

Committee Chair Cabaldon was also supportive of the recommended deletions and modifications, though he cautioned staff against turning the Potential Future Projects section into a place where any idea could go for an indeterminate length of time. He suggested that projects associated with specific

funding opportunities that were no longer available should be automatically deleted. He reminded the committee that while priorities and values should be infused throughout, the document was indeed a Workplan as opposed to a mission statement. He added that commissioners would better be able to use the Workplan as an accountability tool with more streamlined priorities, as well as allowing for more opportunities for innovation.

Commissioner Lisa Skari asked how projects are added to the Workplan. Lane said that there are three ways things end up on the Workplan: when commissioners express a priority; when an aligned funding opportunity emerges; and state specific requests are received. Lane suggested that for state-requested technical assistance, there might be a different process for approval when time is of the essence.

Commissioner Begich suggested committee members could plan to review and comment on the Potential Future Projects section at each meeting, reserving time for review, and in instances where all WICHE members expressed interest, those should be automatically moved into the New Directions section while unfunded specific opportunity projects should automatically be dropped. He suggested formalizing criteria for the editing process and noted that he supported the staff recommendations.

Commissioner Sathre suggested that commissioners could also offer guidance on which projects to delete. Commissioner Arnold added that it would be helpful to understand which projects are not being pursued at all in the absence of funding and which are being incorporated into staff work even in the absence of funding. Lane noted that the Healthcare Workforce efforts were a good example of a high-priority issue that staff pursued in the absence of external funding. Commissioner Damron added that the Commission will always come up with a range of ideas and that it will be up to staff to identify what is realistic to pursue given bandwidth.

Committee Chair Cabaldon wrapped up the discussion by emphasizing that project ideas should be shaped not just by what is top of mind in higher education but by thinking about WICHE's expertise and the resources compared to other groups and what makes sense for WICHE to specifically pursue. The other key element is what commissioners' states need that they cannot do on their own, which could be a priority for WICHE. One of the most essential roles of a commissioner is to identify what the most useful and relevant things are for their state, which WICHE could contribute to. This framing should also guide who else commissioners are talking to in their states to answer these questions.

Commissioner Begich noted that WICHE's substantial reserves could be used to fund high-priority ideas where there is no external funding available. Commissioner Damron noted that WICHE does do this on occasion, but that commissioners are very cautious in making these decisions. Commissioner Jim Chavez noted that these discussions also occur in the Investment Committee in the context of their conversation around allocation choices.

Committee Chair Cabaldon asked for any final discussion items. Commissioner Arnold asked for an update on the status of the various projects on the Workplan before making decisions, noting it would be helpful to know what staff are prioritizing and where there is momentum in practice.

Lane shared that he hoped commissioners would offer feedback at any point between now and May 2024 when the Workplan comes back before the PAR Committee. Committee Chair Cabaldon again encouraged Committee members to provide feedback by February 2024 so that materials can be prepared in advance of the May 2024 Commission Meeting.

Lane said that commissioners should have received WICHE's briefs on nursing workforce shortages. Commissioner Damron added that these briefs are very robust and that the work is continuing with quarterly calls hosted by WICHE and is even branching out into new areas of health care.

Adjournment

The PAR Committee adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve the FY 2025 Workplan Section for the Policy Analysis and Research Unit



POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
<i>Benchmarks: WICHE Region</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.25	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
Peer-to-Peer Virtual Convenings	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.15	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
State Policy and Data Profiles	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S	0.2	N/A
<i>Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F	Western	0.025	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>WICHE Insights</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.1	N/A
WICHE Policy Webinar Series	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.1	Variable
WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)	A/S, I, V/A	Western	2.25	NC-SARA; Western SARA member states; MHEC, NEBHE, and SREB

The annual **BENCHMARKS: WICHE REGION** report analyzes key higher education metrics and information about the West’s progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education. This resource helps stakeholders monitor regional changes over time and informs discussion in policy and education communities. Utilizing WICHE’s Policy Analysis Research Database (PARD), the *Benchmarks* data dashboard now includes state information and regional metrics.

The **LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** (LAC) informs the Commission and staff about significant legislative issues related to higher education, and staff serves the LAC by informing members about emerging policy issues in the West and relevant policy research. LAC members are appointed by the Commission and meet annually.

Policy Analysis and Research unit staff provide support to the region through regularly scheduled **PEER-TO-PEER VIRTUAL CONVENINGS** on federal issues, student access and success, improving the value proposition for postsecondary education, and sharing promising approaches and strategies to common challenges in the West. The primary vehicle for this is a WICHE-facilitated bimonthly call among state and system chief academic officers. The unit has also spun off a separate call on health workforce issues.

The **REGIONAL FACT BOOK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST** presents regional and state-by-state data and analysis on policy indicators across a range of topics. These fiscal, demographic, economic, and social indicators provide up-to-date information for policymakers, educators, and researchers in the West. The *Fact Book's* downloadable data tables are updated periodically throughout the year. WICHE released several enhanced tables in FY 2022, providing increased detail and interactivity and adding new analysis. WICHE supplements the core data sources as much as possible to keep this resource contemporary and examines the overall utility of the full suite of data resources.

WICHE is building out **STATE POLICY AND DATA PROFILES** that capture state and Pacific Island jurisdictions postsecondary contexts. The Policy Analysis and Research Database (PARDB) enables the Policy unit to provide more detailed and relevant information specific to each WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. WICHE has been consulting with key stakeholders in the West about how these data resources can be most useful and expects to roll out these new profiles in FY 2025.

TUITION AND FEES IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST annually provides comprehensive data about the tuition and fee rates published by public higher education institutions in the WICHE region, including changes in tuition and fee rates over the past one-, five- and 10-year periods. In addition to total tuition and fees, the report displays the average mandatory fees for each institution, state, and Pacific Island jurisdictions, over the past one, five, and 10 years, as well as what proportion of total tuition and fees they represent.

The **WICHE INSIGHTS** series consists of periodic briefs (usually published several times a year) that illuminate a higher education policy or research topic or that supplement a regular WICHE activity or release (such as the annual *Tuition and Fees* or the quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report).

The **WICHE POLICY WEBINAR SERIES** features staff, partners, and higher education stakeholders periodically hosting digital forums for registrants on selected higher education topics of interest. Anticipated topics for FY 2025 will likely continue to focus on COVID-19 recovery, with particular attention to enrollment declines and potentially worsening equity gaps due to changes in college-going behavior.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT (SARA)** is a voluntary agreement among states designed to establish comparable standards for U.S. states, territories, and freely associated states regulating postsecondary distance education. SARA expands access to postsecondary educational opportunities while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red tape for institutions. WICHE coordinates the membership of SARA states in the West through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA). WICHE collaborates with the other regional compacts and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) to provide national coverage and ensure consistency in the agreement's implementation.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: A National Consortium	A/F, A/S	Western, U.S.	\$200,000	1.25 FY 2025	Hewlett Foundation, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
Support for the Wyoming Innovation Partnership	A/S, W/S, I	Western	\$120,000	0.75 FY 2025	Wyoming Community College Commission
<i>Knocking at the College Door – Projections of High School Graduates</i>	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$150,000	1.25 FY 2025	TBD
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET

INCREASING ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, AND EQUITY USING OER: A NATIONAL CONSORTIUM:

The Policy unit received funding to create a national consortium with the three other regional higher education compacts — the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) — focused on scaling the successful adoption of high-quality open educational resources to improve student outcomes, increase equity, and improve affordability. This effort started in FY 2021, and WICHE expects additional funding to continue this work into FY 2025. Significant collaboration and coordination exist across regions, with SREB leading the effort.

SUPPORT FOR THE WYOMING INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP: WICHE was contracted by the Wyoming Community College Commission to provide project management for a broad initiative that seeks to modernize and focus Wyoming’s efforts to develop a resilient workforce and economy. The effort aims to better align Wyoming’s economic development agenda by increasing collaborations among state entities and, ultimately, local partners. Additionally, WICHE works closely with the Wyoming governor’s office on this initiative.

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR – PROJECTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: In December 2024, the Policy unit will release the 11th edition of state forecasts of high school graduates. During FY 2025, staff will ramp up analytic efforts and prepare for a major release and dissemination of new data.

A HOLE IN STATE POLICY – ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: In this project, the Policy unit will work with WCET and Pew Charitable Trusts to consider appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative credentials in postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that WICHE states and Pacific Island members can take advantage of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Building Evidence for Scale – Policy and Practice Solutions for Adult Learners	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	U.S.	\$1.5M - \$2M	1.75 4 years	TBD
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Policy Paper Series on Affordability	A/F, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$500,000	1.5 2 years	TBD
Western Postsecondary Data Users Network	A/S, W/S, V/A	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$50,000	0.5 6 months	Western states
Articulating the Value of Postsecondary Education in the West	TBD	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD		Western states
Policy and Practice Solutions for Workforce Shortages	A/S, W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$400,000	2 years	TBD
Intermediaries for Scale Partnerships	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western, U.S.	TBD	TBD	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

BUILDING EVIDENCE FOR SCALE – POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS:

Building on its Adult College Completion Network and other work related to adult learners, WICHE proposes pursuing new approaches to achieve four objectives: a) build the evidence base for effectively serving adult learners; b) facilitate collaboration among network members; c) share scalable solutions across the field; and d) link adult college completion work with the broader agenda to ensure the equity of opportunity. The project will also seek to partner with WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions and other key stakeholders to increase the number of adults with a postsecondary credential of value. To accomplish that goal, the project will identify high-impact supports for adult learners that correlate with increased credential completion; develop effective and aligned policy and practice for serving adult learners in concert with WICHE members, postsecondary systems and institutions, employers, and local leaders; and measure the impact of initiatives aimed at increasing adult postsecondary credential completion to drive continuous improvement.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

POLICY PAPER SERIES ON AFFORDABILITY: The Policy unit will commission a series of papers focused on policy and practice actions to improve postsecondary affordability. The papers (including WICHE as a key author) will aim to provide rigorous, actionable research accessible to policymakers.

WESTERN POSTSECONDARY DATA USERS NETWORK: Education and workforce development agencies continue to improve data systems that have the potential to provide critical information to students and their families, policymakers, and institutional leaders. To take full advantage of these systems, states, territories, and freely associated states must have highly competent staff to analyze the available data and convert it to usable information for improving programs and policies. Additionally, researchers must have opportunities to explore new areas of research that can drive policy conversations. Barriers to taking advantage of these data systems include limited opportunities for state postsecondary researchers to engage in professional development, heavy workloads managing existing reporting duties leaving little time for exploratory analyses, and few chances to network with colleagues to address common problems. WICHE hopes to address these issues by exploring the need for and, if appropriate, establishing a Western Postsecondary Data Users Network, which would convene key system and institutional education and workforce researchers, as well as key staff from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions, to address common questions, provide technical assistance, and assist in professional development. This network would ensure that Western policymakers have access to high-quality evidence to develop, assess, and improve education and training policies and programs.

ARTICULATING THE VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE WEST: The Policy unit will work on multiple approaches to understand and articulate the value of postsecondary education for diverse stakeholders, including a focus on where that value is not meeting broader expectations. This effort will begin with a general articulation of the broad dimensions of value, including the economic return to individuals and communities, civic and cultural value, and other social dimensions of value that are not easily captured in earnings data. This work will have an explicit focus on how value is articulated in diverse Western contexts.

POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR WORKFORCE SHORTAGES: The Policy unit regularly convenes key staff from WICHE members to focus on ways to address short- and long-term workforce shortages in health fields using general fund dollars. Staff has developed a broader proposal to carry out a project that would implement solutions being developed while focusing on building a strong research base into effective and sustainable long-term policy and practice.

INTERMEDIARIES FOR SCALE PARTNERSHIP: Although not selected to be one of the Intermediaries for scale grantees of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WICHE has completed multiple partnerships with those organizations that were selected. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium previously brought in WICHE to facilitate its efforts to develop an effective data infrastructure and staff capacity. Staff will continue to review other opportunities to partner with Intermediaries for scale where the work fits with WICHE's mission and expertise. If consulting opportunities consistent with WICHE's mission are unavailable in FY 2025, staff will recommend removing this item from the Workplan.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: The Policy unit will continue to identify areas where WICHE can help build policy- and practice-relevant research focused on organizational priorities, including student access and success, postsecondary value, and reaching underserved populations, including rural students, military and veteran students, adult learners, incarcerated individuals, and students of color. Additionally, this work could include topic-specific research and analysis.

LEVERAGING WORK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND MEET WORKFORCE DEMANDS IN RURAL AREAS: The goal of this work would be to help facilitate the development of partnerships among institutions and businesses to ensure effective linkages between the workplace and the classroom through co-op/internship programs. Staff believe this approach may have particular benefits for rural areas.

STATE POLICIES TO SUPPORT MEETING STUDENTS' BASIC NEEDS: Housing and food security are crucial issues for students across the West (and the United States as a whole). While campus-level supports such as food banks and emergency grants and loans can help, this effort would examine state- and territory-level policies that can improve student outcomes, including better alignment of social services and education programs, improved access to benefit programs, and other approaches.

WESTERN POLICY FORUM: An annual convening designed to advance WICHE's mission by bringing together key postsecondary leaders in the Western region to learn about successful strategies around access and success, accountability, finance, workforce, and innovation.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

IDAHO ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE GROWTH INITIATIVE: The Idaho State Board of Education commissioned an analysis from WICHE to explore whether Idaho was producing enough

engineering and computer science graduates to meet the needs of the state's economy in response to concerns raised by industry leaders. Guided by an industry advisory group, the WICHE team reviewed existing research, analyzed data, modeled the projected supply of graduates, and conducted a range of employer engagement activities to identify evidence of a substantial gap between supply and demand for graduates in these fields. The [final report](#) details the key areas in the educational pipeline where the state might consider investing to increase the supply of graduates.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: WICHE completed an initial component of our planned broader effort in this space, bringing together health and postsecondary education leaders from several states who have focused on large-scale efforts to improve behavioral health and wellness. Although this work is considered completed, staff are committed to building on this effort. Commitment from Lumina Foundation to support an initial convening of exemplar states and systems focused on improving behavioral health and wellness in postsecondary education. Additionally, conversations continue with other partners about large-scale efforts to scale healthy practices through policy.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Montana's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA

Summary

The Regional Compact evaluator (director of W-SARA) has found that Montana meets all the requirements in Criteria 1-16 of the SARA state membership renewal application, and the state has affirmed that they can and will operate under the SARA criteria for membership over the course of the renewal period. Staff ask the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee to approve a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole that the Commission approve Montana's renewal application for an additional two years of membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Relationship to the WICHE Mission

By providing a coordinated approach to the regulation of interstate distance education, W-SARA serves WICHE's mission in several ways, including sharing resources across the region and providing a forum for interstate collaboration. Most renewal applications are considered by the Executive Committee because of timing constraints.

Background

Every WICHE state participating in SARA must undergo a biennial review of its membership through the renewal process. The W-SARA director, in the role of the Regional Compact evaluator, reviews the state's SARA State Membership Application. The evaluator determines whether the state has met the requirements described in the application over the preceding two-year period and reviews the state's affirmation that they can and will meet these requirements over the course of the upcoming two years. W-SARA also collects and reviews summary data on the state's SARA participation over the renewal period, including institutions added, removed, or placed on provisional status; SARA-qualifying complaints; and changes to relevant statute, regulation, or other policy.

The application, review sheet, and supplementary materials provided by the state are shared with the W-SARA RSC for review in advance of the RSC scheduled meeting to vote on state renewal recommendations. At their scheduled meeting, the applicant state shares a summary of its renewal application with the RSC. The RSC has the opportunity to ask questions and request clarifications on any aspect of the state renewal. At the conclusion of discussion, the RSC votes on a recommendation of approval or denial of the application to be shared with the Commission.

While reviews occur on the biennial cycle described above, W-SARA staff and the W-SARA RSC are available throughout a state's membership to support states' continued compliance with SARA policies and to promote promising practices and effective regulation.

For background information, staff have also prepared a brief information snapshot related to enrollment numbers below.

Project Description

Montana's state renewal application, which follows this summary and begins on page 7-20, was

recommended for approval by the Regional Compact evaluator and was expected to be considered by the W-SARA RSC at the committee’s April 2024 meeting. The W-SARA RSC was expected to vote to recommend the application for approval by the Commission. Staff will provide the committee with an update on the RSC’s discussion and vote, which occurred after the agenda book went to print.

The attached application and supplementary materials include the state application and state review sheet.

Please note: Due to time constraints, the fully signed versions of the application package and review sheet were unavailable when this agenda book went to print. Should anything deviate from what is expected to occur at the RSC meeting and with the application, staff will inform commissioners as early as possible. Although the W-SARA director has reviewed the completed application, it is not signed until after the RSC votes.

Should the Commission either not act on this item or vote not to approve Montana’s renewal application, the state would have the opportunity to appeal that decision through the previously approved appeals process.

Staff and Fiscal Impact

Staff time for W-SARA is supported by the allocation of dues paid by institutions to participate in SARA. Dues are collected by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Action Requested

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to approve Montana’s state renewal application for continued participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Enrollment Numbers

INSTITUTION TYPE	INCOMING SARA ENROLLMENTS (MT INSTITUTIONS)	OUTGOING SARA ENROLLMENTS (MT RESIDENTS)	OUTGOING OOSLP* (SENT FROM MT INSTITUTIONS)
Private For-Profit	47	1,436	0
Private Non-Profit	392	3,287	171
Public	758	1,690	253
Grand Total	1,197	6,413	424

* Out-of-state learning placements



**National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements**

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

State: MT
 Regional Compact WICHE
 Initial Application 8/14/14
 Renewal Application 6/9/24

Application and Approval Form for State Membership in SARA

A state that would like to apply for or renew membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) must submit this form and required documentation to its **regional** education compact's SARA office.

A state may wish to include a cover letter and/or additional documentation to supplement the application and to strengthen the case for becoming a member or renewing membership in SARA.

To be accepted or renewed into SARA, a state must agree that it can and will operate under the principles set forth in the Unified Agreement, SARA's foundational document, and the criteria for state membership as established in the Unified Agreement and further outlined in the *SARA Policy Manual*. For purposes of SARA, the term "state" includes the District of Columbia and the organized U.S. Territories. The requirements for state membership are set forth below.

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Core Requirements		
1.	The state is a member of one of the four interstate higher education regional compacts that administers SARA, or has concluded an affiliation agreement with a regional compact covering SARA activity.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	The state entity responsible for joining SARA has the legal authority under state law to enter into an interstate agreement on behalf of the state and has provided a copy of the statutory or other legal authority documenting this authority.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3.	The state considers applications from degree-granting institutions of all sectors (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) on the same basis and approves institutions that meet SARA standards and agree to SARA policies without differentiating by sector.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The state agrees to require each SARA applicant institution to apply for state approval using the standard SARA institutional application and agrees to operate under the <i>Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education</i> developed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC), as summarized in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Consumer Protection		
5.	The state accepts institutional accreditation by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education — and whose scope of authority, as specified by the Department of Education includes distance education — as sufficient, initial evidence of academic quality for approving institutions for participation in SARA.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	For private institutions, the state accepts the U.S. Department of Education's institutional federal financial responsibility score of 1.5 or above (or 1.0-1.49 with additional justification satisfactory to the state) as indicating sufficient financial stability to qualify for participation in SARA.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	The state has a clearly articulated and comprehensive state process for consumer protection in regard to SARA activities, both with respect to initial institution approval and on-going oversight, including the resolution of consumer complaints in all sectors, and has provided the regional compact a copy of the complaint investigation and resolution process to be used to handle all complaints resulting from institutional operations (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) under SARA.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8.	The state agrees that it will work cooperatively with other SARA states, regional compacts and NC-SARA to enable successful collaboration. It will follow up on requests for information or investigations from SARA member states or any SARA regional or national office, providing required data and reports.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	The state agrees that, if it has requirements, policies, standards, fees or procedures for the approval and authorization of non-domestic institutions of higher education providing distance education in the state, it will not apply those policies, fees, or procedures to any non-domestic institution that participates in SARA. Instead, the state will apply those policies, fees, or procedures specifically prescribed in or allowed by the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
10.	The state designates a “Portal Entity” as defined in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> , to coordinate SARA matters for the state and provide a principal point of contact for resolution of student complaints. Note: the designated entity need not itself be responsible for all oversight activities of SARA providers inside the state, but will be the SARA Portal Entity for that state.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
11.	The state agrees to serve as the point of contact for any SARA-related complaint filed against an institution approved by the state to participate in SARA. The state's SARA Portal Entity is responsible for coordinating complaint resolution and is empowered to investigate and resolve complaints that originate outside of the state. All other state entities and governing boards of SARA participant institutions shall assist as necessary in such investigations and report as needed to the Portal Entity. State remedies, including refunds or other corrective action, must be made available to resolve complaints involving residents of other SARA states.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
12.	The state agrees to document: a) all formal complaints received; b) complaint notifications provided to institutions and accrediting bodies; c) actions taken that are commensurate with the severity of violations; and d) complaint resolutions	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
13	The state agrees that it will promptly report complaints and concerns to the institutions about which the complaint is lodged, the home state SARA Portal Entity responsible for any such institution, and if appropriate, the relevant accrediting bodies.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
14.	The state has clear and well-documented policies and practices for addressing catastrophic events, as follows: a) The state may request assistance from the institution's accreditor as the accreditor applies its standards under 34 C.F.R. §602.24(c) and (d) of federal requirements for catastrophic events. b) The state has laws, regulations, policies and/or processes in place to deal with the unanticipated closure of an institution and will make every reasonable effort to assure that students receive the services for which they have paid or reasonable financial compensation for those not received. Such laws, regulations, policies and/or processes may include tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, teach-out provisions or other practices deemed sufficient to protect consumers. c) The state requires institutions to have adequate disaster recovery plans, particularly with respect to the protection of student records, or the state provides such a plan. d) A SARA member state agrees to apply its policies and practices for catastrophic events consistently and equally within each sector (public, private non-profit, and private for-profit) to residents of any state.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
15	The state agrees that it has developed and implemented a means to hear and internally resolve appeals from institutions for which it denies initial participation or renewal of participation in SARA. During any such appeal, the institution's status as a SARA participating (or non-participating) institution remains unchanged.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Data		
16.	The State agrees that each quarter it will report to NC-SARA the number of appealed complaints it has received regarding each of the state's SARA-participating institutions and the resolution status of those complaints.	CTC	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 2 - SARA State Portal Entity Designation and Voluntary State Action and Information

Name of SARA State Portal Entity: Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

Mailing address of SARA State Portal Entity: 560 N Park Avenue, Helena, MT 59601
560 N Park Avenue, Helena, MT 59601

Website of SARA Portal Entity (location of state's SARA information): <https://www.mus.edu/che/arsa/StateAuthorization/index.ht>

Name of Principal SARA State Portal Entity contact¹: Hannah Tokerud

Title of SARA State Portal Entity contact: Associate Legal Counsel

SARA State Portal Entity email: htokerud@montana.edu

SARA State Portal Entity phone: 406.449.9173

Name of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Joe Thiel

Title of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Interim Deputy Comm'r, Academic, Research & Student Affairs

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity email: jthiel@montana.edu

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity phone: 406.449.9134

I, the undersigned representative of the State of MT having the authority to commit the state to the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), agree that the state will abide by SARA requirements as established in the Unified Agreement and the *SARA Policy Manual*. The state has provided proof of those requirements needing documentation, and hereby applies for the state's admission/renewal to SARA.

Signature  Date March 26, 2024

Typed name of Signatory Officer: Clayton T. Christian

Title of Signatory State Officer: Commissioner of Higher Education

Mailing address: 560 N Park Avenue, Helena, MT 59601

Email address: cchristian@montana.edu

Phone: 406.449.9125

¹ The principal contact is the person with whom state entities and regional compacts should communicate about the state's membership in SARA. It is not necessarily the State Signatory Officer or the person(s) whom institutions and students should contact regarding institutional participation in SARA, student complaints, and other matters regarding the normal discharge of a state's responsibilities under SARA

Section 3 - Regional Compact Evaluator Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its SARA membership, the evaluator must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the evaluator finds that the state meets all required standards, the Regional Compact SARA Director shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the Regional Steering Committee of the compact by signing below.

State Name: Montana

The evaluator recommends approval of the application to the SARA Regional Steering Committee:

Yes No

Evaluator comments:

See attached Regional Compact Evaluation Summary

Signature of Regional Compact Director: Molly Hall-Martin

Name of Regional Compact Director: Molly Hall-Martin

Date signed: April 3, 2024

Title of Regional Compact Director: Director, W-SARA

Signature of Regional Compact President: _____

Name of Regional Compact President: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.

Section 4 - Regional Steering Committee Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its membership in SARA, the Regional Steering Committee of the appropriate regional compact must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the Committee finds that the state meets all required standards, the Committee Chair shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the regional compact by signing below.

State Name: _____

The Regional Steering Committee recommends approval of the application to the regional compact for action under the process the compact has determined:

Yes No

Committee comments:

Signature of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Name of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.

Regional Compact Evaluation Summary

Montana has not had significant changes to the statutes and regulations (principally Montana Code Annotated 20-25-107 and Montana Board of Regents Policy 221) relating to its SARA participation. The Montana University System (MUS) continues to serve as the State Portal Entity (SPE) and over the course of the review period has demonstrated compliance with all 16 components of the SARA renewal application. Over the course of the review period Montana has not received any student complaints and has not had any institutions undergo change of ownership or home state.

The state has two institutions— Dawson Community College and Apollos University - that have been placed on provisional status. Dawson Community College is on provisional status for being on HCM1 for late/missing audit, and Apollos University is on provisional status as a result of being on probationary status with its accreditor and is undergoing closure procedures with a scheduled closure date of December 2024. Montana is committed to working with fellow W-SARA states, W-SARA, and NC-SARA in the investigation and resolution of any SARA-related issues that arise.

According to the most recent SARA data available (fall 2022), Montana’s SARA institutions enrolled 1,197 distance education students through SARA and 6,413 students located in Montana were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories.



W-SARA State Renewal Review Form

State: Montana

Initial SARA Approval Date: 8/14/2014 State Renewal Date: 6/9/24

State Portal Entity: Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

State Portal Entity Primary Contact: Hannah Tokerud

All Additional State Portal Entity Staff: _____

Portal Entity Website: <https://www.mus.edu/che/arsa/StateAuthorization/index.htm>

State SARA Fee(s) (if applicable):

None.

Profile of Institutions

Total SARA participants: 14

Public: 10

Private/nonprofit: 3

Independent for-profit: 1

New institutions since last renewal:

None.

Number of institutions denied renewal: 1

Name of institution/s and reason for denial:

Charisma University. Charisma University's application was denied because it does not hold accreditation from an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The University is a candidate for accreditation only, which is insufficient for participation in SARA. The University accepted this decision.

Was the institutional appeals process utilized? If so, what was the result?

No.

Number of institutions on provisional status: 2

Name of institution/s and reason for provisional status and any monitoring or additional participation requirements:

Apollos University; Dawson Community College.

Apollos University was placed on provisional status on February 21, 2024, because it is on provisional or probationary status or the equivalent with its institutional accrediting agency. The State prohibited further enrollments under SARA for the year. Apollos University plans to close in December 2024, so pursuant to Board of Regents policy 221, the State has notified the University of its obligations to provide timely notification of its intention to close and to transfer student records to the State.

Dawson Community College was placed on provisional status on February 22, 2024, because it is under a cash management agreement with the U.S. Department of Education. As part of the additional oversight measures, the College is required to advise the State of the College's plan to remediate the causes cited in the Department of Education's letter imposing sanctions and to provide timely updates on the College's progress.

Have any institutions had changes of ownership that resulted in action taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

No.

Does your state have any SARA institutions currently on heightened cash monitoring that resulted in actions taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

Yes. See above regarding Dawson Community College.

Complaints Appealed to Portal Entity

Complaints since last renewal:

None.

Complaints currently under consideration:

None.

Discussion Notes (for example, policy practice or regulatory changes that may affect SARA, recurring institutional issues, etc.)

What SARA related challenges, if any, did you encounter since your last renewal?

Apollos University's planned closure (see above regarding provisional status).

Has your state made regulatory changes that impact SARA since your last renewal? If yes, please describe and explain how the SPE has addressed SARA impacts.

None.

Did you experience any major SARA related issues in your state since your last renewal? If yes, what were they and how were they handled?

There is ongoing discussion in Montana regarding the state's clinical teaching capacity. In addition, two institutions authorized in Montana are facing closure (one SARA institution, as discussed above, and one non-SARA institution). Given these issues, there is renewed interest in reviewing our governing policy for state authorization, Board of Regents policy 221 (<https://www.mus.edu/borpol/bor200/221.pdf>), and in ensuring our policy and procedures provide adequate oversight.

Do you have SARA policy concerns in your state that you would like to discuss with W-SARA leadership or during your review?

No.

Additional Comments:

None.

ACTION ITEM

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to Approve Utah's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA

Summary

The Regional Compact evaluator (director of W-SARA) has found that Montana meets all the requirements in Criteria 1-16 of the SARA state membership renewal application, and the state has affirmed that they can and will operate under the SARA criteria for membership over the course of the renewal period. Staff ask the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee to approve a recommendation to the Committee of the Whole that the Commission approve Utah's renewal application for an additional two years of membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Relationship to the WICHE Mission

By providing a coordinated approach to the regulation of interstate distance education, W-SARA serves WICHE's mission in several ways, including sharing resources across the region and providing a forum for interstate collaboration. Most renewal applications are considered by the Executive Committee because of timing constraints.

Background

Every WICHE state participating in SARA must undergo a biennial review of its membership through the renewal process. The W-SARA director, in the role of the Regional Compact evaluator, reviews the state's SARA State Membership Application. The evaluator determines whether the state has met the requirements described in the application over the preceding two-year period and reviews the state's affirmation that they can and will meet these requirements over the course of the upcoming two years. W-SARA also collects and reviews summary data on the state's SARA participation over the renewal period, including institutions added, removed, or placed on provisional status; SARA-qualifying complaints; and changes to relevant statute, regulation, or other policy.

The application, review sheet, and supplementary materials provided by the state are shared with the W-SARA RSC for review in advance of the RSC scheduled meeting to vote on state renewal recommendations. At their scheduled meeting, the applicant state shares a summary of its renewal application with the RSC. The RSC has the opportunity to ask questions and request clarifications on any aspect of the state renewal. At the conclusion of discussion, the RSC votes on a recommendation of approval or denial of the application to be shared with the Commission.

While reviews occur on the biennial cycle described above, W-SARA staff and the W-SARA RSC are available throughout a state's participation to support states' continued compliance with SARA policies and to promote promising practices and effective regulation.

For background information, staff have also prepared a brief information snapshot related to enrollment numbers below.

Project Description

Utah's state renewal application, which follows this summary and begins on page 7-36, was

recommended for approval by the Regional Compact evaluator and was expected to be considered by the W-SARA RSC at the committee’s April 2024 meeting. The W-SARA RSC was expected to vote to recommend the application for approval by the Commission. Staff will provide the committee with an update on the RSC’s discussion and vote, which occurred after the agenda book went to print.

The attached application and supplementary materials include the state application and state review sheet.

Please note: Due to time constraints, the fully signed versions of the application package and review sheet were unavailable when this agenda book went to print. Should anything deviate from what is expected to occur at the RSC meeting and with the application, staff will inform commissioners as early as possible. Although the W-SARA director has reviewed the completed application, it is not signed until after the RSC votes.

Should the Commission either not act on this item, or vote not to approve Utah’s renewal application, the state would have the opportunity to appeal that decision through the previously approved WICHE appeals process.

Staff and Fiscal Impact

Staff time for W-SARA is supported by the allocation of dues paid by institutions to participate in SARA. Dues are collected by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Action Requested

Recommendation to the Committee of the Whole to approve Utah’s state renewal application for continued membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Enrollment Numbers

INSTITUTION TYPE	INCOMING SARA ENROLLMENTS (UT INSTITUTIONS)	OUTGOING SARA ENROLLMENTS (UT RESIDENTS)	OUTGOING OOSLP* (SENT FROM UT INSTITUTIONS)
Private For-Profit	2,395	3,491	2,091
Private Non-Profit	138,103	9,305	7,808
Public	2,564	3,934	1,290
Grand Total	143,062	16,730	11,189

* Out-of-state learning placements



**National Council for
State Authorization
Reciprocity Agreements**

MHEC • NEBHE • SREB • WICHE

State: Utah

Regional Compact WICHE

Initial Application _____

Renewal Application X

Application and Approval Form for State Membership in SARA

A state that would like to apply for or renew membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) must submit this form and required documentation to its **regional** education compact's SARA office.

A state may wish to include a cover letter and/or additional documentation to supplement the application and to strengthen the case for becoming a member or renewing membership in SARA.

To be accepted or renewed into SARA, a state must agree that it can and will operate under the principles set forth in the Unified Agreement, SARA's foundational document, and the criteria for state membership as established in the Unified Agreement and further outlined in the *SARA Policy Manual*. For purposes of SARA, the term "state" includes the District of Columbia and the organized U.S. Territories. The requirements for state membership are set forth below.

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Core Requirements		
1.	The state is a member of one of the four interstate higher education regional compacts that administers SARA, or has concluded an affiliation agreement with a regional compact covering SARA activity.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	The state entity responsible for joining SARA has the legal authority under state law to enter into an interstate agreement on behalf of the state and has provided a copy of the statutory or other legal authority documenting this authority.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3.	The state considers applications from degree-granting institutions of all sectors (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) on the same basis and approves institutions that meet SARA standards and agree to SARA policies without differentiating by sector.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The state agrees to require each SARA applicant institution to apply for state approval using the standard SARA institutional application and agrees to operate under the <i>Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education</i> developed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC), as summarized in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
	Consumer Protection		
5.	The state accepts institutional accreditation by an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education — and whose scope of authority, as specified by the Department of Education includes distance education — as sufficient, initial evidence of academic quality for approving institutions for participation in SARA.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	For private institutions, the state accepts the U.S. Department of Education's institutional federal financial responsibility score of 1.5 or above (or 1.0-1.49 with additional justification satisfactory to the state) as indicating sufficient financial stability to qualify for participation in SARA.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	The state has a clearly articulated and comprehensive state process for consumer protection in regard to SARA activities, both with respect to initial institution approval and on-going oversight, including the resolution of consumer complaints in all sectors, and has provided the regional compact a copy of the complaint investigation and resolution process to be used to handle all complaints resulting from institutional operations (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit) under SARA.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8.	The state agrees that it will work cooperatively with other SARA states, regional compacts and NC-SARA to enable successful collaboration. It will follow up on requests for information or investigations from SARA member states or any SARA regional or national office, providing required data and reports.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	The state agrees that, if it has requirements, policies, standards, fees or procedures for the approval and authorization of non-domestic institutions of higher education providing distance education in the state, it will not apply those policies, fees, or procedures to any non-domestic institution that participates in SARA. Instead, the state will apply those policies, fees, or procedures specifically prescribed in or allowed by the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> .	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
10.	The state designates a "Portal Entity" as defined in the <i>SARA Policy Manual</i> , to coordinate SARA matters for the state and provide a principal point of contact for resolution of student complaints. Note: the designated entity need not itself be responsible for all oversight activities of SARA providers inside the state, but will be the SARA Portal Entity for that state.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
11.	The state agrees to serve as the point of contact for any SARA-related complaint filed against an institution approved by the state to participate in SARA. The state's SARA Portal Entity is responsible for coordinating complaint resolution and is empowered to investigate and resolve complaints that originate outside of the state. All other state entities and governing boards of SARA participant institutions shall assist as necessary in such investigations and report as needed to the Portal Entity. State remedies, including refunds or other corrective action, must be made available to resolve complaints involving residents of other SARA states.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
12.	The state agrees to document: a) all formal complaints received; b) complaint notifications provided to institutions and accrediting bodies; c) actions taken that are commensurate with the severity of violations; and d) complaint resolutions	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
13	The state agrees that it will promptly report complaints and concerns to the institutions about which the complaint is lodged, the home state SARA Portal Entity responsible for any such institution, and if appropriate, the relevant accrediting bodies.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
14.	The state has clear and well-documented policies and practices for addressing catastrophic events, as follows: a) The state may request assistance from the institution's accreditor as the accreditor applies its standards under 34 C.F.R. §602.24(c) and (d) of federal requirements for catastrophic events. b) The state has laws, regulations, policies and/or processes in place to deal with the unanticipated closure of an institution and will make every reasonable effort to assure that students receive the services for which they have paid or reasonable financial compensation for those not received. Such laws, regulations, policies and/or processes may include tuition assurance funds, surety bonds, teach-out provisions or other practices deemed sufficient to protect consumers. c) The state requires institutions to have adequate disaster recovery plans, particularly with respect to the protection of student records, or the state provides such a plan. d) A SARA member state agrees to apply its policies and practices for catastrophic events consistently and equally within each sector (public, private non-profit, and private for-profit) to residents of any state.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Requirements for State Membership in SARA	State affirms meeting the requirements (Initial here)	Regional Compact affirms state meets the requirement
15	The state agrees that it has developed and implemented a means to hear and internally resolve appeals from institutions for which it denies initial participation or renewal of participation in SARA. During any such appeal, the institution's status as a SARA participating (or non-participating) institution remains unchanged.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Data		
16.	The State agrees that each quarter it will report to NC-SARA the number of appealed complaints it has received regarding each of the state's SARA-participating institutions and the resolution status of those complaints.	GTL	Yes or No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 2 - SARA State Portal Entity Designation and Voluntary State Action and Information

Name of SARA State Portal Entity: Utah Board of Higher Education

Mailing address of SARA State Portal Entity: 60 S 400 W, Salt Lake City, UT 84101
60 S 400 W, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Website of SARA Portal Entity (location of state's SARA information): https://ushe.edu/sara

Name of Principal SARA State Portal Entity contact¹: Cynthia Grua

Title of SARA State Portal Entity contact: Assistant Commissioner, Academic Affairs

SARA State Portal Entity email: cgrua@ushe.edu

SARA State Portal Entity phone: 801-646-4768

Name of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Hilary Renshaw

Title of Secondary SARA State Portal Entity contact: Associate General Counsel, USHE

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity email: hilary.renshaw@ushe.edu

Secondary SARA State Portal Entity phone: 801-646-4784

I, the undersigned representative of the State of Utah having the authority to commit the state to the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), agree that the state will abide by SARA requirements as established in the Unified Agreement and the *SARA Policy Manual*. The state has provided proof of those requirements needing documentation, and hereby applies for the state's admission/renewal to SARA.

Signature  Date 4/2/24

Typed name of Signatory Officer: Geoffrey T. Landward

Title of Signatory State Officer: Commissioner of Higher Education

Mailing address: 60 S 400 W, Salt Lake City UT 84101

Email address: glandward@ushe.edu

Phone: 801-646-4754

¹ The principal contact is the person with whom state entities and regional compacts should communicate about the state's membership in SARA. It is not necessarily the State Signatory Officer or the person(s) whom institutions and students should contact regarding institutional participation in SARA, student complaints, and other matters regarding the normal discharge of a state's responsibilities under SARA

Section 3 - Regional Compact Evaluator Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its SARA membership, the evaluator must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the evaluator finds that the state meets all required standards, the Regional Compact SARA Director shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the Regional Steering Committee of the compact by signing below.

State Name: Utah

The evaluator recommends approval of the application to the SARA Regional Steering Committee:

Yes

No

Evaluator comments:

See attached Regional Compact Evaluation Summary

Signature of Regional Compact Director: Molly Hall-Martin

Name of Regional Compact Director: Molly Hall-Martin

Date signed: April 5, 2024

Title of Regional Compact Director: Director, W-SARA

Signature of Regional Compact President: _____

Name of Regional Compact President: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.

Section 4 - Regional Steering Committee Recommendation

For a state to initiate or renew its membership in SARA, the Regional Steering Committee of the appropriate regional compact must find that the state meets all of the requirements set forth in sections 1-16. If the Committee finds that the state meets all required standards, the Committee Chair shall recommend approval of the state's membership to the regional compact by signing below.

State Name: Utah

The Regional Steering Committee recommends approval of the application to the regional compact for action under the process the compact has determined:

Yes No

Committee comments:

Signature of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Name of Regional Steering Committee Chair: _____

Date signed: _____

If SARA membership is denied by the regional compact, the Regional SARA Director will provide to the applicant state a written reason for the denial. The state may reapply at any time, having corrected any deficiencies, or may appeal the denial to the Regional Compact.

Regional Compact Evaluation Summary

The state of Utah has not had significant changes to the administrative rule for SARA or to UBHE policy R431 State Authorization during the renewal period. However, regulatory changes to the Utah Postsecondary School and State Authorization Act, administered by the Department of Commerce Division of Consumer Protection, took effect 1/1/24 (see <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title13/Chapter34/13-34-S101.html>). USHE general counsel and the Utah SPE were asked to contribute comments to the language in the bill whose passage resulted in the new Code 13-34. USHE completed an initial evaluation and is working through an in-depth evaluation of the current Act to determine if UBHE policy R431 State Authorization or R765 SARA administrative rule must be updated to remain in harmony with 13-34-101.

Over the course of the review period, the state has demonstrated compliance with all 16 components of the SARA renewal application. Utah has received two SARA-qualifying complaints over the course of the renewal period. Utah had one institution – Bottega University – placed on provisional status but was removed from provisional status at the time of the institution’s renewal as it met all deadlines and oversight measures imposed by the Utah SPE. Utah has not had any institutions undergo change of ownership or home state during the renewal period. Utah is committed to working with fellow W-SARA states, W-SARA, and NC-SARA in the investigation and resolution of any SARA-related issues that arise.

According to the most recent SARA data available (fall 2022), Utah’s SARA institutions enrolled 143,062 distance education students through SARA and 16,730 students located in Utah were enrolled in distance education from SARA institutions based in other SARA member states/territories.



W-SARA State Renewal Review Form

State: Utah

Initial SARA Approval Date: 8/25/16 State Renewal Date: 6/9/24

State Portal Entity: Utah Board of Higher Education

State Portal Entity Primary Contact: Cynthia Grua

All Additional State Portal Entity Staff: PT temp research support only

Portal Entity Website: https://ushe.edu/sara

State SARA Fee(s) (if applicable):

\$2,000 under 2,500 FTE; \$4,000 2,500-9,999 FTE; \$6,000 10,000 or more FTE

Profile of Institutions

Total SARA participants: 18

Public: 8

Private/nonprofit: 5

Independent for-profit: 5

New institutions since last renewal:

NA

Number of institutions denied renewal: 0

Name of institution/s and reason for denial:

NA

Was the institutional appeals process utilized? If so, what was the result?

NA

Number of institutions on provisional status: 0

Name of institution/s and reason for provisional status and any monitoring or additional participation requirements:

NOTE: Bottega University was renewed on provisional status March 2023. The decision for provisional status stemmed from a Utah Division of Consumer Protection investigation of conditions of an Income Sharing Agreement (ISA). UT SARA set six oversight measures with reporting deadlines. This institution met all deadlines and resolved all oversight measures. Provisional status was removed when the institution renewed 3/26/24. Copies of the 2023 provisional renewal letter and a summary of the institution's response to oversight measures are available upon request.

Have any institutions had changes of ownership that resulted in action taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

No UT SARA institutions have experienced change of ownership since June 2022.

Does your state have any SARA institutions currently on heightened cash monitoring that resulted in actions taken by the SPE? If yes, list institution/s and action/s taken:

No UT SARA institutions are listed in HCM as of the institutions reported December 1, 2023 on <https://studentaid.gov/data-center/school/hcm>.

Complaints Appealed to Portal Entity

Complaints since last renewal:

Have received two referrals from Washington (WA) and one from Texas (TX) SPE. These involved WGU students. The WA students never reached out. The TX SPE had received a formal complaint, forwarded it to me, I investigated and determined in favor of the institution.

Have received two complaints directly, both WGU, [REDACTED]. Neither complaint involved misrepresentation, false and deceptive practices, or accreditation issues. In both cases, WGU satisfied the student's requested outcome. The complaint was resolved to the students' satisfaction and not reported as a SARA complaint due to its nature. Have asked WGU Ombuds for confirmation both students graduated.

Complaints currently under consideration:

There are no SARA complaints currently under consideration.

Discussion Notes (for example, policy practice or regulatory changes that may affect SARA, recurring institutional issues, etc.)

What SARA related challenges, if any, did you encounter since your last renewal?

A minor challenge: USHE general counsel drafted an information-sharing agreement that allows Division of Consumer Protection (DCP) and Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) to more freely share information. The need for this agreement came to light when it was learned DCP had investigated three students complaints against UT SARA institutions, one of them a NV SARA student who should have been referred to the UT SPE. As a result of the agreement DCP has a better grasp on when to forward complaints to the UT SPE.

Has your state made regulatory changes that impact SARA since your last renewal? If yes, please describe and explain how the SPE has addressed SARA impacts.

No regulatory changes have been made since 2020 to the administrative rule for SARA or to UBHE policy R431 State Authorization. However, regulatory changes to the Utah Postsecondary School and State Authorization Act, administered by the Department of Commerce Division of Consumer Protection, took effective 1/1/24 (see <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title13/Chapter34/13-34-S101.html>). USHE contributed comments to the language in the bill whose passage resulted in the new Code 13-34, completed an initial evaluation and is working through an indepth evaluation of the current Act to determine if UBHE policy R431 State Authorization or R765 SARA administrative rule must be updated to remain in harmony with 13-34-101. For example, one change to R431 under consideration is an update of surety requirements from head count to gross tuition revenue.

Did you experience any major SARA related issues in your state since your last renewal? If yes, what were they and how were they handled?

Utah has not experienced major SARA-related issues since last renewal.

Do you have SARA policy concerns in your state that you would like to discuss with W-SARA leadership or during your review?

No UT SARA- specific concerns at this time. Utah appreciates participating in the NC-SARA policy modification process.

Additional Comments:

As the Utah SPE, I express sincere thanks to WICHE for its support of WICHE SPEs. Utah has been the beneficiary of the staff's due diligence, research, and wisdom on numerous occasions. Most recently, Utah benefited from WICHE's offer of FRCS calculations for two non-Title IV institutions, one a UT SARA institution, the second an aspirant. We are grateful.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Potential WICHE Position on Federalism and the Federal and State Roles in Postsecondary Education

Summary

WICHE takes relatively few positions on federal policy. When the Commission does seek to set a position, staff generally work to identify broad ideas that can garner consensus among its very diverse region. These positions rarely focus on a specific piece of legislation or regulation, but aim to set high-level ideas that give staff opportunities to then engage in policy conversations. With this discussion item, staff are requesting committee feedback on a potential new WICHE position on the appropriate division of roles and responsibilities between states and the federal government.

In November 2021, the Commission, based on the recommendation of this committee adopted four high-level principles to guide our federal work and four positions based on those principles. The adopted document is included following this action item description for commissioners' reference.

The first principle reads as follows: "States and territories, including the postsecondary systems and institutions within them, are significant partners in ensuring access to high-quality higher education for all students, and in ensuring accountability of our nation's postsecondary enterprise. Thus, they have a unique and critical role to play in the higher education policymaking process."

Staff are considering proposing a new position building on this that specifies how WICHE views the "unique and critical role" states' play in higher education. Staff recognize that federal policy and financial resources are essential to the broad enterprise of postsecondary education. Additionally, however, it is essential that states themselves have responsibility for the authorization of institutions to operate within their borders consistent with the original intent of the Higher Education Act. While this proposed position is partially in response to recent federal regulatory efforts, the larger concern for staff is that these recent federal actions continue to erode the appropriate balance between state and federal roles and should subsequent administrations continue this erosion, future state authority may be extremely limited with volatile swings between different administrations.

At the direction of the Executive Committee, which has also begun these discussions, but not yet reached any conclusions or set a direction for the Commission, staff have prepared potential language for consideration.

The language presented later in this discussion item is intended to be derived from the following principle that was previously approved by the Commission; the new position would be intended to provide additional nuance and guidance on the relationship between WICHE members and the federal government.

Principle 1. "States and territories, including the postsecondary systems and institutions within them, are significant partners in ensuring access to high-quality higher education for all students, and in ensuring accountability of our nation's postsecondary enterprise. Thus, they have a unique and critical role to play in the higher education policymaking process."

Language for Discussion

“An appropriate balance between federal and state authority is essential for maintaining and developing effective postsecondary education authorization and oversight approaches. Given substantial federal investment in postsecondary education, it is appropriate for the federal government to consider and enact well-reasoned criteria for institutions and states to be eligible to participate in such funding programs. Federal agencies should also be deferential to states when taking actions that could affect state policymaking discretion. Federal efforts that infringe on state discretion should:

- ▶ Involve substantial consultation with states and their representatives to identify potential alternative approaches that meet stated federal objectives
- ▶ Be based on reasonable research and data
- ▶ Do so to the least extent possible to accomplish stated federal objectives

In discussions with representatives from federal agencies and other entities about issues that affect either state discretion or the federal-state relationship, staff will endeavor to ensure communication between parties takes place, assist in providing and supporting high-quality, objective research and data that informs actions, and inform the Commission when staff are concerned that federal actions are violating the spirit or letter of this position or the existing federal requirements of Executive Order 13132 and other federalism requirements.”


The potential language borrows heavily from the framing of Executive Order 13132, which was signed in 1999. The intent was “to guarantee the division of governmental responsibilities between the national government and the States that was intended by the Framers of the Constitution, to ensure that the principles of federalism established by the Framers guide the executive departments and agencies in the formulation and implementation of policies, and to further the policies of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.”

The WICHE Commission approved a set of principles and positions in 2021 to guide the organization's engagement on key issues and topics. These updated positions focus on the needs of WICHE's members and how federal policy could complement state and Compact efforts to improve postsecondary outcomes for all students.


WICHE's proposed federal positions are based on several high-level general principles.

- ▶ **Principle 1.** States and territories, including the postsecondary systems and institutions within them, are significant partners in ensuring access to high-quality higher education for all students, and in ensuring accountability of our nation's postsecondary enterprise. Thus, they have a unique and critical role to play in the higher education policymaking process.
- ▶ **Principle 2.** Solutions to our nation's higher education challenges and problems should focus on how to support positive outcomes for all students – particularly those groups who have been poorly served in the past and are facing significant barriers in the future – and protecting students and taxpayers from fraud.
- ▶ **Principle 3.** Higher education policy decisions should be informed by data, rigorous research, and evidence.
- ▶ **Principle 4.** Higher education in the West has unique characteristics and requires intentional federal policymaking that recognizes the needs of the region.

These four principles are embedded in the following proposed positions:

 **Actionable data and information are key to better outcomes for students and any data system(s) must be developed thoughtfully.** Staff propose that WICHE remain neutral on the creation of a federal student unit record system, consistent with the previously approved WICHE position. However, given the significant existing expertise within WICHE and the lack of state-focused voices involved in previous discussions around the development of such systems, WICHE fills a crucial void and has helped to improve previous legislation.

Additionally, federal policy should support the development of data resources that provide accurate and actionable information about states, territories, and institutions in the West (and, where appropriate, freely associated states). This should include appropriate data resources for and engagement with Tribal Colleges and Universities, which are prevalent throughout the West.

 **A state-federal partnership will enhance affordability and be an essential part of the solution for improving student access and success.** Affordability of postsecondary education is a pressing topic throughout the West that is of wide concern. Given the historical roles of both federal and state funding of postsecondary education, a reinvigorated federal-state partnership is crucial to assessing and improving affordability. States and territories will not be able to meet their postsecondary attainment goals without significant federal investment in ways that account for the different governance structures and characteristics of postsecondary education systems across the West. The federal government is uniquely positioned to provide resources to improve affordability and given the national and state interests in increasing attainment, a well-designed partnership is essential to improving affordability.

Federal proposals to provide “free college” should balance state characteristics, state and territorial support for postsecondary education, and research and evidence in developing the detailed models to design and implement such programs. Further, these models must be sustainable at the federal and state levels. WICHE has a history of developing financial aid models that would serve the development of a state-federal partnership well and has substantial expertise to contribute. Additionally, federal policy supporting minority-serving institutions should provide sufficient resources to promote equitable outcomes for underserved students.



Higher education innovations to improve student outcomes should be supported but must also ensure robust student protections. WICHE has played a significant role in fostering innovation in postsecondary education, but recognizes that any federal efforts to promote new policies and practices through flexibility must protect students from bad-faith actors. Finding the appropriate balance is crucial, and WICHE staff's expertise in policy and technology can play a crucial role.

Further, innovations in postsecondary education and training that involve major departures from existing regulatory and oversight models can be a useful tool to demonstrate viability and effectiveness, but they must also provide appropriate assurances to students. New innovations must have appropriate protections and either have or lead to a strong base of evidence, along with rigorous evaluative requirements. As one example, WICHE joins other organizations in calling for the U.S. Department of Education's "Experimental Sites Initiative" to be a true evaluation of educational innovations, to elevate new policies and programs that improve student outcomes, and to protect the students participating in the experiment.



Digital learning is critical for higher education and economic development in the 21st century. Even prior to the recent pandemic and the wide-scale reliance on digital learning that it created at every institution, the importance of digital learning was abundantly clear. The effectiveness of digital learning is, however, impacted by both student and institutional technology accessibility. The pandemic's disruption of face-to-face instruction has demonstrated the impact of "broadband deserts" on students and institutions. WICHE supports the development and use of digital learning as a means of improving student access and success, especially for those students who are not well-served by more traditional face-to-face instruction. Additionally, the West, including Tribal lands and Pacific Islands, face particular challenges in developing the necessary infrastructure to support digital learning, which can be addressed through federal policy.

Federal policy also oftentimes differentiates between educational modalities, which may be appropriate in some instances, where there are evidence-based reasons. However, students enrolled in distance education should not face additional obstacles due to such differentiation without sufficient justification.

Since 1953, WICHE has worked collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all residents of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life.



Visit www.wiche.edu.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

Meeting

Tuesday, May 7, 2024
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
Marquis 6

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday

May 7, 2024

8:30 –
9:45 a.m.

Marquis 6

Committee Members

Pearl Brower (AK)
Antwan Jefferson (CO)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Agenda

PRESIDING

John Gomez, Director of Operations

STAFF

Gina Brimner, Director of Special Projects
Janell Daly, Senior Administrative Coordinator

Information Items

Behavioral Health Program FY 2025 Workplan Draft

John Gomez

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Current Behavioral Health Projects

John Gomez

Budget Update

John Gomez

Behavioral Health Program (BHP) Spotlight

Gina Brimner

Colorado Behavioral Health Administration Crisis Professional Curriculum Project – How the WICHE BHP can augment state behavioral health staff.

Other Business

Adjournment

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM FY 2025 WORKPLAN DRAFT



 **WICHE**
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

FY 2025 **WORKPLAN**

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
BHP Member Service and Support	A/S, I	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health authorities
Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG): Annual Membership Program	A/S, I, V/A	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health data specialists

BHP MEMBER SERVICE AND SUPPORT: The WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions are asked to contribute a nominal support fee of \$15,000 to the WICHE BHP to be a member of the Behavioral Health Oversight Council, to provide guidance to and collaboration. As part of the regional collaborative, states will have a platform to perform regional collaborative projects; have access to regional training to support workforce development and system improvement; have available to them consultation and technical assistance on a variety of policy issues; and be part of an interstate networking and resource sharing collaborative.

WESTERN STATES DECISION SUPPORT GROUP (WSDSG) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM: Since 1985, the WICHE BHP has been managing the WSDSG, an information-sharing membership-based network for behavioral health data and evaluation staff and managers from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. The WICHE BHP manages quarterly conference calls to discuss emerging behavioral health data and system evaluation issues and provides ongoing support to WSDSG members. The WICHE BHP also organizes an annual meeting with training and presentations for WSDSG members to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data and evaluation. Funding is based on an annual membership fee of \$6,000.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium – Interns and Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	Western	\$150,000	7/23-6/24	State of Alaska; Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychiatric Institute – Regulatory Compliance Technical Assistance	A/S, V/A	Western	\$197,100	4 years	State of Alaska
Arizona Evidence-Based Practices Fidelity Monitoring*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$915,428	6.5 7/23-6/24	State of Arizona
Arizona – Mercy Care C.A.R.E.S. Training	W/S, V/A	Western	\$70,000	2/24-3/25	Mercy Care
Colorado Behavioral Health Administration Technical Assistance	W/S, A/S	Western	\$168,015	0.75 11/23-6/24	State of Colorado
Guam Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western and Pacific Jurisdictions	\$62,745	0.5 10/23-9/24	U.S. Territory of Guam
Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$1,929,212	0.5 7/23-6/24	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Clinical Psychologists*	W/S	Western	\$100,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Behavioral Health and Social Workers	W/S	Western	\$125,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$125,000	7/23-6/24	State of Idaho
Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$221,400	1.5 7/23-6/24	State of Montana
Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC)	A/S, W/S	Western	\$449,809	1.5 8/23-9/24	University of North Dakota
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC)	A/F, A/S, I	Western	\$649,500	3	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
NASMHPD Technical Assistance	W/S	Pacific Jurisdictions	\$48,750	2/24–9/24	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
National Institutes of Health Behavioral Health Aide Assessment	W/S	Western	\$153,088	0.75 4 years	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; Northwest Indian College; University of Alaska – Anchorage
Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$358,094	0.25 8/23-8/25	State of Nevada
New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$157,223	0.25 8/23-8/24	State of New Mexico; Indian Health Service
Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$3,000	7/23-6/24	State of Oregon
Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)	W/S	Western	\$869,509	3 9/23-8/24	JBS International
Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention – Together With Veterans	W/S	U.S.	\$3,063,425	4.5 4/23-3/24	U.S. Veterans Administration’s Office of Rural Health and Office of Suicide Prevention
Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$200,000	0.5 3 Years	Sanford Health
South Dakota IMP(ACT) Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$49,900	0.25 6/23-5/24	State of South Dakota
South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$175,000	0.25 8/22-11/24	State of South Dakota
University of Wisconsin Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$52,659	0.4 9/23-8/24	University of Wisconsin
Utah Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$26,400	7/23-6/24	State of Utah

* WICHE expects these projects will be renewed, or they have already been renewed, for FY 2025.

ALASKA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (AK-PIC) INTERNS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

The WICHE BHP supports the ongoing operations of the AK-PIC for interns and faculty, including its engagement in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and achievement/maintenance of American Psychological Association (APA) accreditation. The AK-PIC consists of a multisite consortium of Alaska agencies that maintain at least one supervising psychologist onsite to provide supervision and didactic training to interns.

ALASKA PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE – REGULATORY COMPLIANCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP was selected through a competitive bidding process to assist the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) in maintaining compliance with regulating agencies through review of policies, health information management, infection control, milieu management, risk management, medical staff credentialing, pharmacy practices, and life safety code and environment of care. The WICHE BHP will perform reviews and provide guidance on how to address shortcomings in policies and execution.

ARIZONA EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES (EBPS) FIDELITY MONITORING: The WICHE BHP partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to support the implementation and fidelity reviews of four EBPs in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. The WICHE BHP supports a team of fidelity reviewers who review approximately 20 different providers in Maricopa County each year. In FY 2024, the project was expanded to include fidelity reviews throughout the balance of the state of Arizona.

ARIZONA MERCY CARE C.A.R.E.S. TRAINING: The WICHE BHP collaborates with Arizona-based Mercy Care through its C.A.R.E.S (Community Action Resources Education and Service) community giving initiative to plan and provide training to increase workforce expertise by implementing training strategies for evidence-based practices: Trauma-informed Care for Children, Youth and Adults; Transition to Independence Model; Infant-Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona 0-5 Training; and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders including Opioids.

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide technical assistance in the development of a Crisis Professional Training Curriculum consisting of 24 distinct modules. The WICHE BHP is augmenting the BHA staff with Crisis Professional Expertise by supporting the work of a Crisis Professional Advisory Board and reviewing curriculum modules.

GUAM PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (GU-PIC): The WICHE BHP has partnered with the U.S. Territory of Guam to develop an accreditable psychology internship consortium to serve Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and build the behavioral health workforces there. The WICHE BHP assists by guiding all phases of developing a psychology internship consortium to attract and retain qualified and highly trained behavioral health professionals in the territories. Guam-PIC graduated its first intern from the program in AY 2022-23.

HAWAII PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (HI-PIC): The WICHE BHP supports the state of Hawai'i in developing and operating an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is the establishment of a pipeline to build Hawai'i's behavioral health workforce. Three Hawai'i state agencies (the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the newly formed Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) will provide funding to support HI-PIC. Currently, 10 interns are participating in HI-PIC.

HAWAII RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS: The Hawai'i Department of Education contracts with the WICHE BHP to recruit and contract with clinical psychologists to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands.

HAWAII RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND SOCIAL WORKERS: The WICHE BHP is assisting the Hawai'i Department of Education with marketing, recruitment,

screening, and referral services for school-based behavioral health (SBBH) and social work professionals to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands. This effort is designed to increase the employment of SBBH and social work professionals.

IDAHO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (ID-PIC): The WICHE BHP is assisting the State of Idaho in continuing to operate an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Idaho's behavioral health workforce, especially in rural and underserved areas. The Idaho State Board of Education received funding from the Idaho Legislature to support WICHE's assistance in restructuring and expanding an existing unaccredited internship program and pursuing American Psychological Association accreditation.

MONTANA PACT FIDELITY REVIEWS: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services' Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division has contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to the division on the implementation of its Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). This project includes conducting fidelity reviews for 14 PACT programs operating across the state, developing plans and focused training to promote the improvement of services, and consultation on outcomes and dashboard development.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MP-MHTTC): The MP-MHTTC is a six-year partnership between the WICHE BHP and the University of North Dakota to provide comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners across a six-state area. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the center specializes in rural and frontier mental health in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The project is in the final year of its six-year award.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (MP ROTAC): In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance to rural communities across the continuum of care.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTORS (NASMHPD) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is a subcontractor to NASMHPD on its Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Technical Assistance Coalition and Transformation Transfer Initiative. The BHP has been focused on implementing and expanding 988 crisis services in rural and frontier regions through a series of training and technical assistance sessions for providers across the country. Additionally, the BHP will assist the CNMI in developing a behavioral health aide certification program.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE ASSESSMENT: The WICHE BHP, in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), was awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) research grant. This project evaluates the behavioral health aide program, focusing on efficacy, implementation, and best practices. As behavioral health workforce issues continue to grow in tribal areas, this research has the potential to significantly influence the development of new programs across the West.

NEVADA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NV-PIC): The WICHE BHP assists the State of Nevada in the continued operation of an accredited psychology internship consortium. The primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Nevada's behavioral health workforce. The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and Nevada WICHE provides support and funding for the BHP's ongoing development and operation of the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium.

NEW MEXICO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NM-PIC): The WICHE BHP is working with partner agencies to develop a doctoral psychology internship consortium for the State of New Mexico. A primary goal of the internship program is to help develop New Mexico's behavioral health workforce in rural and underserved areas. Through funding from the New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division, the New Mexico Department of Health, and the federal Indian Health Services, the WICHE BHP is facilitating program development and helping to ensure the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards.

OREGON STATE HOSPITAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (OSH-PIP): The WICHE BHP continues to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Training Program by supporting and maintaining the internship's website.

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP): The WICHE BHP has partnered with JBS International to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses and psychostimulant misuse in high-risk communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortia. As a partner in this project, the WICHE BHP provides technical assistance to 66 rural planning and implementation opioid grantees and psychostimulant grantees funded for three years by the Health Resources and Services Administration.

RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION – TOGETHER WITH VETERANS: The WICHE BHP is collaborating with the Denver-based federal Veterans Administration, Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) to develop and implement Together With Veterans (TWV), a Veteran suicide prevention program for rural communities. The program became operational in FY 2019, with four initial sites (two in Colorado, one in Montana, and one in North Carolina). Since then, the TWV program has been implemented in 38 rural communities, with 14 of those communities having completed their three-year commitment to the program. The TWV program sites are located in rural communities throughout the country, stretching from as far east as New Hampshire and as far west as Guam.

SANFORD HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SH-PIC): The WICHE BHP worked with the leadership of Sanford Health to help develop a psychology internship designed to provide a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in North Dakota and Minnesota. Sanford Health has an extensive national footprint and is a leading agency in advancing integrated health services (physical and behavioral). The internship development began primarily with Sanford's integrated health sites in North Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA IMP(ACT) FIDELITY REVIEWS: The WICHE BHP is continuing to assist the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health to evaluate the fidelity of the evidence-based practice Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) at community behavioral health clinics in three locations in South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SD-PIC): The University of South Dakota contracted with the WICHE BHP to develop a psychology internship consortium. The WICHE BHP is

working with the state to identify core partners for the internship, including the South Dakota Human Services Center in Yankton and other community-based partners. WICHE's work will extend from planning and development to supporting achieving accreditation of the internship program.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is working in partnership with the University of Wisconsin through a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to provide education and training to graduate students, practitioners, educators, and trainers. These learning collaboratives will focus on the integration of substance use disorder and mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery in rural communities. The WICHE BHP will provide expert trainers for a series of six trainings over 12 weeks, twice a year, for the next three years. Many expert trainers will be provided in conjunction with the ongoing work of WICHE's Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP).

UTAH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (UT-PIC): The WICHE BHP works with partner agencies to develop the internship consortium's self-study. This will help ensure the program meets the American Psychological Association accreditation standards and assist with the accreditation process.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Expansion of Behavioral Health Aide Model in Pacific Jurisdictions	W/S, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	Pacific Jurisdictions Native Alaskan Tribal Health Consortium
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Mental Health Needs Classification System	W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	State of Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center - Recompete	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

EXPANSION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE (BHA) MODEL IN PACIFIC JURISDICTIONS: The WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Community Guidance Center in the CNMI to launch a pilot project implementing the BHA model of a local community behavioral health paraprofessional worker, modeled after the Alaska BHA program. Concurrently, the WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Pacific Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (PBHCC) to establish a certification system for BHAs. Current funding has been provided to WICHE from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), and there is interest from the other Pacific Jurisdictions to expand this effort. The WICHE BHP is exploring funding sources to support such expansion.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: The WICHE BHP is working with the newly formed Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to explore the possibility of assisting the department in the development of a classification system to accurately assess the mental health needs of the department's patient population. This project would be designed to improve the types and quantity of services the department provides to its incarcerated population.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER – RECOMPETE: In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The WICHE BHP will need to recompete for a new five-year funding opportunity to continue its work with MP ROTAC.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado's Behavioral Health Administration has approached the WICHE BHP regarding an opportunity to continue supporting the Crisis Professional Curriculum project in Phase II of the project.

STUDENT WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH: The WICHE BHP continues to seek opportunities and funding to partner with the Policy and Analysis unit and Lumina Foundation to support and improve college student wellness and mental health, to improve college completion and degree attainment for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or mental health status.

Previously considered projects that we propose to remove from the Workplan: None at this time.

Completed Projects

Work that staff completed in FY 2024:

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY – TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED SUPERVISION OF POST-GRADUATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide outreach, research, and documentation specific to best practices for supervising doctoral-level practitioners of psychology pursuing state licensure. The WICHE BHP reviewed accepted practices for supervision, including in-person, telephone, and video conferencing modalities for remote locations, ultimately presenting a policy analysis paper to the licensure boards in Alaska.

AVONDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT REACCREDITATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP supported the Avondale Elementary School District's reaccreditation of its Doctoral School Psychology Internship Program by providing technical assistance in its submission of reaccreditation to the American Psychological Association.

HAWAI'I EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES – RATES STUDY: The Early Intervention Services Section (EIS) of the Hawai'i Department of Health contracted with the WICHE BHP to complete another comparative review of early childhood services compensation methodology and pricing structures for both contracted services and related professional salaries such as general educator, occupational and physical therapists, and speech language pathologist. The EIS rates study compared Hawai'i rates to those in other, analogous states to ensure competitive pay to help maintain a sufficient workforce.

MONTANA CRISIS SYSTEM: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assess and make recommendations regarding Montana's implementation of its Mobile Crisis System, including an assessment of individual crisis-stabilization facilities, existing mobile crisis response teams, and its crisis-system data reporting and technology solutions. In addition to a high-level statewide assessment, the WICHE BHP also assessed seven county-based crisis services.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) ONLINE PUBLICATION UPDATE: The NIH contracted with the WICHE BHP to update its publication, *Mental Health and Rural America: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography*. The revision expanded the publication's focus to include substance use and addiction, with particular emphasis on opioid addiction in rural and frontier areas of the United States.

NORTH DAKOTA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE STUDY: The University of North Dakota (UND) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to UND as part of the North Dakota Behavioral Health Plan Aim 7: Behavioral Health Workforce. WICHE convened and facilitated a Behavioral Health Workforce Summit with key stakeholders and developed a Behavioral Health Workforce Strategic Plan.

SOUTH DAKOTA HUMAN SERVICES CENTER OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW: The South Dakota Department of Social Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assist the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.

SOUTH DAKOTA HSC OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW – PHASE II: Provided policy guidance, technical assistance, and support for the implementation of focused programming and staffing models, assisting the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.



EDTECH COMMITTEE

Meeting

Tuesday, May 7, 2024
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
Marquis 2

Agenda

1 Executive

2 Welcome

3 Plenary I

4 Roundtable

5 Plenary II

6 Programs

7 Policy

8 Behavioral

9 EdTech

10 Business

11 References

TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED EDUCATION (EDTECH) COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday

May 7, 2024

8:30 –
9:45 a.m.

Marquis 2

Committee Members

Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Robert Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Rick Aman (ID)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
Michael Meotti (WA)

Agenda

PRESIDING

Commissioner Fred Lokken (NV)

STAFF

Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET
Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy
Innovations
Russ Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice President for Technology-
Enhanced Education

Information Items

WCET FY 2025 Workplan Draft

Van Davis, Cheryl Dowd, and Russ Poulin

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Discussion Items

Emerging Federal Policies for Distance and Digital Learning

Van Davis, Cheryl Dowd, Russ Poulin

What EdTech Issues and Solutions Are Emerging in Your States

Fred Lokken

- ▶ Artificial Intelligence Policy and Practice
- ▶ Other EdTech Advances, Challenges, Legislation, or Policies

Other Business

Adjournment

WCET FY 2025 WORKPLAN DRAFT



WICHE
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

FY 2025 WORKPLAN

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
WCET Member Services and Support	A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	425 member institutions, agencies, organizations
Digital Learning Practice	A/F, A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, Every Learner Everywhere, other organizations
Digital Learning Policy	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET members, SAN, NASASPS, NC-SARA, other organizations
WCET Annual Meeting	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Leadership Summit	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Webcast Series	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Various, depending on the topic
wcetMIX (Member Information Exchange) and Member-only Resources	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET, SAN, and member leadership
State System of Multi-Institutional Consortia Digital Learning Leaders	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	WCET staff	Higher education systems and multi-institution consortia
State Authorization Network (SAN)	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	149 members representing ~ 900 institutions, regional compacts, NASASPS, NC-SARA
WCET Steering Committee Annual Priorities	A/F, A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET-elected Steering Committee and other members

WCET MEMBERSHIP SERVICES AND SUPPORT helps colleges, universities, higher education organizations, state agencies, and companies understand both the practice and policy of digital learning by providing timely information and a collaborative community. The popular WCET *Frontiers* blog features promising practices, innovations, emerging policies, compliance advice, and member profiles. The WCET *Frontiers* podcast series was introduced to provide engaging interviews about solutions and innovations in the practice and policy of digital learning in higher education.

WCET, the State Authorization Network (SAN), and Every Learner Everywhere (ELE) continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING PRACTICES** that have an impact on faculty and students. These groups are noted for their experience in providing members and the field with information on digital learning practices that enhance student success. Past areas of focus include artificial intelligence, digital student support services, digital accessibility, assessment and academic integrity, microcredentials, and learning analytics.

WCET and SAN continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING POLICIES** (federal, state, accreditation, and regulatory) that have an impact on faculty and students. WCET and SAN are noted for their expertise on policy issues, including consumer protections for digital learning students, regular and substantive interaction for distance education, state authorization of out-of-state activities, out-of-state professional licensure regulatory requirements, and digital learning definitions.

WCET events include the **ANNUAL MEETING, MEMBER-ONLY LEADERSHIP VIRTUAL SUMMIT, AND MONTHLY WEBCAST SERIES**. WCET's annual meeting is an in-person event, bringing together up to 400 leaders and practitioners interested in good practices in digital learning in postsecondary education. Members and non-members attend. The 2023 Annual Meeting had 316 attendees and had many multiple sessions of various topics. The member-only Virtual Summit takes place in the spring and is a half-day, single topic-focused event. The 2023 Virtual Summit had over 140 attendees, and the 2024 Virtual Summit focused on artificial intelligence. The monthly Webcast Series showcases innovative practices and effective policies in digital learning, with an average attendance of 150 members and non-members.

WCETMIX is a digital platform to support communication, collaboration, and resource-sharing among WCET members with approximately 5,000 participants (members and non-members). Members are invited to communicate through WCET's popular *wcetNEWS* and *wcetDISCUSS* digital forums. SAN also uses *wcetMIX* to support communication and sharing among its members.

The **STATE SYSTEM OF MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL CONSORTIA DIGITAL LEARNING LEADERS** meet monthly to share their unique challenges and solutions in using cooperation and shared services to better meet the needs of students, faculty, and administrators at their member institutions.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN)** is a membership organization, created in 2011 as a division of WCET, that empowers its members to successfully resolve state and federal regulatory challenges to improve student consumer protections in digital and experiential learning across state lines. SAN serves postsecondary institutional staff who must translate and implement educational technology regulations as well as the agencies that support that work. Related issues include state institutional approvals, reciprocity, professional licensure, employment law issues, international compliance, and military-related considerations. SAN does this through providing members with an online library of resources and tools, policy analysis, virtual and in-person trainings, and facilitating communication so that members can cooperate to identify common needs, track emerging policies and regulations, evaluate their efficacy, and share lessons learned. SAN is developing a second edition of its Professional Licensure Handbook that will assist the public in navigating federal professional licensure regulations.

Each year, the **WCET STEERING COMMITTEE** selects **ANNUAL PRIORITIES** to provide insights and resources to assist members. Working groups are formed to advise and assist in developing webinars, conference sessions, blog posts, reports, and other resources to inform the membership. The selected topics for 2024 were:

- ▶ **Artificial Intelligence** – As these tools become ubiquitous, how do we tackle the instructional, academic integrity, and equity issues related to generative artificial intelligence?
- ▶ **Digital Learning Economics** – As higher education faces affordability challenges, what are the costs of digital learning and how can digital learning assist in making higher education more affordable and accessible?

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Artificial Intelligence: Policy and Practice in Higher Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	0.5	WCET, external consultants, and other digital learning nonprofits as needed
Emerging Federal Policies	A/F, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	2	WCET, SAN, WICHE Policy unit
Every Learner Everywhere	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Oct 2022 – Dec 2024) \$66,88,840	1.5-5.8 / 2017-25	13 partner organizations
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET, WICHE Policy Unit

The impact of **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** has undergone an extensive buildup and now upon us. In November 2023, OpenAI released ChatGPT, a chat interface for its GPT large language model AI. Using the chat interface, users can make a seemingly endless array of queries of GPT 4 that result in often stunning responses. The relative ease in getting the program to create everything from poems to short answers to complete essays has led many faculty and administrators to worry about the academic integrity of coursework. Others are urging faculty to rethink assessment practices and find ways to integrate generative artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT, into coursework. Artificial Intelligence will remain one of WCET's focus areas in 2024 and will include the production of several blogs, webinars, and both public and member-only reports. This work is being funded through internal investment but may lead to additional funding opportunities.

The years 2024 and 2025 will be unusually full of **EMERGING FEDERAL POLICY** discussions regarding digital learning in higher education. Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Veterans Administration have rules regarding professional licensure programs. The department has undertaken rulemaking on accreditation, distance education Title IV tracking, and state authorization for distance education, and digital books and resources that will be finalized in Fall 2024. The department has also indicated that it will release new guidance on third-party services and online program managers in 2024. NC-SARA is facilitating the new SARA Policy Modification Process intended to be more inclusive and transparent. Legislation is likely in U.S. Congress on short-term Pell grants and on housing allowance for Veterans studying at a distance. WCET and SAN staff will continue to follow these policy proposals and inform members.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE (ELE) is a network of 13 partner organizations working collaboratively to help institutions use new technology to innovate in teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes for Black, Latino, and Indigenous, poverty-affected, and first-generation students. WCET is an intermediary for the network, which is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is also one of the participating partners. The most involved partner organizations include Achieving the Dream, American Public and Land-Grant Universities, and the Online Learning Consortium. Service topics include information on adaptive learning, equitable pedagogical practices in digital learning, evidence-based teaching practices for digital learning, and techniques for putting students first in the classroom.

In collaboration with the WICHE Policy Analysis and Research unit, WCET will work on **A HOLE IN STATE POLICY: ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**. This project will examine the role that alternative providers play in the development and offering of postsecondary credentials. The Policy Analysis and Research unit (assisted by WCET) will work with key state partners to develop appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative providers of postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that states can leverage the advantages of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Price and Cost of Distance Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	■ ■ ■ ■	National	Internal	0.5 1 year	WICHE Policy Unit

In 2017, WCET conducted national research on the **PRICE AND COST OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**. A survey of institutions sought to collect information on the price that institutions charge students for a distance education course and the cost to create that course. The work led to the realization that the views of practitioners and policymakers are completely at odds. An update of the 2017 analysis is needed for the post-COVID higher education world.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT FOR WCET AND SAN: WCET and SAN used the services of WebAIM, part of the Institute for Disability Research, Policy, & Practice, at Utah State University, to improve its website accessibility. SAN has begun a similar extensive review of its website with WebAIM, with the hopes to have the work completed in the next fiscal year.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE has successfully closed out five grants and one contract and has primarily transitioned to using a new three-year network investment grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The focus of this year has been on the major reinvestment grant, and with its new deliverables focused on a new governance system, new technical assistance providers, selecting and onboarding new equity-first organizations, and creating a menu of services, an institutional digital learning assessment tool, and quality service standards. The network continued to be a recognized leader in equity in digital learning through multiple conference presentations, resources, and blog posts. Additionally, Every Learner onboarded a new director in June 2023, after the previous one resigned in February 2023.

The **WCET ANNUAL MEETING** took place in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October 2023. The 35th Annual Meeting had over 300 attendees. Sessions covered an array of digital learning and higher education topics including information about recently released regulations, artificial intelligence, the array of digital learning definitions and need for clarity, microcredential strategies, accreditation challenges and changes, and quality in digital learning. The Annual Summit for Women in eLearning (ASWE) was held in conjunction with the WCET Annual Meeting; this is the first time ASWE was held in-person and had 72 attendees.

The **MEMBER-ONLY VIRTUAL SUMMIT** topic for 2023 was the evolving business models for higher education, which resonated with WCET members as many institutions were seeking strategies for increasing revenue and retention. Over 140 people participated in the one-day virtual event. The 2024 event focused on artificial intelligence and higher education.

The **WCET WEBCAST SERIES** is popular with the WCET community because it is free and open to all, featuring experts and practitioners who share pragmatic advice and lessons learned on digital learning topics. Topics for 2023 include accessibility considerations in open education, effective tools and strategies for AI and academic integrity, microcredentials, and enrollment challenges.

The **WCET ONLINE COMMUNITY** moved to a new platform in March 2024. The new platform, Sengii, provides a better user experience by allowing WCET members to navigate the platform and discussions more intuitively. The original platform, Higher Logic, had become increasingly cost-prohibitive.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Setting Definitions for Learning Modalities	A/S, A/F, I		U.S. and Canada	\$150-200,000 (initially)	0.5 1 year	Canadian Digital Learning Research Association

SETTING DEFINITIONS FOR LEARNING MODALITIES: WCET and the Canadian Digital Learning Research Association will build on an existing body of work to create more standard definitions for digital learning modalities. In a recent survey by WCET, only 52% of institutions stated they had an institution-wide definition of distance learning, 41% had definitions for online learning, and 20% had definitions for hyflex learning. This leaves students, faculty, and other groups and agencies guessing what each institution calls these experiences. Developing these definitions could serve policy at the federal, regional, and/or state levels while also allowing for local flexibility. Most importantly, such definitions would provide better clarity for students to know what to expect when they enroll and participate in a course described with these terms.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Business Session

Tuesday, May 7, 2024
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Marquis Ballroom

Agenda

1 Executive

2 Welcome

3 Plenary I

4 Roundtable

5 Plenary II

6 Programs

7 Policy

8 Behavioral

9 EdTech

10 Business

11 References

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – BUSINESS SESSION

Tuesday

May 7, 2024

10:00 –
11:30 a.m.

Marquis
Ballroom

Business Session Agenda

Call to Order

Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO), WICHE Chair

 **Approval of the November 10, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes** 10-3

Report of the Chair

Commissioner Jefferson

10-9

Report of the President

Demarée Michelau

10-10

Report and Recommended Action of the Executive Committee

Commissioner Jefferson, Chair

Review of Action Items of the Executive Committee Between November 2023 and May 2024

Commissioner Jefferson, Chair


10-12

Report on the President's Evaluation

Commissioner Jefferson, Chair

Report and Recommended Action of the Programs and Services Committee

Commissioner Patricia Sullivan (NM), Committee Chair

 **Approval of the Professional Student Exchange Program Support Fees for the AY 2025-26 and AY 2026-27 Biennium** 6-15

Report and Recommended Action of the Policy Analysis and Research Committee

Commissioner Christopher Cabaldon (CA), Committee Chair









 **Approval of Montana's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA** 7-18

 **Approval of Utah's Renewal Application to Continue Participation in W-SARA** 7-34

Report of the Behavioral Health Oversight Committee

Commissioner Jefferson, Committee Chair

Action Items

 ACTION ITEM	Approval of the FY 2025 Salary and Benefit Recommendations	10-20
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of FY 2025 Annual Operating Budget – General and Non-General Fund Budgets	10-22
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of Dedicated Reserve Levels for Non-General Fund Activities	10-30
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of Dues for the FY 2026 and FY 2027 Biennium	10-34
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of Future Commission Meeting Dates and Locations	10-40
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of the FY 2025 Workplan	10-43
 ACTION ITEM	Approval of the WICHE Conflict of Interest Policy for the WICHE Commission	10-76
 ACTION ITEM	Affirmation of the Code of Ethics for the Commission	10-81

Other Business

Adjourn Committee of the Whole – Business Session

Meeting Evaluation

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/May24CommMtg>



Thank you for your feedback!

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the November 10, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Matt Freeman (ID), Chair
Antwan Jefferson (CO), Vice Chair
David Lassner (HI), Immediate Past Chair
Tom Begich (AK)
Pearl Brower (AK)
John Arnold (AZ)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Todd Haynie (AZ)
Christopher Cabaldon (CA)
Ellen Junn (CA)
Bob Shireman (CA)
Jim Chavez (CO)
Colleen Sathre (HI)
Laurie Bishop (MT)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Cathy Dinauer (NV)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Dale Erquiaga (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Bill Soules (NM)
Danita Bye (ND)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Hilda Rosselli (OR)
Lisa Skari (OR)
Diana VanderWoude (SD)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Millner (UT)
John Carmichael (WA)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Gerry Pollet (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)
Kevin Carman (WY)
Joseph Shaeffer (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Sean Parnell (AK)
Angie Paccione (CO)
John Morton (HI)

Rick Aman (ID)
Dave Lent (ID)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Mark Hagerott (ND)
Brian Maher (SD)
Rodney Jacob (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/Guam)
Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/RMI)

Staff Present

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Margo Colalancia, Director, Student Access Programs, Programs and Services
Janell Daly, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Behavioral Health Program
Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET, Service Design and Strategy Officer, Every Learner Everywhere
Liliana Diaz, Senior Policy Analyst, Policy Analysis and Research
Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and to the Commission, Office of the President
Kay Hulstrom Associate Director, Operations and Program Implementation, Programs and Services
Kathryn Kerensky, Director, Digital Learning, Policy and Compliance, WCET
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer, Accounting Services
Dennis Mohatt, Vice President, Behavioral Health Program and Co-Director, Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)
Bobbi Perkins, Director, Mountain Plains ROTAC/ Technical Assistance Lead, Behavior Health Program

Staff Present *(continued)*

Jeanette Porter, Senior Administrative Coordinator, Office of the President
Russ Poulin, Executive Director WCET and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education

Megan Raymond, Senior Director, Membership and Programs, WCET
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

Call to Order

Chair Matt Freeman called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and acknowledged Veterans Day. He asked Veterans present to stand to be recognized and honored. Laura Ewing reported to Chair Freeman that the Committee of the Whole had a quorum.

Chair Freeman gave brief remarks about the passing in July 2023 of former Commissioner Jim Hansen (SD) at the age of 94. Hansen was a commissioner from 2002 through 2005 and was reappointed in 2008, where he served until 2020.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 9, 2023, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES

Chair Freeman asked for any additions or corrections to the minutes. There were none, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Report of the Chair

Chair Freeman gave an overview of WICHE's accomplishments and highlights while he was Chair of the Commission. He mentioned the following in his overview:

- ▶ A 70th anniversary celebration for WICHE was held in Boulder, Colorado, for current and previous staff, local and state government officials, and a number of local individuals who have supported and contributed to the work of WICHE over the years. This celebration provided a moment to remind those in attendance of the great work of the organization to provide educational opportunities for tens of thousands of students and generate student savings in the hundreds of millions of dollars for the residents of the WICHE region since becoming a compact on August 8, 1953.
- ▶ The expansion of the Pacific Island membership continued with the addition of the American Samoa, providing the opportunity for the Pacific jurisdiction to leverage the compact for the benefit of its students.
- ▶ A formal review and assessment of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) was held. The program had not been reviewed in over 20 years, and the assessment by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was proving valuable to the program's future growth.
- ▶ WICHE staff were recognized for their work on the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA) policy modification process.
- ▶ Staff coordinated the acquisition of group property insurance by sponsoring five private institutions in Oregon and Washington state; this joint coverage saved the states a considerable amount of money.

Report of the President

During the Report of the President, President Demarée Michelau thanked staff, the California commissioners, and WICHE officers for their work and valuable contributions to a successful November 2023 Commission meeting. Additionally, she mentioned the following:

- ▶ WICHE is in the beginning stages of documenting its history of WICHE since the last book, *A History of the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education*, was published by author Frank Abbott. Abbott's book covered the years 1951-2003, while the new book will cover the years 2003-23.
- ▶ President Michelau traveled throughout the region and discussed the importance of engagement. She encouraged commissioners to let her know how she could help with work being done in the states, territories, and freely associated states.
- ▶ She encouraged commissioners to review the well-documented report of her work in 2023, which appears in the November 2023 Commission Meeting agenda book.

Report and Recommended Action of the Programs and Services Committee

STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAMS

Committee Vice Chair Diana VanderWoude provided the report from the Programs and Services Committee that met during the November 2023 Commission Meeting. During the meeting, staff provided the following updates:

- ▶ The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) reported 2.3% more students received WUE reduced tuition benefits throughout the WICHE region in AY 2022-23; over 47,000 WUE students saved \$520 million.
- ▶ The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) reported a 12% decrease in the number of students who benefitted from the program in AY 2022-23; 3,269 students saved \$58 million.
- ▶ The Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) was stable in FY 2022 with 559 students from 10 states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands receiving support of \$14.2 million.
- ▶ Guam has eight certified applicants who will receive PSEP support in Fall 2024.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ The WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities program, funded by the Mellon Foundation, launched in August 2023 with an eight-member cohort.
- ▶ The No Holding Back project reviewed 12 participating institutions to explore why administrative holds were placed on student records and the impact of the holds on students. The findings show that first-year, transfer students, males, nontraditional, lower-income, and students of color are more likely to experience holds that impede their academic success. The project brought awareness to the participating institutions and to find ways to improve administrative holds practices and policies for both students and institutions.

COST-SAVINGS INITIATIVES

Staff worked with five of the six institutions that previously participated in the Master Property Program (MPP). WICHE was sponsoring a group property insurance program for these small, private liberal arts

institutions. Staff were investigating a regionally available property insurance program and will report their findings at a future Commission meeting.

PSEP ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW REPORT

Brian Prescott and Sarah Torres Lugo from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) met with committee members to discuss their research on regional workforce needs and their assessment of 10 health-related professional fields currently included in PSEP. In summary, they found that the 10 professional health fields remain necessary across the region. The committee discussed opportunities for expanding PSEP into new program areas and agreed that further workforce needs research should be done.

Report and Recommended Action of the Policy Analysis and Research Committee

Committee Chair Christopher Cabaldon provided the report and recommended action from the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee that met during the November 2023 Commission Meeting. During the meeting, staff provided the following updates:

- ▶ An amendment to the action item in the agenda book pertaining to approving a project titled Technical Assistance Focused on State and System Governance Models for the Nevada System of Higher Education. Nevada is no longer able to use the appropriated funds to examine the state's higher education governance structures, but the state can study the state's funding formula. Staff requested an amended motion to submit a proposal to provide technical assistance to the Nevada System of Higher Education, which is focused on the state's funding formula. The committee recommend staff move forward with the proposal to be contracted by the state of Nevada for this funding formula project.

Committee Chair Cabaldon MOVED TO APPROVE a project related to studying the funding formula in Nevada and authorize staff to submit a proposal for the contract and Commissioner Tom Begich SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved by the Commission.

- ▶ Staff presented a report on the results of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) policy modification process. Five proposals were submitted and approved by all four regional compacts and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) board. The key parts of the proposals are to establish a state-led policy modification process and ensure that states lead the complex agreement.
- ▶ Staff provided updates on the Fall 2023 release of *Tuitions and Fees in the West* publication. Tuition and fees are stable and increasing slightly throughout the region.
- ▶ The committee engaged in an extensive discussion about the structure and content of the Policy Analysis and Research unit's section of the Workplan. Staff presented proposed revisions that would reduce the number of approved projects listed under the New Directions category to better prioritize work. The committee gave suggestions and approved the revisions.

Report of the Legislative Advisory Committee

Commissioner Laurie Bishop gave a report on the activity of the Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC).

The LAC convened in Phoenix, Arizona, September 12-13, 2023, with a record number of attendees: 27 legislators representing 12 WICHE states and territories. The theme of the meeting was *Exploring the Concept of Value in Postsecondary Education*. Some of the presentation topics mentioned were:

- ▶ Federal policy considerations
- ▶ Student perspectives of affordability, completion, and return on investment
- ▶ Higher education's role in workforce and economic development
- ▶ An informative artificial intelligence (AI) presentation with an engaging discussion

The meeting evaluation reflected that 100% of those who responded to the meeting survey thought the meeting was worth their time and would use the information they learned in their legislative work.

The 2024 LAC meeting will be held in Denver, Colorado, September 11-12, 2024. After the report, there was a discussion about which weekdays may be better for improved attendance at the LAC meetings. It was noted that meeting on Thursday-Friday works better than meeting on days during the middle of the week.

Report and Recommended Action of the Audit Committee

Committee Chair David Lassner gave the report of the Audit Committee. Committee members include Commissioners John Arnold, Jim Chavez, and Clayton Christian. The committee met in June 2023 via videoconference with staff and Karmyn Jeffries from FORVIS, the auditing firm for WICHE. Jeffries reviewed the FY 2023 financial statements and the report to governance, and then she discussed the auditor's opinion. The audit resulted in an unmodified opinion of a "clean audit." Committee Chair Lassner said the committee recommends that the Commission accept the FY 2023 audited financial statement.

Committee Chair Lassner MOVED TO APPROVE the FY 2023 audit and financial statement and Commissioner Christian SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

Report and Recommended Action of the Nominating Committee

Committee Chair Lassner gave the report of the Nominating Committee. Committee members also include Commissioners Rodney Jacob, Clayton Christian, Patricia Sullivan, and Ann Millner. The committee met via videoconference on September 22, 2023, to consider the nominations. After thorough deliberation, the Nominating Committee recommend Commissioner Barbara Damron (NM) as the 2024 Vice Chair of the Commission. Additionally, the committee recommends Commissioner Antwan Jefferson (CO) for 2024 Chair and Commissioner Matt Freeman (ID) as 2024 Immediate Past Chair.

Committee Chair Lassner MOVED TO APPROVE the slate of officers for 2024 and Commissioner Frankie Eliptico SECONDED. The motion was approved.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF REVISED WICHE RETIREMENT BENEFIT PERTAINING TO NEW ROTH IRA CATCH-UP REQUIREMENT

President Michelau presented the action item. She said Section 603 of the SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022 requires that employees whose prior year wages from their current employer exceeded \$145,000 are

allowed to make any catch-up contributions to Roth (post-tax) beginning January 1, 2024. She asked for questions regarding the full information on the action item outlined in the agenda book. There were no questions, and no discussion.

Commissioner Kathleen Goeppinger MOVED TO APPROVE the revised WICHE retirement benefit of the Roth IRA catch-up requirement. Commissioner Begich SECONDED the motion. The motion was approved.

Discussion Item

UPDATE ON WICHE'S BUDGET

Craig Milburn gave the report on WICHE's FY 2023 and FY 2024 budgets. He covered the following in his report on the breakdown of how the FY 2023 General Fund budget ended:

- ▶ There was \$3.6 million budgeted.
- ▶ There were \$3.9 million in expenditures.
- ▶ There was \$4.3 million in incoming revenue (with a substantial amount of income gained from interest).
- ▶ There was nearly \$400,000 in excess revenue.
- ▶ FY 2023 started with \$4.3 million in reserves and ended the year with \$4.6 million.
- ▶ There were no concerns thus far with the FY 2024 General Fund budget, which was on schedule after the first quarter.

Information Item

NON-GENERAL FUND RESERVES FOR FY 2024

The reserve budget amounts for the individual units are set and approved each May by the Commission and an update is given at each November Commission meeting. Milburn reported that each of the unit's reserve budgets are financially sound.

REMARKS BY WICHE OFFICERS

Outgoing Chair Freeman, Incoming Chair Jefferson, and Incoming Vice Chair Damron expressed gratitude for the Commission's support in diligently upholding the organization's mission and making a difference in students' lives. They each conveyed the honor they have had to serve in their leadership roles on the Commission.

President Michelau acknowledged the fine work and leadership of outgoing Chair Freeman and thanked him for his partnership in a successful year of collaboration.

Adjournment

The Committee of the Whole adjourned on Friday, November 10, 2023, at 11:15 a.m.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Antwan Jefferson, Colorado

Commissioners,

When we last convened in November, good old Commissioner Matt Freeman (ID) was our chair and he's now the immediate past chair. Again, many thanks to Matt for chairing the work of this Commission. Barbara Damron was unanimously voted in as the vice chair, a colleague with whom I'm excited to partner. I'm here to fill in the time between these two well-respected higher education leaders.

It's important to note that the officers have the responsibility to represent WICHE while working closely with President Michelau and WICHE's amazing staff throughout the year. I want to share with you all some of the work that Commission officers have been involved with since we last met in Riverside, California. Commissioners Freeman and Damron and I have been up to a few things to keep the work of the Commission moving ahead.

In January, we held our officers' retreat where we worked on a range of topics. We reflected on 2023, considering successes and improvement opportunities. We looked ahead to key WICHE governance activities for the current year. And we reviewed priorities for 2024, such as considering PSEP's opportunities to remain innovative, responsive, and effective as a workforce development strategy for WICHE members, as well as considering potential and surfacing critical issues facing WICHE, higher education, and the West. This was all in an effort to identify productive forward pathways. During the latter part of January's officers' retreat, we discussed trends surfacing in the region, including demographic changes (you may be encouraged to know that the next edition of *Knocking at the College Door* will be released later this year), Commission and legislative turnover, and the value proposition of postsecondary education. We also went through a media training, for which I'll certainly need a refresher.

During February and March, we held two Executive Committee meetings and worked to plan this Commission meeting. In April, we returned to the Pacific to visit our WICHE members in Guam, CNMI (specifically Saipan and Tinian), and the Republic of Palau. During this trip, our principal goals were to build and enhance our relationships and awareness with our newest partners. We also used the time to explore strategies that would allow WICHE to help meet a growing need for healthcare workers throughout the region.

For now, know that we are working to represent well the diverse region that is the West by closely following the wisdom and guidance of President Michelau and her team.

Thank you for the opportunity to occupy this seat for this 71st year of WICHE.

Antwan Jefferson, PhD

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Demarée K. Michelau

The first several months of the year are always my favorite. Not only do I enjoy spending my free time skiing in the beautiful Rocky Mountains, but it's also when the legislatures in the West are hard at work. Legislators, governors, SHEEOs, college presidents, staffers, lobbyists, and others focus on the key issues facing their campus communities, and I can learn about their mutual challenges and approaches as well as their differences.

WICHE's superpower is the diversity within our region, including the various perspectives on higher education issues, and there is no place that you can see that play out better than in our state capitals. Sometimes, what happens there makes us proud, and other times, it may even puzzle us, but no matter what, it always gives us a good sense of priorities. Seeing this firsthand and talking to folks directly helps me do my job of serving the region better.

During the past six months since we last met as a Commission, I have visited a number of states, as well as the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, Guam, and the Republic of Palau. While they all are unique, there are some themes that are fairly universal. For instance, health workforce shortages are impacting all areas of the West, and WICHE is working with commissioners and partners to address these challenges through virtual roundtables, briefs, etc. Using our power to convene smart people is one way we can find ways to tackle these challenges collaboratively. In addition, we learned from a recent assessment of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) that it may be an underutilized tool for WICHE states and the Pacific jurisdictions to meet their workforce needs. In response, we are working to enhance the program and identify ways to make it more effective. WICHE's psychology internship programs are now in 9 states and Guam and helping clinical psychologists finish their education and practice in rural areas. Through these consortia, WICHE is having a direct and positive impact on the health workforce in the the rural West.

As demographics change and the educational landscape evolves, postsecondary enrollment, especially college-going rates, is a concern for many of our states and institutions. This coming December, WICHE will release our seminal report, *Knocking at the College Door*, projections of high school graduates. These highly anticipated data will drive policy decisions at the state houses, on campuses, and elsewhere and will provide us with a better picture of the pandemic's impacts on postsecondary education.

Supporting positive behavioral health on campus is another priority for many in the West, and to support our campuses in sharing promising strategies for addressing key issues, WICHE convened state, institutional, and federal stakeholders in a recent meeting funded by Lumina Foundation. We will continue to build state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches and catalyze the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

Postsecondary education is facing some serious challenges, only some of which I have mentioned here, and WICHE will be expected to remain a productive partner to the Western states and Pacific jurisdictions. This means not only anticipating what lies ahead but also being responsive to needs as they arise. Fortunately, the organization is governed by an engaged group of experienced and thoughtful commissioners, and the staff are talented and committed to their work. I cannot imagine a better team with which to tackle the challenges ahead.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to each and every commissioner for their service to WICHE and to their communities, to the smart and talented staff, and to our many partners throughout the West. It's an honor to work with you.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Between November 2023 and May 2024

WICHE Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Approved Riverside, California – November 9, 2023

Committee Members Present

Matt Freeman (ID), Chair
Antwan Jefferson (CO), Vice Chair
David Lassner (HI), Immediate Past Chair
Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goepfinger (AZ)
Bob Shireman (CA)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Barbara Damron (NM)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States/CNMI)
Ann Milner (UT)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Committee Members Absent

Ben Cannon (OR)
Michael Meotti (WA)

Additional Commissioners Present

Laurie Bishop (MT)
Patricia Sullivan (NM)
Lisa Skari (OR)

WICHE Staff Present

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President, Programs and Services
Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President and the Commission
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer
Russ Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice President for Technology-Enhanced Education
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

Guests

Dave Edwards, Sonder Studio
Helen Edwards, Sonder Studio

Call To Order

Chair Matt Freeman called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m., and a quorum was confirmed.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2023, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES

Chair Freeman requested comments or corrections to the Executive Committee meeting minutes from September 14, 2023. There were none. Chair Freeman declared the minutes approved as submitted.

Discussion Item

A PRIMER ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND INTERESTED COMMISSIONERS

Dave and Helen Edwards presented the commissioners and staff with a primer on artificial intelligence (AI). They facilitated discussion in preparation for the Plenary II session to take place later that day during the November 2023 Commission Meeting.

Other Business

Chair Freeman asked for other business, and there was none.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

WICHE Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – Approved Videoconference – February 21, 2024

Committee Members Present

Antwan Jefferson (CO), Chair
Barbara Damron (NM), Vice Chair
Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate Past Chair

Pearl Brower (AK)
Kathleen Goeppinger (AZ)
Bob Shireman (CA)
David Lassner (HI)
Clayton Christian (MT)
Fred Lokken (NV)
Kyle Davison (ND)
Ben Cannon (OR)
Larry Tidemann (SD)
Frankie Eliptico (U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
Michael Meotti (WA)
Fred Baldwin (WY)

Other Commissioners Present

Ann Millner (UT)

WICHE Staff Present

Raymonda Burgman Gallegos, Vice President,
Programs and Services
Van Davis, Chief Strategy Officer, WCET
Laura Ewing, Executive Assistant to the President
and the Commission
Molly Hall-Martin, Director, W-SARA, Policy
Analysis and Research
Patrick Lane, Vice President, Policy Analysis and
Research
Demarée Michelau, President
Craig Milburn, Chief Financial Officer
Russ Poulin, Executive Director, WCET and Vice
President for Technology-Enhanced Education
Melanie Sidwell, Director of Communications

Call to Order

Chair Antwan Jefferson called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. MST. and a quorum was confirmed.

Action Item

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2023, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Chair Jefferson requested comments or corrections to the Executive Committee meeting minutes from November 9, 2023. There were none. Chair Jefferson declared the minutes approved as submitted.

Information Item

NEW COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED SINCE NOVEMBER 2023

President Demarée Michelau updated the committee with the new commissioners that have been appointed since November 2023:

- ▶ Maryrose Beasley (MT)
- ▶ Llew Jones (MT)
- ▶ Nathan Lukkes (SD)

Discussion Item

PROPOSED COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

President Michelau presented proposed Commission meeting dates and locations to be considered from May 2026 to November 2030. The dates and locations will be voted on during the May 2024 Commission Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. The following dates and locations were reviewed:

2026:

May 18-19, Washington
November 5-6, Colorado

2027:

May 3-4 or May 11-12, New Mexico
November 4-5, Colorado

2028:

May 8-9, Alaska
November 9-10, Colorado

2029:

May 7-8, Wyoming
November 8-9, Colorado

2030:

May 6-7, Idaho
November 7-8, Colorado

President Michelau drew attention to 2027, stating that if May 3-4 are the selected dates for the May meeting, it would cause challenges for staff to provide the March actuals in the budget numbers due to the timing of closing out the books. Having the March actuals is important for approving the FY 2028 budget; however, an addendum with the updated budget to the agenda book printed in April could be provided. She noted the alternative date of May 11-12, which is a Tuesday/Wednesday and differs from the usual pattern, allows for travel to the meeting to avoid traveling on Mother's Day (Sunday, May 9) that year.

During the discussion, a question was raised about the consistency of Colorado as the November meeting location. President Michelau noted that historically, the November meeting is in Colorado to allow more staff to participate in and observe the Commission meeting and having the meeting in Colorado provides reduced meeting costs overall. The pattern for Colorado serving as the host site every November is being proposed to resume, now that meetings in those states that were missed during COVID when the Commission met virtually have been scheduled. Additionally, at one point there was a pattern of winter meetings in the northern portion and spring meetings in the southern portion of the WICHE region to avoid the potential for snow impacting travel. An additional comment from the committee was made about legislative sessions that can still be in session in early May, and that could challenge meeting participation.

Commissioner Barbara Damron pointed out that several events, such as the Indian Market and the

Spanish Market, which are typically held in the summer months in Santa Fe, New Mexico, might be moved to May. If these events indeed change their schedule to May, there may be an issue with obtaining an adequate number of hotel rooms in 2027 if the Commission meeting is held in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Discussion Item

UPDATE ON WICHE'S BUDGET

President Michelau gave an overview of the organization's budget. The FY 2024 is in good condition. Additional information was given:

- ▶ Staff are preparing the FY 2025 budgets for Commission approval at the May 2024 Commission Meeting.
- ▶ The Pacific Island membership dues will be covered by the Technical Assistance Program (TAP) grant through June 30, 2025.
- ▶ The federal government is changing its strategy for the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center work (MHTTC), which will result in the loss of funding for the program on September 30, 2024. The biggest impact is losing training resources and services for the states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. Staff have meetings in Washington, D.C., with agencies to determine how the loss of services can be mitigated for the individuals served through the MHTTC.
- ▶ President Michelau and Craig Milburn have met with the audit firm, and there are no new GASB pronouncements. There is a possible Audit Committee meeting in June 2024 to discuss the upcoming WICHE audit that will begin in August 2024.

Proposed dues and staff merit increase information was given to the committee:

- ▶ The Commission approves the dues at the May Commission Meeting every other year for the coming biennium.
- ▶ The Commission sets dues two years in advance so states and Pacific Island jurisdictions that operate on biennial budget schedules can include WICHE dues in their budget planning.
- ▶ The Commission has supported a 3% increase in dues year over year. This did not take place during the Great Recession and during the onset of COVID-19. There were also years when the dues did not increase, and then a 14% increase occurred; this action proved to be problematic for state budgets. The Commission preferred an incremental-increase philosophy for the dues-increase strategy.
- ▶ President Michelau recommends an increase of 3% for dues for the FY 2026 and FY 2027 biennium.
- ▶ President Michelau recommends a 3% staff merit increase for FY 2025.

Dues and Staff Merit Increase Discussion:

A question was posed about whether a 3% merit increase was adequate for the current cost of living and how that compares to what the states and Pacific Island jurisdictions are doing with merit increases. President Michelau said with the 4% increase in FY 2023 and the flat-rate increase for lower-paid staff in FY 2022, the WICHE staff merit increase aligns well with what is taking place in the region and the increase is also based on the WICHE Officers' recommendation. A commissioner noted that there is

scrutiny within the WICHE region on state budgets. Therefore, the proposed 3% increase is modest, and advocating for the proposed amount will most likely not be challenged.

Discussion Item

MAY 2024 WICHE COMMISSION MEETING AND DRAFT AGENDA

President Michelau reviewed the preliminary agenda for the May 2024 Commission Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, on May 6-7. The theme of the meeting, *Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century Economy*, will be centered on the workforce of the 21st century. The plenary sessions and the roundtable discussions are scheduled for Monday, May 6, and the committee meetings and the Committee of the Whole business session will be held on Tuesday, May 7. Adding an excursion to the meeting agenda has been planned, and a number of options (Hoover Dam and a dinner cruise on Lake Mead as examples) have been explored but finding a destination that is open in the late afternoon and early evening, as well as available for a reception or dinner for the planned number of attendees, has proven to be challenging. The Mob Museum and the Neon Sign Museum were mentioned as other locations being explored. During the discussion, the Atomic Museum was suggested as an option; the museum has exhibits on the nuclear testing that has taken place in Nevada. The committee requested that this option be explored, as well.

Discussion Item

STATE AUTHORIZATION UPDATE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FEDERALISM

President Michelau introduced several key developments related to state authorization and reciprocity, the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) policy modification process, and the state-federal partnership. Vice President Patrick Lane gave a full report on the modification process. His report included the following:

- ▶ The SARA policy modification process is currently open.
- ▶ The WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA) Regional Steering Committee (RSC) has submitted four proposals that are centered around increased consumer protections that give states more reasons to hold institutions accountable with the ability to remove the institutions from the agreement if they do not meet the renewal requirements.
- ▶ WICHE separately submitted two proposals: a) removing the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) board from having the final vote in the policy modification process and leaving the final decision with the states and b) revising the complaint process.
- ▶ The proposals relate to the negotiated 2023-24 rulemaking (“Neg Reg”) process for higher education for program integrity and institutional quality. Neg Reg is a process used by the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies, in which representatives from a government agency and affected interest groups negotiate the terms of a proposed administrative rule. WICHE’s policy proposals were submitted based on concerns raised by the department about the role of the NC-SARA board during the policy modification process and formalizing the complaint process. This policy is to allow WICHE to ensure compliance with the federal regulations, although the language for the policy has not yet been accepted. During the hearings, WICHE interjected corrections when there had been clear misinformation shared by or with the negotiators. It is too early to know how

the regulation will be finalized. Staff will continue to monitor the department's Neg Reg hearings and report back to the Executive Committee about how it might affect SARA and make sure that WICHE and its role are not incorrectly represented.

The discussion item continued with President Michelau, who presented information about federalism and the relationship between the states and the federal government and a possible consensus on how to move forward. She cited the principle that the Commission adopted for federal positions: "States and Territories, including the postsecondary systems and institutions within them, are significant partners in assuring access to high quality, higher education for all students, and in ensuring accountability of our nation's postsecondary enterprise. Thus, they have a unique and critical role to play in the higher education policy-making process." This principle was instrumental for WICHE when navigating the Neg Reg process if guidelines could be put in place with how WICHE partners with the federal government interpret the principle. She reminded the committee that WICHE's federal positions are discussed and determined by the Commission, focusing on high-level positions rather than specific legislation or regulations. When considering positions, the protocol is to gather feedback, report back to the WICHE Executive Committee, and forward the feedback to the Policy Analysis and Research (PAR) Committee to determine whether action should be taken. She shared the National Governors Association (NGA) principle, which captures its stance on the state-federal relationship: "Governors recognize the need for Federal intervention. Should States fail to act collectively on issues of legitimate concern. Preemption of State laws, however, should be the exception rather than the rule. This is especially true in areas of primary state responsibility, including education, insurance, regulation, criminal justice, preservation of the dual banking system, preservation of State securities, regulation, and the management of state personnel programs."

She noted that a position on the state-federal role is not specifically about state authorization and reciprocity and current issues in front of the department but would more clearly specify WICHE's federal position through this principle and what it means to be a partner by defining its state role. She asked the Executive Committee about whether WICHE should more clearly define this first principle within the federal positions and additionally have a high-level federal position around state authorization to remain the purview of the states and territories.

Committee feedback included:

- ▶ The principle sounds as if it is applying to state institutions of higher education, and so much of state authorization concerns for consumer protection are unrelated to the public institutions and are about the for-profit institutions. Clarification around the type of institutions and the oversight of for-profit institutions that are getting federal money and not any state money could be added.
- ▶ Some states initially had some issues with nonprofit institutions, too, and the principle is valid for those instances and maintaining program integrity and institutional quality.
- ▶ WICHE staff should provide committee members with materials (e.g., position paper, white paper) and adequate time to study, reflect, and consult colleagues before contributing to the development of an additional principle so that there is a clear understanding of the various decisions that are made by the Commission and the impact of those decisions on state authorization and reciprocity.
- ▶ Create a subcommittee that can create language for an additional principle that the Executive Committee could discuss and further develop.

- ▶ A concern about the details and proper balance between state and federal roles, particularly around state authorization and reciprocity. There are areas in which the federal government should not be involved, and likewise, there may be appropriate areas related to Title IV funding.

Information Item

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND PROPOSED SUPPORT FEES

Vice President Raymonda Burgman Gallegos noted that Programs and Services (PAS) staff are making progress with the next steps after receiving the findings of the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) assessment conducted by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). They are reviewing the prospect of adding program fields and plan to present the Commission with a formalized process, most likely at the November 2024 Commission meeting. Staff are considering how PSEP aligns with the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), as WRGP is currently more about student access and does not include meeting workforce needs in the same way as PSEP. The WICHE-region certifying officers received the PSEP assessment presentation by NCHEMS, and PAS staff will seek feedback on how to be more responsive to meeting workforce demands.

Staff are investigating institutional eligibility requirements to be put in place for participating in PSEP and WRGP. The landscape of professional programs is evolving, especially within osteopathic medicine, and a discussion about this evolution should take place in the coming months.

The Commission will vote to approve PSEP support fees for the next biennium in May 2024, and the PAS Committee will meet in March 2024 to discuss and consider the proposed fee increase for FY 2026 and FY 2027. This meeting is prior to the Commission meeting and will therefore allow proper time for consideration and deliberation of the PSEP support fee increase when the Committee of the Whole votes in May 2024.

Chair Jefferson asked for questions and discussion. There was none.

Other Business

Chair Jefferson asked for other business, and there was none.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m. MST.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the FY 2025 Salary and Benefit Recommendations

Summary

All standard salary increases at WICHE are provided on the basis of performance; WICHE does not provide across-the-board raises, step increases, or cost-of-living adjustments. President Demarée Michelau recommends a 3% FY 2025 performance-based increase to staff who have performed at exceptionally high levels over the past year.

Background

Occasional exceptions to the “merit-only” policy is made if a staff member is promoted; salary surveys indicate a position is out of alignment with other positions within the organization or, within reason, to retain a valued individual who has been offered a more lucrative position elsewhere.

Salary

As reflected in the proposed budget agenda item, President Michelau is pleased to recommend a 3% FY 2025 performance-based increase to staff who have performed at exceptionally high levels over the past year.

Benefits

The proposed budget also includes a 3% increase in benefits for staff, all of which are related either to benefits directly associated with salary (i.e., WICHE contributions to the retirement plan, life insurance, workers’ compensation, unemployment compensation, and Social Security) or to projected changes in the costs of general benefits (i.e., health/ dental insurance premiums, Social Security, and workers’ compensation). Major benefits to staff include the following:

- ▶ Participation in WICHE’s retirement plan, which provides two-to-one matching for contributions up to a combined 15% (5% from staff, 10% from WICHE), in TIAA-managed accounts.
- ▶ Health and dental insurance, which includes participation in a health savings account (HSA) plan through insurer UnitedHealthcare. WICHE provides a set portion of the health and dental insurance payment, with the staff members paying the remainder, which varies depending upon the plan they select. WICHE also contributes an amount annually to each staff member’s health savings account. An optional flexible spending account (FSA) is available for eligible medical expenses and dependent care.
- ▶ Generous vacation, sick leave, paid holidays, and personal business leave
- ▶ Up to 12 weeks of paid family leave at approximately 75% (to a max of \$1,500.00 weekly) of the employee’s base pay for disability and family, bonding, and military leaves
- ▶ Life, accidental death and long-term disability insurance
- ▶ Voluntary vision plan and voluntary supplemental life insurance
- ▶ Conversion of up to 900 hours of accumulated sick leave for most individuals retiring from WICHE (requires at least five years of service and combined age and tenure at WICHE of at least 70 years).

The full amount of a 3% average salary increase is approximately \$326,406. The General Fund portion is

\$71,730 and the Non-General Fund portion is \$254,676. These proposed increases are reflected in the proposed FY 2025 budget.

Action Requested

Approval of a 3% average salary increase for WICHE staff for FY 2025.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the FY 2025 Annual Operating Budget – General Fund and Non-General Fund Budgets

Background

The General Fund budget proposed by staff for FY 2025 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025) is for a suite of WICHE programs that provide services to members and support a wide range of highly significant projects. General Fund revenue not only supports basic WICHE program activities, such as the work of the Student Access Programs, the Policy Analysis and Research unit, and Communications, but it also provides an organizational structure that allows WICHE to become involved in other regional resource-sharing and collaborative activities in postsecondary education, many of which are supported by non-state dollars. The proposed FY 2025 budget shows a slight budget surplus and reflects WICHE annual dues at \$164,000 (approved in May 2022). The four budgets, following the General Fund budget, reflect the projected Non-General fund budgets for each of the four primary programmatic units within WICHE. Non-General Fund activities include all projects supported by external sources, such as fees, grants, memberships, or contracts. Of these four Non-General Fund budgets, the WCET and Behavioral Health units are self-funded.

Action Requested

Approval of the FY 2025 General Fund budget and the FY 2025 Non-General fund budget.

General Fund Budget

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education General Fund Budget

Mar 2024

Comparing FY 2024 with FY 2025
Revenue and Expenditures

	FY 2024				FY 2025				
	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Projection	Projection Higher or (Lower) than Budget		FY 2025 Budget	FY 2025 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2024 Budget		FY 2025 Budget Higher or (Lower) than FY 2024 Projection	
Revenue									
4102 Indirect Cost Reimbursements	\$1,200,000	\$1,332,784	\$132,784	11.1%	\$1,200,000	\$0	0.0%	(\$132,784)	-10.0%
4104 Indirect Cost Sharing-WICHE	(\$600,000)	(\$559,366)	\$40,634	-6.8%	(\$600,000)	\$0	0.0%	(\$40,634)	7.3%
4201 Members/Fees States/Institutions a	\$2,624,000	\$2,624,000	\$0	0.0%	\$2,704,000	\$80,000	3.0%	\$80,000	3.0%
4300 Interest	\$696,000	\$1,033,216	\$337,216	48.5%	\$730,000	\$34,000	4.9%	(\$303,216)	-29.3%
4560 SHEPC excess rents	\$36,000	\$9,000	(\$27,000)	-75.0%	\$36,000	\$0	0.0%	\$27,000	300.0%
4600 Other Income	\$30,000	\$25,762	(\$4,238)	-14.1%	\$30,000	\$0	0.0%	\$4,238	16.5%
4850 Credit Card Transaction Rev. / Units	\$30	\$3	(\$27)	-90.7%	\$30	\$0	0.0%	\$27	979.1%
Total Revenue	\$3,986,030	\$4,465,399	\$479,369	12.0%	\$4,100,030	\$114,000	2.9%	(\$365,369)	-8.2%
Expenditures									
0102 Student Access Program	\$454,807	\$443,364	(\$11,443)	-2.5%	\$469,658	\$14,851	3.3%	\$26,294	5.9%
0104 Policy Analysis & Research	\$490,667	\$489,145	(\$1,523)	-0.3%	\$505,387	\$14,720	3.0%	\$16,243	3.3%
0105 Communications & Public Affairs	\$461,042	\$421,447	(\$39,595)	-8.6%	\$483,139	\$22,097	4.8%	\$61,693	14.6%
0106 Programs & Services	\$126,171	\$128,118	\$1,947	1.5%	\$129,956	\$3,785	3.0%	\$1,838	1.4%
0110 President's Office	\$660,549	\$636,942	(\$23,607)	-3.6%	\$679,918	\$19,369	2.9%	\$42,976	6.7%
0111 Commission Expense	\$400,670	\$460,900	\$60,230	15.0%	\$420,703	\$20,034	5.0%	(\$40,197)	-8.7%
0112 Administrative Services	\$930,369	\$929,808	(\$562)	-0.1%	\$960,176	\$29,807	3.2%	\$30,369	3.3%
0115 Miscellaneous Gen. Fund	\$334,292	\$505,047	\$170,756	51.1%	\$344,321	\$10,029	3.0%	(\$160,727)	-31.8%
0116 Program Development	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	0.0%	\$25,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
0131 LAC Meeting	\$78,637	\$82,756	\$4,119	5.2%	\$81,137	\$2,500	3.2%	(\$1,619)	-2.0%
Total Expenditures	\$3,962,203	\$4,122,526	\$160,323	4.0%	\$4,099,395	\$137,192	3.5%	(\$23,131)	-0.6%
Surplus (Deficit) for the Fiscal Year	\$23,827	\$342,874	\$319,047		\$635	(\$23,192)			
Reserves at Beginning of Year									
1 Minimum Reserve b	\$475,464	\$475,464	\$0	0.0%	\$491,927	\$16,463	3.5%	\$16,463	3.5%
2 Reserve for Unexpected Shortfall c	\$396,220	\$396,220	\$0	0.0%	\$409,939	\$13,719	3.5%	\$13,719	3.5%
3 Reserve to Operate Accounts Receivable d	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$850,000	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%
4 President's Strategic Objectives e	\$150,000	\$0	(\$150,000)	-100.0%	\$150,000	\$0	0.0%	\$150,000	
5 Reserve Available for Dedication	\$2,811,654	\$2,961,654	\$150,000	5.3%	\$3,124,346	\$312,692	11.1%	\$162,692	5.5%
Reserves at Beginning of Year	\$4,683,338	\$4,683,338	\$0	-94.7%	\$5,026,212	\$342,874		\$342,874	
Reserves Dedicated during Year									
6 Deficit (Surplus) for the Fiscal Year above	(\$23,827)	(\$342,874)	\$319,047		(\$635)	(\$23,192)	97.3%	(\$342,238)	99.8%
Reserves Dedicated during the Fiscal Year	(\$23,827)	(\$342,874)	\$319,047		(\$635)	(\$23,192)		(\$342,238)	
Reserves at End of Year	\$4,707,165	\$5,026,212	\$319,047		\$5,026,847	\$319,682			

- (a) At the May 2022 meeting the Commission set the FY 2024 dues to \$164K and the FY 2025 dues to \$169K.
 (b) Minimum reserve set by the commission is 12% of Budgeted Expenses. Set May 2000.
 (c) Unexpected Shortfall reserve set by commission at 10% of Budgeted Expenses. To be used only if anticipated funding does not materialize. Set May 2007.
 (d) Reserve amount needed float accounts receivable until payments are received for contracted work. Approved by Executive Committee February 2016.
 (e) Authorization given to the President to dedicate up to \$150K each year for the President's Strategic Objectives.

Programs and Services Budget

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Two Year Budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025

PRS
Mar 2024

Programs and Services

Object / Description	FY 2024		FY 2025		Variance	%
	Total	Budget	Budget			
	Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24 Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-23 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-24 30-Jun-25	FY 2025 budget higher or (lower) than FY 24		
9 months elapsed 3 months remaining						
11-20 MHEC Master Property Program	\$16,500			\$0		
11-21 MHECtech	\$705,628	\$188,000		(\$188,000)	-100.0%	
11-22 MHECcare	\$0	\$2,013		(\$2,013)	-100.0%	
11-25 Contracts & Joint Procurement	\$0		\$625,000	\$625,000		
12-05 Fidelity - Technology Capacity	\$384,794	\$355,888	\$244,578	(\$111,310)	-31.3%	
12-49 Anticipated Project 1	\$0	\$1,000,000		(\$1,000,000)	-100.0%	
15-01 Western Academic Leader Forum	\$150,608	\$164,467	\$128,322	(\$36,145)	-22.0%	
15-20 Western Alliance Comm Colleges	\$143,230	\$154,128	\$127,826	(\$26,302)	-17.1%	
15-25 Mellon - WICHE Academy	\$1,425,047	\$670,675	\$902,232	\$231,557	34.5%	
15-30 Forum Academy	\$56,981	\$59,780	\$69,780	\$10,000	16.7%	
52-36 No Holding Back	\$153,561	\$91,204		(\$91,204)	-100.0%	
Revenue	\$3,036,348	\$2,686,155	\$2,097,738	(\$588,417)	-21.9%	
Total Revenue	\$3,036,348	\$2,686,155	\$2,097,738	(\$588,417)	-21.9%	
11-21 MHECtech	\$208,326	\$181,622		(\$181,622)	-100.0%	
11-22 MHECcare	\$325	\$2,013		(\$2,013)	-100.0%	
11-25 Contracts & Joint Procurement	\$0		\$346,388	\$346,388		
12-05 Fidelity - Technology Capacity	\$121,925	\$352,600	\$157,392	(\$195,208)	-55.4%	
12-49 Anticipated Project 1	\$26,193	\$1,000,000		(\$1,000,000)	-100.0%	
15-01 Western Academic Leader Forum	\$161,541	\$164,467	\$127,351	(\$37,116)	-22.6%	
15-15 Online Course Exchange	(\$293)			\$0		
15-20 Western Alliance Comm Colleges	\$137,032	\$154,128	\$126,235	(\$27,893)	-18.1%	
15-25 Mellon - WICHE Academy	\$460,164	\$637,318	\$786,947	\$149,630	23.5%	
15-30 Forum Academy	\$37,125	\$51,944	\$61,224	\$9,280	17.9%	
52-36 No Holding Back	\$148,172	\$70,629		(\$70,629)	-100.0%	
Expense	\$1,300,509	\$2,614,719	\$1,605,537	(\$1,009,182)	-38.6%	
Total Expense	\$1,300,509	\$2,614,719	\$1,605,537	(\$1,009,182)	-38.6%	
Revenue over (under) Expense	\$1,735,839	\$71,436	\$492,201	\$420,765		

Policy Analysis and Research Budget

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Two Year Budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025

PAR
Mar 2024

Policy Analysis & Research

Object / Description	FY 2024	FY 2024	FY 2025	Variance	%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Budget</i>		
	<i>Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24</i> <i>Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24</i>	<i>01-Jul-23</i> <i>30-Jun-24</i>	<i>01-Jul-24</i> <i>30-Jun-25</i>		
9 months elapsed					
3 months remaining					
17-05 W-SARA	\$545,806	\$523,461	\$542,829	\$19,368	3.7%
50-01 Policy Core Account	\$1,650			\$0	
50-36 South Dakota - NCHEMS Consult	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$16,000	\$14,000	700.0%
51-07 Idaho Eng. Growth Initiative	(\$11,505)			\$0	
51-14 AIHEC IFS Consulting Phase II	\$18,213			\$0	
52-16 BH Policy Roundtable	\$101,134	\$100,000		(\$100,000)	-100.0%
52-25 Alternative Credentials	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$66,685	\$54,685	455.7%
53-14 Data for the American Dream	\$147		\$34,767	\$34,767	
53-16 Wyoming Innovation Partnership	\$122,492	\$150,000	\$120,000	(\$30,000)	-20.0%
53-35 OER - Hewlett (Policy Unit)	\$6,774			\$0	
53-36 OER Hewlett Phase II (Policy)	\$188,830	\$202,537	\$33,298	(\$169,240)	-83.6%
53-37 OER Org Effectiveness	\$86,300	\$86,300		(\$86,300)	-100.0%
55-01 Anticipated New Funding	\$0		\$50,000	\$50,000	
Revenue	\$1,073,840	\$1,076,298	\$863,579	(\$212,720)	-19.8%
Total Revenue	\$1,073,840	\$1,076,298	\$863,579	(\$212,720)	-19.8%
17-05 W-SARA	\$545,522	\$523,461	\$542,829	\$19,368	3.7%
50-36 South Dakota - NCHEMS Consult	\$1,457	\$1,500	\$15,663	\$14,163	944.2%
51-07 Idaho Eng. Growth Initiative	\$3,439			\$0	
52-16 BH Policy Roundtable	\$113,112	\$100,000		(\$100,000)	-100.0%
52-25 Alternative Credentials	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$66,685	\$54,685	455.7%
53-14 Data for the American Dream	\$148		\$34,700	\$34,700	
53-16 Wyoming Innovation Partnership	\$124,201	\$149,994	\$119,999	(\$29,995)	-20.0%
53-35 OER - Hewlett (Policy Unit)	\$517			\$0	
53-36 OER Hewlett Phase II (Policy)	\$188,347	\$202,538	\$28,011	(\$174,527)	-86.2%
53-37 OER Org Effectiveness	\$84,936	\$86,300		(\$86,300)	-100.0%
55-01 Anticipated New Funding	\$0		\$50,000	\$50,000	
Expense	\$1,073,678	\$1,075,792	\$857,887	(\$217,905)	-20.3%
Total Expense	\$1,073,678	\$1,075,792	\$857,887	(\$217,905)	-20.3%
Revenue over (under) Expense	\$162	\$506	\$5,692	\$5,186	

Behavioral Health Program Budget

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Two Year Budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025

MHH
Mar 2024

Mental Health

Object / Description	FY 2024		FY 2025		Variance	%
	Total	Budget	Budget	Budget		
9 months elapsed						
3 months remaining						
	Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24	01-Jul-23	01-Jul-24			
	Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24	30-Jun-24	30-Jun-25			FY 2025 budget higher or (lower) than FY 24
40-01 MH - State Affiliation Fees	\$614,089	\$485,000	\$589,000	\$104,000	21.4%	
40-10 MH - Decision Support Group	\$68,000	\$54,000	\$54,000	\$0	0.0%	
40-21 MH - Suicide Prevention Toolkits	\$1,105			\$0		
41-01 MH - Consulting Main Account	\$53,850	\$53,850		(\$53,850)	-100.0%	
41-30 AZ Mercy Maricopa EBP FY15-16	\$664			\$0		
41-39 AZ MMIC Training 2017	\$83,639	\$83,639	\$70,000	(\$13,639)	-16.3%	
41-45 SD DBH Annual Fidelity Review	\$49,900	\$49,000	\$49,900	\$900	1.8%	
41-49 Maricopa Cty Fidelity Reviews	\$475,567	\$475,567	\$475,567	\$0	0.0%	
41-54 University of Wisconsin TA	\$52,659	\$52,659	\$52,659	\$0	0.0%	
41-80 VA Rural Suici FY 15, 16 and 17	\$3,272,132	\$2,865,913	\$1,818,019	(\$1,047,894)	-36.6%	
41-89 AZ Statewide Fidelity Reviews	\$439,861	\$439,861	\$668,778	\$228,917	52.0%	
42-51 AK - BHA Assessment	\$155,663	\$153,088	\$156,803	\$3,715	2.4%	
43-54 Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews	\$221,400	\$90,900	\$221,400	\$130,500	143.6%	
43-70 SAMHSA MHTTC Grant	\$301,283	\$306,321	\$72,951	(\$233,370)	-76.2%	
43-73 SAMHSA MHTTC Supplemental	\$170,187	\$181,126	\$41,250	(\$139,876)	-77.2%	
43-74 HRSA Rural Opioid Response TA	\$865,127	\$865,127	\$891,157	\$26,030	3.0%	
43-76 ROTA-Regional Center	\$710,951	\$655,179	\$236,984	(\$418,195)	-63.8%	
43-77 NASMHPD Technical Assistance	\$143,583	\$62,500	\$20,000	(\$42,500)	-68.0%	
43-78 CO BHA Crisis Professional T/A	\$186,605	\$168,015	\$250,000	\$81,985	48.8%	
44-48 AK API Regulatory Compliance	\$197,100	\$197,100	\$197,100	\$0	0.0%	
44-77 NIMH Book Project	\$23,494	\$15,994		(\$15,994)	-100.0%	
45-01 MH - Anticipated New Funding	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	#Div/O!	
45-40 AK Trust PIC FY17/18	\$22,500	\$20,000	\$22,500	\$2,500	12.5%	
45-43 MH - AK PIC Interns FY11-FY19	\$130,000	\$100,000	\$130,000	\$30,000	30.0%	
45-52 CO BHA Technical Assistance	\$115,000	\$115,000		(\$115,000)	-100.0%	
46-01 HI - DOH	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$29,325	\$4,025	15.9%	
46-02 HI - DPS	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$0	0.0%	
46-03 HI - DOE	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$25,300	\$0	0.0%	
46-06 HI - DOE Interns	\$342,766	\$637,499	\$841,308	\$203,809	32.0%	
46-07 HI - DPS Interns	\$531,614	\$774,985	\$186,560	(\$588,425)	-75.9%	
46-08 HI - DOH Interns	\$585,981	\$363,877	\$506,706	\$142,829	39.3%	
46-15 HI DOE Recruitment	\$66,000	\$66,000	\$83,000	\$17,000	25.8%	
46-17 HI Recruitment of Clinical Psy	\$39,734	\$72,500	\$77,500	\$5,000	6.9%	
46-18 School Based BH Professionals	\$137,500	\$137,500	\$137,500	\$0	0.0%	
46-24 NM Psychology Internship	\$269,121	\$173,720	\$173,720	\$0	0.0%	
46-27 SD Psychology Internship	\$106,250	\$75,000	\$31,250	(\$43,750)	-58.3%	
46-31 OR Psych Internship FY 15-18	\$2,895	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	0.0%	
46-32 Idaho Psychology Internship	\$132,500	\$36,470	\$129,005	\$92,535	253.7%	
46-33 Sanford Psychology Internship	\$72,000	\$66,667	\$36,000	(\$30,667)	-46.0%	
46-36 UT Psychology Internship	\$26,400	\$16,000	\$10,400	(\$5,600)	-35.0%	
46-40 NV Intern Stipends FY 15-16-17	\$70,631	\$166,100	\$199,065	\$32,965	19.8%	
46-41 Guam Psychology Internship	\$124,558	\$77,500	\$62,745	(\$14,755)	-19.0%	
46-51 NV Psych Internship FY 15	\$55,458	\$45,063	\$40,036	(\$5,027)	-11.2%	
Revenue	\$10,993,668	\$10,277,620	\$9,115,788	(\$1,161,832)	-11.3%	
Total Revenue	\$10,993,668	\$10,277,620	\$9,115,788	(\$1,161,832)	-11.3%	

Object / Description	FY 2024		FY 2024	FY 2025	Variance	%
	Total		Budget	Budget		
	Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24	Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-23 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-24 30-Jun-25		
9 months elapsed 3 months remaining						
						FY 2025 budget higher or (lower) than FY 24
40-01 MH - State Affiliation Fees	\$1,123,990		\$785,000	\$980,000	\$195,000	24.8%
40-10 MH - Decision Support Group	\$30,650		\$46,000	\$46,000	\$0	0.0%
40-21 MH - Suicide Prevention Toolkits	\$22				\$0	
41-01 MH - Consulting Main Account	\$25,185		\$48,850		(\$48,850)	-100.0%
41-30 AZ Mercy Maricopa EBP FY15-16	\$1				\$0	
41-39 AZ MMIC Training 2017	\$82,788		\$82,886	\$69,370	(\$13,516)	-16.3%
41-45 SD DBH Annual Fidelity Review	\$44,486		\$42,500	\$44,910	\$2,410	5.7%
41-46 SD HSC Optimal Capacity	\$1				\$0	
41-49 Maricopa Cty Fidelity Reviews	\$425,632		\$425,632	\$425,632	\$0	0.0%
41-54 University of Wisconsin TA	\$47,920		\$47,920	\$47,250	(\$670)	-1.4%
41-80 VA Rural Suici FY 15, 16 and 17	\$2,781,312		\$2,533,100	\$1,636,217	(\$896,883)	-35.4%
41-89 AZ Statewide Fidelity Reviews	\$393,676		\$393,676	\$601,900	\$208,224	52.9%
42-32 ANTHC - BH Aide Assessment	\$3,660				\$0	
42-51 AK - BHA Assessment	\$143,210		\$143,210	\$143,475	\$265	0.2%
42-75 ND Behavioral Health Workforce	\$16				\$0	
43-54 Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews	\$175,650		\$85,350	\$193,725	\$108,375	127.0%
43-70 SAMHSA MHTTC Grant	\$296,764		\$295,321	\$69,303	(\$226,018)	-76.5%
43-73 SAMHSA MHTTC Supplemental	\$167,634		\$174,776	\$39,188	(\$135,588)	-77.6%
43-74 HRSA Rural Opioid Response TA	\$773,515		\$750,850	\$797,586	\$46,736	6.2%
43-76 ROTA-Regional Center	\$700,287		\$643,100	\$233,429	(\$409,671)	-63.7%
43-77 NASMHPD Technical Assistance	\$76,109		\$56,500	\$16,500	(\$40,000)	-70.8%
43-78 CO BHA Crisis Professional T/A	\$156,245		\$150,373	\$223,750	\$73,377	48.8%
44-48 AK API Regulatory Compliance	\$180,611		\$182,318	\$179,361	(\$2,957)	-1.6%
44-77 NIMH Book Project	\$16,101		\$14,395		(\$14,395)	-100.0%
45-01 MH - Anticipated New Funding	\$0			\$435,000	\$435,000	
45-40 AK Trust PIC FY17/18	\$14,588		\$19,500	\$20,700	\$1,200	6.2%
45-43 MH - AK PIC Interns FY11-FY19	\$129,502		\$98,500	\$115,050	\$16,550	16.8%
45-52 CO BHA Technical Assistance	\$99,475		\$99,475		(\$99,475)	-100.0%
46-01 HI - DOH	\$17,262		\$25,300	\$21,994	(\$3,306)	-13.1%
46-02 HI - DPS	\$15,604		\$25,300	\$18,975	(\$6,325)	-25.0%
46-03 HI - DOE	\$17,364		\$25,300	\$18,975	(\$6,325)	-25.0%
46-06 HI - DOE Interns	\$330,783		\$599,700	\$778,210	\$178,510	29.8%
46-07 HI - DPS Interns	\$512,969		\$739,700	\$166,971	(\$572,729)	-77.4%
46-08 HI - DOH Interns	\$535,922		\$340,200	\$453,502	\$113,302	33.3%
46-15 HI DOE Recruitment	\$60,645		\$66,000	\$80,925	\$14,925	22.6%
46-17 HI Recruitment of Clinical Psy	\$31,787		\$64,500	\$65,875	\$1,375	2.1%
46-18 School Based BH Professionals	\$125,345		\$116,875	\$116,875	\$0	0.0%
46-24 NM Psychology Internship	\$253,863		\$165,000	\$165,000	\$0	0.0%
46-27 SD Psychology Internship	\$89,591		\$68,500	\$29,688	(\$38,812)	-56.7%
46-31 OR Psych Internship FY 15-18	\$133		\$2,000	\$1,500	(\$500)	-25.0%
46-32 Idaho Psychology Internship	\$125,193		\$34,500	\$119,975	\$85,475	247.8%
46-33 Sanford Psychology Internship	\$107,779		\$58,900	\$36,000	(\$22,900)	-38.9%
46-36 UT Psychology Internship	\$6,900		\$12,500	\$10,400	(\$2,100)	-16.8%
46-40 NV Intern Stipends FY 15-16-17	\$67,134		\$162,000	\$188,116	\$26,116	16.1%
46-41 Guam Psychology Internship	\$81,602		\$73,500	\$61,176	(\$12,324)	-16.8%
46-51 NV Psych Internship FY 15	\$52,505		\$42,500	\$39,035	(\$3,465)	-8.2%
Expense	\$10,321,414		\$9,741,507	\$8,691,538	(\$1,049,969)	-10.8%
Total Expense	\$10,321,414		\$9,741,507	\$8,691,538	(\$1,049,969)	-10.8%
Revenue over (under) Expense	\$672,254		\$536,113	\$424,250	(\$111,863)	

WCET Budget

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Two Year Budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025

WCT
Mar 2024

WCET

Object / Description	FY 2024		FY 2025		Variance	%
	Total	Budget	Budget			
	Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24 Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-23 30-Jun-24	01-Jul-24 30-Jun-25	FY 2025 budget higher or (lower) than FY 24		
9 months elapsed 3 months remaining						
20-01 WCET Core Revenue	\$8,500		\$5,000	\$5,000		
20-02 WCET Indirect Cost Share	\$162,947	\$192,892	\$165,000	(\$27,892)	-14.5%	
20-03 WCET Membership Dues	\$995,323	\$925,000		(\$925,000)	-100.0%	
20-04 WCET Sponsorships	\$74,795	\$50,000	\$65,000	\$15,000	30.0%	
20-05 WCET Dues Alt	(\$1,034)		\$980,000	\$980,000		
20-06 WCET FY24 Membership Dues	\$3,850			\$0		
20-10 WCET - Administration	\$0			\$0		
20-22 WCET Annual Meeting 2022	(\$1,084)			\$0		
20-23 WCET Annual Meeting 2023	\$175,866	\$220,000		(\$220,000)	-100.0%	
20-24 WCET Annual Meeting 2024	\$20,471	\$20,703	\$230,824	\$210,121	1014.9%	
20-25 WCET Annual Meeting 2025	\$0		\$21,630	\$21,630		
20-44 WCET - ASWE Annual Summit	\$21,853	\$0		\$0	#Num!	
20-45 WCET Summit Spring 2025	\$0		\$10,000	\$10,000		
20-46 WCET Reg/Policy Summit Sum2	\$5,000		\$65,000	\$65,000		
20-48 WCET Summit Spring 2024	\$12,623			\$0		
24-04 WCET ELE APLU Cohort	\$46,154	\$45,000		(\$45,000)	-100.0%	
24-06 WCET ELE Course Gtwy Interns	\$33,655			\$0		
24-10 Gates Reinvestment	\$2,733,517	\$2,217,185	\$1,600,000	(\$617,185)	-27.8%	
24-11 Gates Capacities	\$1,116	\$95,174		(\$95,174)	-100.0%	
24-49 WCET ELE General	\$69,677	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000	#Div/0!	
25-13 State Authorization Net FY24	\$680,430	\$629,000		(\$629,000)	-100.0%	
25-15 State Authorization Net FY25	\$0		\$695,200	\$695,200		
25-31 State Auth Network Cohort 1	\$4,999			\$0		
25-32 State Auth Network Cohort 2	\$5,000			\$0		
25-33 State Auth Network Cohort 3	\$0		\$5,000	\$5,000		
26-24 State Auth Network Adv Topic24	\$20,098			\$0		
Revenue	\$5,073,756	\$4,394,953	\$3,917,654	(\$477,299)	-10.9%	
Total Revenue	\$5,073,756	\$4,394,953	\$3,917,654	(\$477,299)	-10.9%	

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
Two Year Budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025

WCT
Mar 2024

WCET

<i>Object / Description</i>	FY 2024	FY 2024	FY 2025	<i>Variance</i>	<i>%</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Budget</i>		
	<i>Actual > 01-Jul-23 -- 31-Mar-24</i> <i>Forecast > 01-Apr-24 -- 30-Jun-24</i>	<i>01-Jul-23</i> <i>30-Jun-24</i>	<i>01-Jul-24</i> <i>30-Jun-25</i>		
				<i>FY 2025 budget higher</i>	<i>or (lower) than FY 24</i>
20-10 WCET - Administration	\$1,197,340	\$1,155,565	\$1,208,154	\$52,589	4.6%
20-22 WCET Annual Meeting 2022	(\$1,084)			\$0	
20-23 WCET Annual Meeting 2023	\$175,866	\$220,000		(\$220,000)	-100.0%
20-24 WCET Annual Meeting 2024	\$20,471	\$20,703	\$230,824	\$210,121	1014.9%
20-25 WCET Annual Meeting 2025	\$0		\$21,630	\$21,630	
20-44 WCET - ASWE Annual Summit	\$25,798	\$0		\$0	#Num!
20-45 WCET Summit Spring 2025	\$0		\$8,000	\$8,000	
20-46 WCET Reg/Policy Summit Sum2	\$5,000		\$65,000	\$65,000	
20-48 WCET Summit Spring 2024	\$7,520			\$0	
24-04 WCET ELE APLU Cohort	\$46,154	\$45,000		(\$45,000)	-100.0%
24-06 WCET ELE Course Gtwy Interns	\$33,655			\$0	
24-10 Gates Reinvestment	\$2,733,517	\$2,217,184	\$1,600,000	(\$617,184)	-27.8%
24-11 Gates Capacities	\$1,116	\$95,174		(\$95,174)	-100.0%
24-49 WCET ELE General	\$69,678		\$75,000	\$75,000	
25-13 State Authorization Net FY24	\$534,904	\$596,058		(\$596,058)	-100.0%
25-15 State Authorization Net FY25	\$0		\$693,151	\$693,151	
25-31 State Auth Network Cohort 1	\$1,002			\$0	
25-32 State Auth Network Cohort 2	\$805			\$0	
25-33 State Auth Network Cohort 3	\$0		\$805	\$805	
26-24 State Auth Network Adv Topic24	\$19,775			\$0	
Expense	\$4,871,515	\$4,349,685	\$3,902,564	(\$447,121)	-10.3%
Total Expense	\$4,871,515	\$4,349,685	\$3,902,564	(\$447,121)	-10.3%
Revenue over (under) Expense	\$202,240	\$45,269	\$15,091	(\$30,178)	

ACTION ITEM

Approval of Dedicated Reserve Levels for Non-General Fund Activities

Background

WICHE policy states that dedicated reserves for Non-General Fund activities — categorized into minimum reserve, reserve for unexpected shortfall, and program development — shall be approved by the Commission for the upcoming fiscal year as part of the annual budget at the May meeting. Just as the General Fund requires and accumulates reserves, Non-General Fund accounts require and accumulate reserves as well. In the past, the Commission has recognized this in establishing policy that the self-funded units strive to achieve reserves of at least 25% of their annual operating funds.

As with the General Fund, these reserves serve to cover three categories of unbudgeted expenditures:

- ▶ Cost of closing the operation, if necessary, at minimum
- ▶ Unanticipated shortfalls, such as contract or grant overruns, bridge funding between contracts or grants, unanticipated salary or service cost adjustments, etc.
- ▶ One-time program development activities, such as proposal writing, unique software requirements, unique meeting opportunities, etc.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the WICHE Behavioral Health Program

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$8,691,538
20% Minimum Reserves	\$1,738,308
20% Unanticipated Expenses	\$1,738,308
10% Program Development	\$869,154
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$4,345,769

Justification: The minimum reserve requirement, though higher than the percentage required in the General Fund, is the amount that would be required to meet the financial obligations of the Behavioral Health Program (BHP) unit, should it be terminated. The reserve for unanticipated expenses is slightly higher than the percentage included in the General Fund account because of the reliance on grants and contracts as revenue in which the risk of unanticipated expenses is higher. The modest amount for program development would suffice for that purpose in the WICHE BHP unit. Should the WICHE BHP unit exceed its target reserve, after closing out contracts and grants, WICHE would transfer those funds to the General Fund reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for WCET – the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$3,208,608
20% Minimum Reserves	\$641,722
20% Unanticipated Expenses	\$641,722
10% Program Development	\$320,861
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$1,604,304

Justification: The minimum reserve requirement, though higher than the percentage required in the General Fund, is the amount that would be required to meet the financial obligations of WCET – the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies should it be terminated. The comparatively high required unanticipated expenses reflect the unique nature of WCET as a large membership organization, with substantially greater risk in the unanticipated event of an economic downturn or forced cancellation of a large meeting venue. Should WCET exceed its target reserve, after closing out contracts, grants, other revenues, and expenses, WICHE would transfer those funds to the General Fund reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for WCET’s State Authorization Network

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$693,956
20% Minimum Reserves	\$138,791
50% Unanticipated Expenses	\$346,978
30% Program Development	\$208,187
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$693,956

Justification: The minimum reserve requirement, though higher than the percentage required in the General Fund, is the amount that would be required to meet financial obligations of WCET’s State Authorization Network (SAN), should it be terminated. The more substantial amount for the reserve for unanticipated expenses is requested to provide enough coverage for the unexpected but possible liabilities incurred if one or more meetings or other planned event must be canceled. The more substantial amount for the program development reserve reflects the membership nature of SAN, because most of the initiative’s revenues come directly from its members through dues and conference fees, and not from contracts and grants. If the resources available from SAN exceed its reserve requirements, it is proposed that the excess funds transfer to the WCET reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the Policy Analysis and Research Unit

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$315,058
0% Minimum Reserves	\$0
N/A Unanticipated Expenses	\$125,000
25% Program Development	\$78,765
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$203,765

Justification: Because the Policy Analysis and Research unit has only one program that annually generates revenues, its only source of revenues in excess of expenses (reserves) are funds remaining in grants and contracts, if WICHE is allowed by the funding source to retain those funds. As a result, there is no need for a minimum reserve fund, given that the General Fund covers this potential liability. The unit, however, does need funds to cover unanticipated expenditures, such as possible grant or contract overruns or bridge funding to sustain a project between funding cycles. The \$125,000 request does not represent a percentage of the unit’s annual appropriation, but rather simply an amount deemed reasonable for FY 2025 to cover such unanticipated expenditures. The unit can also benefit from a modest amount of funding to pursue program development activities, such as grant writing, seed

funding for prospective projects, etc. Annual General Fund financing of 25% would adequately cover this type of expenditure. Should the Policy Analysis and Research unit exceed its target reserve, after closing out contracts and grants, WICHE would transfer those funds to the General Fund reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$542,829
100% Minimum Reserves	\$542,829
0% Unanticipated Expenses	\$0
0% Program Development	\$0
FY 2025 Target Reserve (Required by NC-SARA)	\$542,829

Justification: NC-SARA has a reserve requirement of 100% of annual revenues. If the resources available from W-SARA exceed its reserve requirements, it is proposed that the excess funds be transferred to the Policy Analysis and Research unit reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the Programs and Services Unit

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$944,339
0% Minimum Reserves	\$0
N/A Unanticipated Expenses	\$125,000
25% Program Development	\$236,085
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$361,085

Justification: In addition to its General Fund support and revenues garnered from Non-General Fund programs that generate annual revenues, the Programs and Services unit, like the Policy Analysis and Research unit, receives support from various grants and contracts. As a result, there is no need for a minimum reserve fund, given that the General Fund covers this potential liability. This unit also needs some reserves to support unanticipated expenses and to fund modest amounts of program development funds to cover unanticipated expenditures. The \$125,000 recommended for FY 2025, commensurate with the request for Policy Analysis and Research, is not reflected as a percent of the unit's operating budget, but rather as a reasonable reserve to cover unanticipated but possible expenditures, such as possible grant or contract overruns or bridge funding to sustain a project between funding cycles. The unit can also benefit from a modest amount of funding (25%) to pursue program development activities, such as grant writing, seed funding for prospective projects, etc. If the resources available in the Academic Leadership initiatives or the joint-purchasing collaboratives exceed their reserve requirements, it is once again proposed, as the Commission approved last year, that the excess funds transfer to the Programs and Services reserve. Should the Programs and Services unit exceed its target reserve, after closing out contracts and grants, WICHE would transfer those funds to the General Fund reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the Joint-Purchasing Collaboratives (within the Programs and Services Unit)

FY 2025 Budget to be Approved May 2024	\$346,388
20% Minimum Reserves	\$69,278
50% Unanticipated Expenses	\$173,194
30% Program Development	\$103,916
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$346,388

Justification: The minimum reserve requirement, though higher than the percentage in the General Fund, is the amount that would be required to meet financial obligations of the two-program collaboration, should they be terminated. The quite substantial program development reserve is necessary at this time because these joint-purchasing collaborations continue to be developed and thus have greater needs for funds to pursue new ventures and secure existing ones. If the resources available from the joint-purchasing collaboratives exceed reserve requirements, it is proposed that the excess funds transfer to the Programs and Services unit reserve.

Approval of Non-General Fund Reserve Amounts for the Academic Leadership Initiatives (within the Programs and Services Unit)

FY 2025 budget to be Approved May 2024	\$314,810
20% Minimum Reserves	\$62,962
50% Unanticipated Expenses	\$157,405
30% Program Development	\$94,443
FY 2025 Target Reserve	\$314,810

Justification: The minimum reserve requirement, though higher than the percentage required in the General Fund, is the amount that would be required to meet financial obligations of the Academic Leadership initiatives, should one or more be terminated. The more substantial amount for the reserve for unanticipated expenses is requested to provide enough coverage for the unexpected but possible liabilities incurred if an annual meeting or other planned event must be canceled. The more substantial amount for the program development reserve reflects the membership nature of the Academic Leadership initiatives, particularly the Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders and Western Academic Leadership Forum, because most of revenue from these initiatives come directly from their members through dues and conference fees, not from contracts and grants. The Alliance and Forum have intentionally set their dues at rates higher than annual expenditures to garner enough resources to explore unique academic issues that arise over time and that are not being addressed by WICHE per se. If the resources available from the Academic Leadership initiatives exceed their reserve requirements, it is proposed that the excess funds transfer to the Programs and Services unit reserve.

Action Requested

Approval of the categories and amounts reflected above.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of Dues for the FY 2026 and FY 2027 Biennium

Summary

The Commission approves dues in May every other year for the coming biennium, and action on the dues for FY 2026 and FY 2027 is necessary at this meeting. The Commission sets the dues two years in advance so that states that operate on biennial budgets can include WICHE dues in their budget planning. Action is required at this meeting because states, territories, and freely associated states will begin budget planning for future years before the Commission meets in November.

Rationale for Dues Increases

For many years, the Commission has adhered to a philosophy that it was best to gradually increase dues each year to adjust for inflation rather than to have significant fluctuations that require substantial increases in some years to make up for ground lost by holding dues stable in other years. This has served the organization well and allowed WICHE to cover natural inflationary increases in costs of service delivery (and increased demand for WICHE services), salaries, health insurance, and goods and services purchased by WICHE. The Commission has asked staff to calculate the return on investment concerning the WICHE dues. The following four pages reflect the value that WICHE provides to its states, territories, and freely associated states.

Current Circumstances of WICHE Dues

Dues for the upcoming fiscal year 2025 were established at \$169,000 at the May 2022 Commission Meeting. In February and March 2024, staff reported to the Executive Committee the intention to seek a modest 3% increase in dues for both FY 2026 and FY 2027, and that is the request being made at this time. The rationale for the increase is to be consistent with the philosophy of a gradual dues increase to cover natural inflationary increases in costs of service delivery, etc. In addition, this increase helps the general fund side of the budget remain equitable with the non-general fund side of the budget, including personnel costs. Finally, staff anticipate that interest rates will not generate as much revenue as in previous years.

It should be noted that WICHE dues comprise, on average, approximately 16% of WICHE's budget; the remaining budget is made up of membership dues, grants, contracts, and other sources. This is a significant departure from when the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) fees that are passed from states and territories onto participating institutions were reported as part of the WICHE budget; at that time, WICHE dues comprised about 25% of the organizational budget.

While WICHE has a considerable reserve, the organization cannot spend the reserve on operating costs, such as personnel and salary. The ample reserves for the organization are both an opportunity and a challenge. In recent years, there were considerable additions to the General Fund reserves, but that pace is not expected to continue as IT needs are increasing and costs continue to rise, particularly around efforts to enhance cybersecurity.

Staff recommends increasing the dues by \$5,500 in FY 2026 and \$5,500 in FY 2027, which is approximately a 3% increase while keeping a round number. The proposed dues are:

FISCAL YEAR	DUES	AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE INCREASE
FY 2024 (approved May 2022)	\$164,000	\$5,000	3.05%
FY 2025 (approved May 2022)	\$169,000	\$5,000	2.96%
FY 2026	\$174,500	\$5,500	3.15%
FY 2027	\$180,000	\$5,500	3.06%

Action Requested

Approval of WICHE dues at \$174,500 in FY 2026 and \$180,000 in FY 2027.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

\$613M

TOTAL SAVED

by students through WICHE Student Access Programs

\$559.1M

SAVED
through WUE

\$39.2M

SAVED
through WRGP

\$14.5M

SAVED
through PSEP

WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE

 **WUE**

Saves **UNDERGRADUATE** students on out-of-state tuition. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

47,248
STUDENTS

chose WUE schools in the West

\$11,834

AVERAGE SAVINGS
for undergraduate students

WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM

 **WRGP**

Saves students on out-of-state **GRADUATE** certificate, master's, and doctoral programs. They pay no more than 150% of in-state tuition at partner institutions across the West.

2,877
STUDENTS

chose WRGP schools in the West

13,637

AVERAGE SAVINGS
for graduate students

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

 **PSEP**

Helps students pursuing careers in **10 HEALTH FIELDS**. They can enroll in programs in the WICHE region and receive substantial tuition support from their home state/territory.

10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands **invested \$14.5 million to grow their healthcare workforce and reduced the educational costs of 557 students.**

More than **130 accredited programs** are offered through PSEP at **63 institutions.**

A student can save between \$35,700 and \$139,800 on tuition over the lifespan of a professional health degree program, depending on the field of study.

Regional collaboration

WICHE brings together senior academic leaders to foster dialogue about issues facing individual institutions through its leadership and professional development networks.

WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ACADEMIC LEADERS The Alliance is a consortium of leaders at community colleges, technical schools, and systems and state governing and coordinating boards associated with two-year institutions.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM The Forum is a consortium of academic officers at four-year institutions, including those awarding bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, as well as chief executives and chief academic officers for systems and state governing boards.

WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY is a yearlong professional development program for academic leaders aspiring to become chief academic officers in the WICHE region's postsecondary sector.

NO HOLDING BACK In 2022-23, 12 WICHE institutions analyzed data, policies, and practices to make improvements to how it used holds on registration or transcripts, and contributed to the development of tools for other institutions to undertake this work.

COSTS-SAVINGS PROGRAMS Thanks to collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), one of four U.S. regional higher education compacts, WICHE-region educational institutions, nonprofits, and public education entities can benefit from three programs: MHECtech, which provides competitively bid purchasing contracts for an array of hardware, software, and technology services; MHECare, which provides a student health insurance plan and teletherapy services; and a MHEC Cyber Insurance Program, which offers risk transfer and advisory solutions.

STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT

(SARA) is a voluntary agreement that provides reciprocity for the state authorization of distance education. WICHE Commissioners have been strong advocates for protecting the state voice in important governance decisions affecting this agreement and staff continue to support participating states and improving student protections while bolstering access.

Optimal behavioral health care

WICHE Behavioral Health Program's (BHP) fastest-growing initiative is the **PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIA**, which helps build the behavioral health workforce pipeline, particularly in rural or remote areas. WICHE contributes an administrative framework, American Psychological Association accreditation, and other support for consortia across the WICHE region, which include:

- ▶ Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium (AK-PIC)
- ▶ Guam Psychology Internship Consortium (GU-PIC)
- ▶ Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium (HI-PIC)
- ▶ Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium (Idaho-PIC)
- ▶ Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium (NV-PIC)
- ▶ New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium (NM-PIC)
- ▶ Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program (OSH-PIP)
- ▶ Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium (SH-PIC)
- ▶ South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium (SD-PIC)
- ▶ Utah Psychology Internship Consortium (UT-PIC)

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP)

is a multiyear initiative supported by the Health Resources & Services Administration to identify treatment barriers and best practices for preventing and treating substance use disorder. BHP provides technical assistance to 76 grantees across the U.S., supporting 36 grantees in the WICHE region.

TOGETHER WITH VETERANS (TWV) – RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

enlists rural Veterans and local partners to join forces to reduce Veteran suicide in their own community. Funded by the US Department of Veterans Affairs and administered by the WICHE BHP, TWV provides communities with individualized coaching, tools, training, technical assistance, and resources to implement the program in their own communities. The BHP supports 38 rural communities as far east as New Hampshire and as far west as Guam, and of those, supports 18 rural communities in the WICHE region.

WICHE BHP, in partnership with the University of North Dakota College of Education and Human Development and with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), co-administers the **MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MP-MHTTC)**. The MP-MHTTC provides comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners in the SAMHSA Region 8. Region 8 is comprised of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

In October 2022, WICHE BHP was awarded a multiyear grant from SAMHSA to establish the **MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (MP ROTAC)**. The MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance that focuses on opioid and stimulant misuse in rural areas throughout SAMHSA's Region 8.

Sound public policy

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR is the leading U.S. resource for projections of college-ready students. *Knocking*, which includes a quadrennial publication with additional analysis, is essential for postsecondary policymakers, planning and workforce efforts, and economic development. Visit knocking.wiche.edu to access reports, interactive dashboards, webinars, presentations, as well as state-level data.

DATA RESOURCES WICHE offers curated data and policy resources to support better-informed decision-making. WICHE's research projects and collaborations cover postsecondary completion, health workforce development, behavioral health in postsecondary education, open educational resources (OER), state finance, prior learning assessment, and more.

- ▶ **Tuition and Fees in the West** includes tuition, fees, and enrollment data about 350+ public institutions in the West.
- ▶ **Benchmarks: WICHE Region** presents information on the West's progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education.
- ▶ Data on over 35 indicators in WICHE's **Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West**.

DATA EXPERTS WICHE staff provide analysis on finance, financial aid, articulation and transfer, strategic planning, student demographics, and more, as well as host peer-to-peer calls of state, system, and institutional chief academic officers to identify areas of potential collaboration and resource sharing across the West.

WICHE has convened staff from across the region in a collaborative network to identify challenges and promising practices to help address workforce shortages in the health sector. Through this effort, WICHE members are able to share innovative approaches and collaborate to solve the complex challenges in this sector.

Innovative solutions

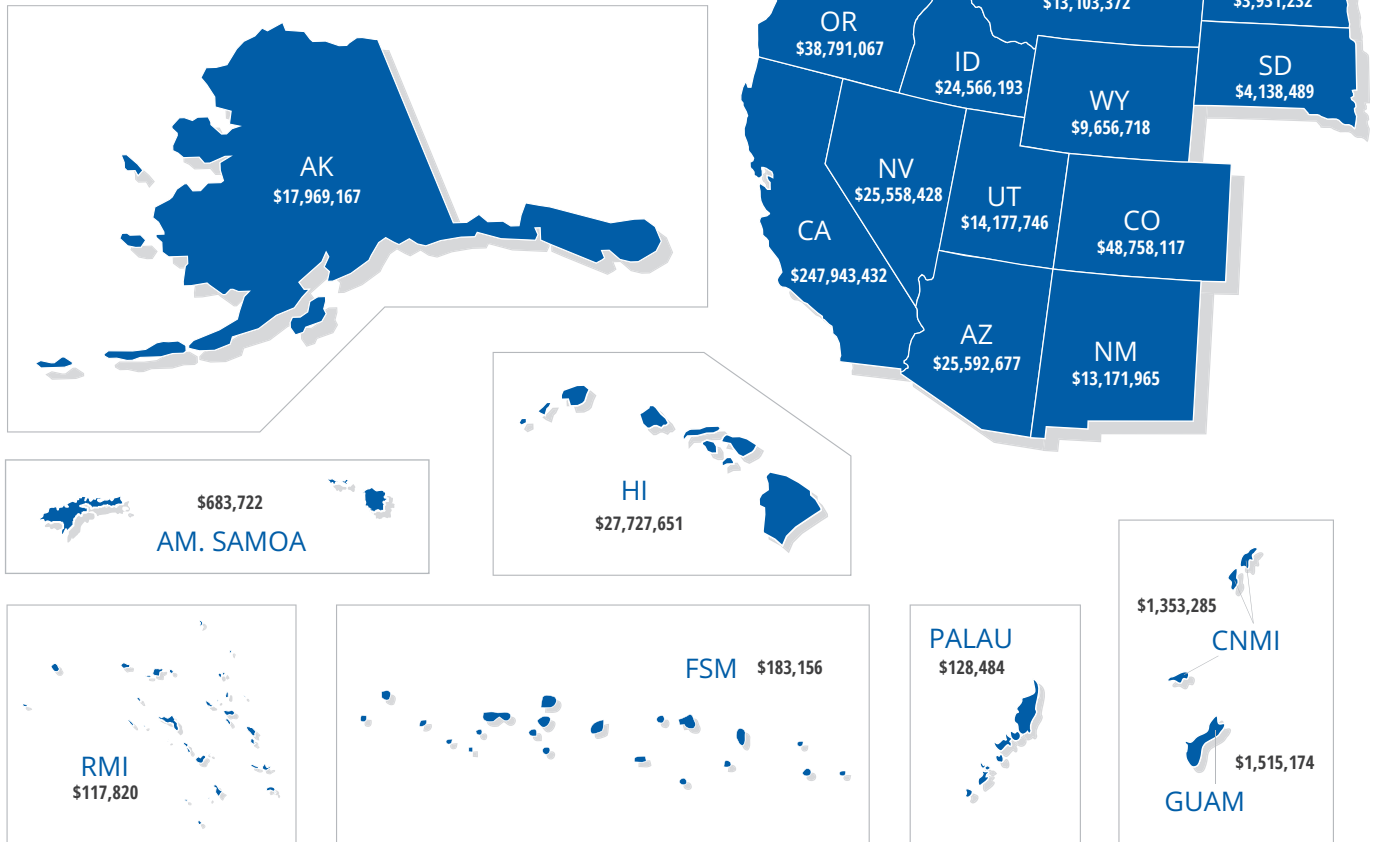
WCET – THE WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES is the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. Its growing membership includes institutions, higher education agencies and systems, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and corporations in all U.S. states and several Canadian provinces. See wcet.wiche.edu/current-members for a complete list.

STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN) helps guide institutions through state regulations around online courses and programs. See wcetsan.wiche.edu/member-institutions-organizations for a complete list.

WICHE has convened the **OERWEST NETWORK**, which is part of a nationwide collaborative to scale the development and adoption of free course materials. Open educational resources (OER) have shown promise in improving student outcomes, particularly for poverty-affected students, for whom the high cost of textbooks can be a barrier to postsecondary success.

WICHE Region

\$612,874,718 = Total student savings through WICHE's Student Access Programs AY 2023



WICHE Commission February 2024

ALASKA

Tom Begich
Pearl Brower
Sean Parnell

HAWAII

David Lassner
John Morton
Colleen Sathre

NEW MEXICO

Barbara Damron (*Vice Chair*)
Bill Soules
Patricia Sullivan

U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES & FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES

Frankie Eliptico (CNMI)
Rodney Jacob (Guam)
Kalani R. Kaneko (RMI)

ARIZONA

John Arnold
Kathleen Goeppinger
Todd Haynie

IDAHO

Rick Aman
Matt Freeman
(*Immediate Past Chair*)
Dave Lent

NORTH DAKOTA

Danita Bye
Kyle Davison
Mark Hagerott

UTAH

Patricia Jones
Geoffrey Landward
Ann Millner

CALIFORNIA

Christopher Cabaldon
Ellen Junn
Robert Shireman

MONTANA

Maryrose Beasley
Clayton Christian
Llew Jones

OREGON

Ben Cannon
Hilda Rosselli
Lisa Skari

WASHINGTON

John Carmichael
Michael Meotti
Gerry Pollet

COLORADO

Jim Chavez
Antwan Jefferson (*Chair*)
Angie Paccione

NEVADA

Catherine (Cathy) Dinauer
Dale Erquiaga
Fred Lokken

SOUTH DAKOTA

Nathan Lukkes
Larry Tidemann
Diana VanderWoude

WYOMING

Fred Baldwin
Kevin Carman
Joseph Schaffer

WICHE.EDU

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

ACTION ITEM

Approval of Future Commission Meeting Dates and Locations

Summary

Per the WICHE bylaws, the full Commission shall meet twice each year. WICHE has a practice of setting dates and locations in advance so that commissioners can appropriately plan. Staff request approval of the proposed future meeting dates and locations.

Background

Per the bylaws, the Commission shall meet twice each year. Meetings of the Commission shall be held during the months of May or June and November or December on the day and at a time and place set at least one meeting in advance of the meeting to be held.

It is WICHE's longstanding practice to approve Commission meetings several years in advance to encourage commissioner participation. A policy formally adopted in 1952, Commission meetings are held in each of the Western states because it is important for commissioners and staff to see and experience the different contexts in which our students live and learn. This helps the Commission develop a fuller understanding and appreciation for the opportunities and challenges that exist in our region. Generally speaking, there is a pattern that the states follow, but in some cases, there have been minor modifications to the schedule to allow for the Commission chair to host in their home state. The November Commission meetings are typically held in Colorado because a) there are cost savings due to reduced staff travel and b) there is value in increased opportunity for staff to watch and participate in Commission meetings.

Proposed Future Dates and Locations

The following is a list of proposed future dates and locations for Commission meetings (in red) with a list of Commission meeting locations since 1990 for reference. To the extent possible, the proposed dates all avoid conflicts with Election Day, Veterans Day, WCET Annual Meeting, and President Michelau's daughters' high school graduations.

Commission Meeting Locations Since 1990

YEAR	MAY/SPRING MEETING	NOVEMBER/FALL MEETING
2030	ID (May 6-7)	CO (November 7-8)
2029	WY (May 7-8)	CO (November 8-9)
2028	AK (May 8-9)	CO (November 9-10) – Veterans Day is likely observed on November 10
2027	NM (May 3-4)	CO (November 4-5)
2026	WA (May 18-19)	CO (November 5-6)
2025	UT (May 5-6)	CO (November 13-14)
2024	Las Vegas, NV (May 6-7)	Honolulu, HI (November 14-15)
2023	Phoenix, AZ (May 8-9)	Riverside, CA (November 9-10)
2022	Rapid City, SD	Portland, OR
2021	Virtual (approved AZ)	Virtual (approved CO)
2020	Virtual (approved Portland, OR)	Virtual (approved CO)
2019	Bismarck, ND	Denver, CO
2018	Missoula, MT	Broomfield, CO
2017	Coeur d’Alene, ID	Denver, CO
2016	Laramie, WY	Denver/Boulder, CO
2015	Girdwood, AK	Boulder, CO
2014	Santa Fe, NM	Denver, CO
2013	Spokane, WA	Boulder, CO
2012	Fort Collins, CO	Salt Lake City, UT

YEAR	MAY/SPRING MEETING	NOVEMBER/FALL MEETING
2011	San Francisco, CA	Laie, HI
2010	Portland, OR	Boulder, CO
2009	Las Vegas, NV	Boulder, CO
2008	Rapid City, SD	Phoenix, AZ
2007	Whitefish, MT	Denver, CO
2006	Bismarck, ND	Boulder, CO
2005	Juneau, AK	Boulder, CO
2004	Boise, ID	Broomfield, CO
2003	Salt Lake City, UT	Broomfield, CO
2002	Santa Fe, NM	Broomfield, CO
2001	Jackson Hole, WY	Broomfield, CO
2000	Denver, CO	Seattle, WA
1999	Denver, CO	Honolulu, HI
1998	Denver, CO	Portland, OR
1997	Reno, NV	Denver, CO
1996	Denver, CO	Albuquerque, NM
1995	Boulder, CO	San Francisco, CA
1994	Rapid City, SD	Tucson, AZ
1993	Kalispell, MT	Salt Lake City, UT
1992	Bismarck, ND	Boulder, CO
1991	Boulder, CO	Coeur d’Alene, ID
1990	Portland, OR	Seattle, WA

Commission Meeting Locations by State Since 1990

STATE	YEARS SUMMARY
Alaska	2015, 2005
Arizona	2023, 2008, 1994
California	2023, 2011, 1995
Colorado	2025, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2010, 2009, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1992, 1991
Hawai'i	2023, 2011, 1999
Idaho	2017, 2004, 1991
Montana	2018, 2007, 1997, 1993
Nevada	2023, 2009, 1997
New Mexico	2014, 2002, 1996
North Dakota	2019, 2006, 1992
Oregon	2022, 2010, 1998, 1990
South Dakota	2022, 2008, 1994
Utah	2025, 2012, 2003, 1993
Washington	2013, 2000, 1990
Wyoming	2016, 2001

Action Requested

WICHE staff request approval of the proposed future meeting dates and locations.

ACTION ITEM

Approval of the FY 2025 Workplan




Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

FY 2025 WORKPLAN

FY 2025 WORKPLAN

Our Vision

WICHE will strive to provide access to postsecondary education opportunities that are both valuable and equitable for residents of the West, so that all may realize their potential as individuals and contribute to the region's economic, social, and cultural vitality.

Our Mission

WICHE works collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all residents of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life.

The Workplan

Each May, WICHE's 48-member Commission develops and approves the compact's annual Workplan. The Workplan highlights WICHE's strategic priorities and outlines the diverse activities, projects, and initiatives of the organization for the fiscal year (FY) 2025 beginning July 1, 2024, all of which are intended to advance WICHE's mission.

Our Strategic Priorities

- ▶ **AFFORDABILITY & FINANCE (A/F):** Supporting the alignment of appropriations, tuition, and financial aid policy and practice at the institutional, state, and federal levels to make postsecondary education more accessible to those who seek it.
- ▶ **ACCESS & SUCCESS (A/S):** Improving access to and success in postsecondary education for all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, by developing and sharing evidence-based strategies.
- ▶ **WORKFORCE & SOCIETY (W/S):** Collaborating across all sectors, including but not limited to behavioral health, business, and industry, to meet the region's workforce needs so that our communities can thrive.
- ▶ **INNOVATION (I):** Developing and supporting advancements in teaching and learning, student services, and technology to help students access and succeed in postsecondary education and increase the value of their investment after completion.
- ▶ **VALUE & ACCOUNTABILITY (V/A):** Collecting and measuring sound data about postgraduate outcomes to determine the true value of WICHE's partnerships for students and society at large so that we can continually improve how students, institutions, and WICHE members spend their time, effort, and money on postsecondary education and workforce training.

WICHE UNITS

WICHE implements the Workplan by conceptualizing and managing a vast array of programs, projects, and initiatives and by developing valuable resources that address the needs of members through four operational units:

- ▶ **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (PAS):** The Programs and Services unit is where students thrive and institutional leaders collaborate. The unit's primary goals are to broaden student access and success and to foster higher education collaborations that address institutional strategic goals. The Programs and Services unit manages WICHE's three Student Access Programs and other initiatives that help institutions and students — undergraduate, graduate, and health professional — save money and efficiently use available resources. The unit also oversees initiatives that bring together the West's higher education leaders to address shared goals and concerns and develop a new cadre of college and university leaders. The Programs and Services unit notes when a particular topic or issue warrants further exploration. The unit works with campus leaders to create communities of practice, often grant funded, to examine these issues and explore solutions. Additionally, the unit helps institutions achieve cost savings through several programs in collaboration with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which created and administers the joint purchasing programs.
- ▶ **POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH (PAR):** The Policy Analysis and Research unit supports better-informed decision-making by providing policy analysis and data resources and leveraging its convening power to foster regional collaboration. The unit leads research projects and collaborative initiatives focusing on open educational resources, the West's workforce challenges, and supporting postsecondary education and completion. WICHE staff provides expertise on higher education issues, including demographic change, governance, equitable opportunity in higher education, adult learners, state and federal financial aid, finance, articulation and transfer, federal policy, and college completion initiatives. WICHE is responsible for implementing the Western region's State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA). The unit's publication series, *WICHE Insights*, explores a wide range of significant policy issues. The unit also undertakes major long-term grant-funded projects, collaborates with other regional and national organizations, and provides short-term technical assistance to WICHE partners.
- ▶ **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (BHP):** The WICHE Behavioral Health Program, established in 1955, seeks to support the public systems of care and the workforce that serve people with behavioral health issues and their families. The program pursues this mission through partnerships with state behavioral health agencies, federal agencies, advocacy and consumer groups, and higher education institutions. The WICHE BHP's activities focus on direct technical assistance to state and local agencies, policy analysis and research, support of state behavioral health agency data analysis, and higher education liaison activities to enhance workforce development and campus behavioral health.
- ▶ **WCET – WICHE COOPERATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES:** WCET promotes collaboration and information-sharing related to educational technologies in higher education. Established in 1989, WCET's mission is to be the leader in the practice, policy, and advocacy of digital learning in higher education. It works in three divisions: WCET membership, State Authorization Network (SAN), and Every Learner Everywhere (ELE). Memberships through WCET and the SAN support hundreds of higher education professionals across the U.S. and Canada. ELE advocates for equitable outcomes in U.S. higher education through advances in digital learning. WCET's strategic plan focuses on practice, policy, equity, and community in fulfilling its vision of advancing learner access and success through postsecondary digital learning for a more equitable world.

Our Work, Our Activities, and Our Projects

WICHE, an organization founded on the principle of collaboration, prides itself on working in partnership across these four units to better serve the region. The final section of this Workplan highlights collaborations across WICHE. When appropriate, some initiatives also extend beyond the WICHE region.

Each of the following sections is organized according to these categories:

- ▶ **CURRENT ACTIVITIES:** Current work that is either classified as Ongoing Services and Resources (continuing work supported by the General Fund or fees) or Projects and Initiatives (continuing or new work supported by grants, contracts, or fees)
- ▶ **NEW DIRECTIONS:** Commission-approved projects for which staff is seeking funding
- ▶ **POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS:** Projects that staff is considering pursuing and/or bringing to the Commission for approval; also listed are previously considered projects that staff are proposing to remove from the Workplan
- ▶ **COMPLETED PROJECTS:** Projects that staff finished in FY 2024

Note: Current Activities are not given prioritization rankings since they are initiatives WICHE staff has already committed to undertaking. Projects in the New Directions category are prioritized by relevance to WICHE's mission, opportunity, and staff competence. Potential Future Projects are not given prioritization rankings because they are not approved and remain under consideration by the Commission.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Academic Leaders Toolkit	A/S	Western	(included in Forum and Alliance)	Forum and Alliance members
MHECare Student Health Solutions	A/F, A/S	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.1	Four vendors offering student, faculty, and staff health insurance and behavioral health services for students
MHECtech Technology Contracts	A/F	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB	0.88	21 vendors offering hardware, software, printers and peripherals, data and networking, security services, and other technology services
Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP)	A/F, A/S, W/S	Western	1.2	All WICHE states, CNMI, and Guam fund and/or enroll students through PSEP's 130+ cooperating programs
Western Academic Leadership Academy (Academy)	W/S, V/A	Western	.10 and consultants	Forum and Alliance members
Western Academic Leadership Forum (Forum) • Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting • Collaborative Projects	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 52 institutions, 9 systems
Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders (Alliance) • Professional Development: 2025 Annual Meeting • Collaborative Projects	A/S, W/S	Western	0.65	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 68 institutions, 8 systems
Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 67 participating institutions
Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	A/F, W/S, A/S	Western	0.9	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions; 169 participating institutions

The **ACADEMIC LEADERS TOOLKIT**, jointly funded by the Alliance and Forum, is a peer-reviewed, searchable online repository of decision-making tools that college, university, and system-level academic leaders contribute. Tools in various categories — program evaluation, creation, and elimination; faculty recruitment and retention; and learning-outcomes assessment — help academic leaders address various challenges.

MHECARE STUDENT HEALTH SOLUTIONS, a MHEC partnership available to WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions offers institutions and systems a student health insurance plan underwritten by UnitedHealthcare Student Resources (UHCSR). UHCSR was selected through a competitive bid process, enabling member institutions to avoid a time- and resource-consuming request-for-proposal (RFP) process. MHECare now includes META Teletherapy and TAOConnect, which offers teletherapy services for students seeking counseling services. The most recent addition to MHECare is a whole health program for students, their dependents, graduates, and faculty and staff through HealthMarkets.

MHEC TECHNOLOGY CONTRACTS enables institutions to purchase off competitively bid master purchasing agreements for an array of hardware, software, and technology services. Several agreements are available to K-12 districts; state, county, local governments; and education-related nonprofits. More than 1,600 institutions and other entities in the WICHE region benefit from aggregated volume purchases that lower product costs and save institutions money and time.

The **PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM** (PSEP) provides affordable access for students to 130+ healthcare professional programs at more than 60 institutions and in 10 healthcare fields. In academic year (AY) 2023-24, 557 students from 10 WICHE states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) received \$14.5 million (reflecting investment by their home-state legislatures) in tuition benefits through PSEP. Since its 1953 inception, PSEP has helped more than 15,900 students, many of whom return to their home states to fill key healthcare positions. Staff are working with the Commission to implement recommendations from the 2023 PSEP Field Assessment and Review to ensure the program is an effective tool to meet the workforce needs of the West.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** (Academy) is a yearlong professional development program to expand the qualified chief academic leadership pipeline for two- and four-year institutions in the West. Academy activities focus on understanding the context of academic leadership, setting academic goals and priorities, and developing specific skill sets required of chief academic officers. Its seventh cohort, nominated by Forum and the Alliance members, commenced in July 2023.

The **WESTERN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM** (Forum) brings together WICHE-region chief academic leaders from four-year institutions, associated systems, and state coordinating and governing boards to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives. The Forum is funded primarily by membership dues, with additional funding provided by annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS** (Alliance) brings together academic leaders at community colleges and technical schools and related systems and state agencies to exchange ideas and information, share resources and expertise, and collaborate on regional initiatives supporting the two-year higher education sector. Like the Forum, the Alliance is funded by membership dues and annual meeting sponsors.

The **WESTERN REGIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAM** (WRGP) allows WICHE-region residents to pay reduced nonresident tuition rates for approximately 2,000 master’s degrees, graduate certificate, and doctoral programs at 67 participating public universities. In AY 2023-24, 2,877 students saved an estimated \$39.2 million in tuition through WRGP. Structured similarly to the WUE, Western public universities may make any graduate program eligible at the WRGP tuition rate at their discretion, which has significantly increased the number of students who can benefit. Participating institutions may also now have the option to charge WRGP students up to 150% of resident tuition, but the vast majority continue to charge students resident tuition.

The **WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE** (WUE) is WICHE’s signature undergraduate tuition savings program and the nation’s largest of its kind, saving 47,248 students an estimated \$559.1 million in tuition in AY 2023-24. Currently, 167 public two- and four-year WICHE-region institutions allow WUE students to pay no more than 150% of resident tuition instead of nonresident tuition. The Programs and Services unit will continue to expand the marketing of WUE and WRGP to benefit more students and institutions through targeted, state-specific publicity and activities, as well as increased outreach to high school counselors and admissions advisers.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Interstate Passport®	A/S, I	U.S.		.1 FTE	72 institutions in 21 states across the country are members. Institutions in these and several other states are in the exploratory stage.
WICHE Academy for Leaders in the Humanities	A/S, W/S	Western	Mellon Foundation \$1.5 million grant	1.30 FTE	Western postsecondary institutions

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria. It was the only nationwide network of institutionally accredited, nonprofit, public, and private two- and four-year institutions dedicated to general education attainment block transfer. It also provided institutions in the network with an academic progress tracking system for Passport transfer students, designed by registrars and institutional researchers in conjunction with the National Student Clearinghouse. The goal of Interstate Passport was to eliminate transfer students’ unnecessary repetition of learning previously achieved.




The **WICHE ACADEMY FOR LEADERS IN THE HUMANITIES** offers leadership development to tenured humanities faculty members. WICHE is collaborating with the Mellon Foundation and other key stakeholders to develop a two-year, campus-based immersive experience for faculty leaders. These leaders attend a three-day WICHE Institute for Leaders in the Humanities in Boulder, Colorado, focused on three key competencies: career planning and development, project management, and organizational design and agility. They will collaborate with upper-level academic administration to learn more about day-to-day operations, craft a campus project, receive internal and external mentoring, and develop a new network with the fellows appointed at other institutions.


New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Compact for Faculty Diversity	A/S, W/S		National	TBD	TBD	MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
No Holding Back - Assessing the Use of Administrative Holds	A/S, A/F		U.S.	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), National Association of Collegiate and University Business Officers (NACUBO), members of the Alliance and Forum, Policy Analysis and Research, MHEC, SREB, NEBHE		
Reducing the Postsecondary Attainment Gap for American Indians and Alaska Natives: Linking Policy and Practice	A/S		U.S.	Seeking additional external funding to assist NASNTIs further and sustain an institutional network	TBD	NASNTI's Tribal colleges, Tribal education departments, higher education organizations

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	I, W/S		Western	In-kind	.05 FY 2025	WCET, DHS, FEMA

The **COMPACT FOR FACULTY DIVERSITY:** Staff members are collaborating with the other three higher education regional compacts to seek funding to reinvigorate the Compact for Faculty Diversity and its associated Doctoral Scholars Program. The programs would address the significant imbalance that continues nationwide in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of faculties. The goals of the initiative are to increase faculty diversity in all ranks and across all institution types to equal or exceed the diversity of the nation by engaging postsecondary systems, institutions, and leaders in concrete commitments to increase the hiring of faculty of color, supported by specific action plans.

NO HOLDING BACK – ASSESSING THE USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HOLDS: WICHE's Programs and Services unit and Policy Analysis and Research unit collaborated with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions to provide institutions in the West with tools to (re)evaluate their administrative hold policies to improve student success and to use their data in policy formation better. We will continue disseminating these resources and seek new partners interested in continued application of the tools and policy implications.

REDUCING THE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GAP FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES: Linking policy and practice, an initiative begun in late 2017 with funding from Lumina Foundation, continues to have strong relevance in light of the persistent postsecondary attainment gap of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students compared to other student populations. Staff will seek funding to continue efforts to reduce or eliminate these gaps at Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTIs) by supporting culturally relevant high-impact practices and fostering institutional and tribal collaborations to share and expand sustainable student support systems on campuses. Another major objective going forward is to continue to strengthen the NASNTI presence and impact in state and federal higher education policy arenas and to create a collaborative network of institutions serving large numbers of American Indian and Alaska Native students.

CYBERSECURITY TRAINING FOR SENIOR NONTECHNICAL LEADERS: As an additional component of the cybersecurity initiative, WICHE is continuing to develop partnerships with cyber experts and conducting outreach to WICHE states and Pacific jurisdictions to provide training for institutional nontechnical leaders for cyber protection.

Projects to be Removed from Workplan

Work that staff previously considered pursuing but now propose to remove from the Workplan.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
MHEC Cyber Insurance	A/F	■ ■ ■	WICHE, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB		0.1	All WICHE members are eligible
Online Course Exchange – FlexPATH Alliance	A/S, I	■ ■ ■	U.S.	Grant request pending: \$1,416,883 National Science Foundation sub-award (5 years) The FlexPATH grant was not funded.	1.9	University of Nevada, Reno; New Mexico State University; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; and their respective community colleges
Online Course Exchange	A/S, I	■ ■ ■	U.S.		0	1 consortium serving 16 institutions

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

The **ALLIANCE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** would identify, develop, and prepare aspiring academic leaders for career advancement and success in progressively more complex administrative roles at community, junior, and technical colleges across the West.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

The **PSEP FIELD ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW** conducted in 2023 studied the healthcare professions (dentistry, allopathic medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, and veterinary medicine) currently served by the PSEP program. The final assessment, delivered to the Programs and Services Committee in November 2023, reported how well these health fields are meeting regional workforce needs. It also recommended other professional areas that may help meet the region’s current or future workforce needs.

INTERSTATE PASSPORT® was a national initiative that facilitated the block transfer of lower-division general education based on multistate, faculty-developed learning outcomes and proficiency criteria.

POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by the General Fund or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
<i>Benchmarks: WICHE Region</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC)	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.25	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
Peer-to-Peer Virtual Convenings	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.15	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>Regional Fact Book for Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.025	N/A
State Policy and Data Profiles	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S	0.2	N/A
<i>Tuition and Fees in Public Higher Education in the West</i>	A/F	Western	0.025	WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions
<i>WICHE Insights</i>	A/F, A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Western	0.1	N/A
WICHE Policy Webinar Series	A/F, A/S, W/S, V/A	Western	0.1	Variable
WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA)	A/S, I, V/A	Western	2.25	NC-SARA; Western SARA member states; MHEC, NEBHE, and SREB

The annual **BENCHMARKS: WICHE REGION** report analyzes key higher education metrics and information about the West’s progress in improving access to, success in, and financing of higher education. This resource helps stakeholders monitor regional changes over time and informs discussion in policy and education communities. Utilizing WICHE’s Policy Analysis Research Database (PAR), the *Benchmarks* data dashboard now includes state information and regional metrics.

The **LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** (LAC) informs the Commission and staff about significant legislative issues related to higher education, and staff serves the LAC by informing members about emerging policy issues in the West and relevant policy research. LAC members are appointed by the Commission and meet annually.

Policy Analysis and Research unit staff provide support to the region through regularly scheduled **PEER-TO-PEER VIRTUAL CONVENINGS** on federal issues, student access and success, improving the value proposition for postsecondary education, and sharing promising approaches and strategies to common challenges in the West. The primary vehicle for this is a WICHE-facilitated bimonthly call among state and system chief academic officers. The unit has also spun off a separate call on health workforce issues.

The **REGIONAL FACT BOOK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST** presents regional and state-by-state data and analysis on policy indicators across a range of topics. These fiscal, demographic, economic, and social indicators provide up-to-date information for policymakers, educators, and researchers in the West. The *Fact Book's* downloadable data tables are updated periodically throughout the year. WICHE released several enhanced tables in FY 2022, providing increased detail and interactivity and adding new analysis. WICHE supplements the core data sources as much as possible to keep this resource contemporary and examines the overall utility of the full suite of data resources.

WICHE is building out **STATE POLICY AND DATA PROFILES** that capture state and Pacific Island jurisdictions postsecondary contexts. The Policy Analysis and Research Database (PARC) enables the Policy unit to provide more detailed and relevant information specific to each WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. WICHE has been consulting with key stakeholders in the West about how these data resources can be most useful and expects to roll out these new profiles in FY 2025.

TUITION AND FEES IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE WEST annually provides comprehensive data about the tuition and fee rates published by public higher education institutions in the WICHE region, including changes in tuition and fee rates over the past one-, five- and 10-year periods. In addition to total tuition and fees, the report displays the average mandatory fees for each institution, state, and Pacific Island jurisdictions, over the past one, five, and 10 years, as well as what proportion of total tuition and fees they represent.

The **WICHE INSIGHTS** series consists of periodic briefs (usually published several times a year) that illuminate a higher education policy or research topic or that supplement a regular WICHE activity or release (such as the annual *Tuition and Fees* or the quadrennial *Knocking at the College Door* report).

The **WICHE POLICY WEBINAR SERIES** features staff, partners, and higher education stakeholders periodically hosting digital forums for registrants on selected higher education topics of interest. Anticipated topics for FY 2025 will likely continue to focus on COVID-19 recovery, with particular attention to enrollment declines and potentially worsening equity gaps due to changes in college-going behavior.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT (SARA)** is a voluntary agreement among states designed to establish comparable standards for U.S. states, territories, and freely associated states regulating postsecondary distance education. SARA expands access to postsecondary educational opportunities while ensuring meaningful consumer protections for students and reducing regulatory red tape for institutions. WICHE coordinates the membership of SARA states in the West through the WICHE State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (W-SARA). WICHE collaborates with the other regional compacts and the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) to provide national coverage and ensure consistency in the agreement's implementation.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Increasing Access, Affordability, and Equity Using OER: A National Consortium	A/F, A/S	Western, U.S.	\$200,000	1.25 FY 2025	Hewlett Foundation, MHEC, NEBHE, SREB
Support for the Wyoming Innovation Partnership	A/S, W/S, I	Western	\$120,000	0.75 FY 2025	Wyoming Community College Commission
<i>Knocking at the College Door – Projections of High School Graduates</i>	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$150,000	1.25 FY 2025	TBD
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET

INCREASING ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, AND EQUITY USING OER: A NATIONAL CONSORTIUM:

The Policy unit received funding to create a national consortium with the three other regional higher education compacts — the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) — focused on scaling the successful adoption of high-quality open educational resources to improve student outcomes, increase equity, and improve affordability. This effort started in FY 2021, and WICHE expects additional funding to continue this work into FY 2025. Significant collaboration and coordination exist across regions, with SREB leading the effort.

SUPPORT FOR THE WYOMING INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP: WICHE was contracted by the Wyoming Community College Commission to provide project management for a broad initiative that seeks to modernize and focus Wyoming's efforts to develop a resilient workforce and economy. The effort aims to better align Wyoming's economic development agenda by increasing collaborations among state entities and, ultimately, local partners. Additionally, WICHE works closely with the Wyoming governor's office on this initiative.

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR – PROJECTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: In December 2024, the Policy unit will release the 11th edition of state forecasts of high school graduates. During FY 2025, staff will ramp up analytic efforts and prepare for a major release and dissemination of new data.

A HOLE IN STATE POLICY – ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: In this project, the Policy unit will work with WCET and Pew Charitable Trusts to consider appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative credentials in postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that WICHE states and Pacific Island members can take advantage of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

WICHE Commission-approved projects for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Building Evidence for Scale – Policy and Practice Solutions for Adult Learners	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	U.S.	\$1.5M - \$2M	1.75 4 years	TBD
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Policy Paper Series on Affordability	A/F, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$500,000	1.5 2 years	TBD
Western Postsecondary Data Users Network	A/S, W/S, V/A	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$50,000	0.5 6 months	Western states
Articulating the Value of Postsecondary Education in the West	TBD	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD		Western states
Policy and Practice Solutions for Workforce Shortages	A/S, W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	\$400,000	2 years	TBD
Intermediaries for Scale Partnerships	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western, U.S.	TBD	TBD	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

BUILDING EVIDENCE FOR SCALE – POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS:

Building on its Adult College Completion Network and other work related to adult learners, WICHE proposes pursuing new approaches to achieve four objectives: a) build the evidence base for effectively serving adult learners; b) facilitate collaboration among network members; c) share scalable solutions across the field; and d) link adult college completion work with the broader agenda to ensure the equity of opportunity. The project will also seek to partner with WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions and other key stakeholders to increase the number of adults with a postsecondary credential of value. To accomplish that goal, the project will identify high-impact supports for adult learners that correlate with increased credential completion; develop effective and aligned policy and practice for serving adult learners in concert with WICHE members, postsecondary systems and institutions, employers, and local leaders; and measure the impact of initiatives aimed at increasing adult postsecondary credential completion to drive continuous improvement.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

POLICY PAPER SERIES ON AFFORDABILITY: The Policy unit will commission a series of papers focused on policy and practice actions to improve postsecondary affordability. The papers (including WICHE as a key author) will aim to provide rigorous, actionable research accessible to policymakers.

WESTERN POSTSECONDARY DATA USERS NETWORK: Education and workforce development agencies continue to improve data systems that have the potential to provide critical information to students and their families, policymakers, and institutional leaders. To take full advantage of these systems, states, territories, and freely associated states must have highly competent staff to analyze the available data and convert it to usable information for improving programs and policies. Additionally, researchers must have opportunities to explore new areas of research that can drive policy conversations. Barriers to taking advantage of these data systems include limited opportunities for state postsecondary researchers to engage in professional development, heavy workloads managing existing reporting duties leaving little time for exploratory analyses, and few chances to network with colleagues to address common problems. WICHE hopes to address these issues by exploring the need for and, if appropriate, establishing a Western Postsecondary Data Users Network, which would convene key system and institutional education and workforce researchers, as well as key staff from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions, to address common questions, provide technical assistance, and assist in professional development. This network would ensure that Western policymakers have access to high-quality evidence to develop, assess, and improve education and training policies and programs.

ARTICULATING THE VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE WEST: The Policy unit will work on multiple approaches to understand and articulate the value of postsecondary education for diverse stakeholders, including a focus on where that value is not meeting broader expectations. This effort will begin with a general articulation of the broad dimensions of value, including the economic return to individuals and communities, civic and cultural value, and other social dimensions of value that are not easily captured in earnings data. This work will have an explicit focus on how value is articulated in diverse Western contexts.

POLICY AND PRACTICE SOLUTIONS FOR WORKFORCE SHORTAGES: The Policy unit regularly convenes key staff from WICHE members to focus on ways to address short- and long-term workforce shortages in health fields using general fund dollars. Staff has developed a broader proposal to carry out a project that would implement solutions being developed while focusing on building a strong research base into effective and sustainable long-term policy and practice.

INTERMEDIARIES FOR SCALE PARTNERSHIP: Although not selected to be one of the Intermediaries for scale grantees of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WICHE has completed multiple partnerships with those organizations that were selected. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium previously brought in WICHE to facilitate its efforts to develop an effective data infrastructure and staff capacity. Staff will continue to review other opportunities to partner with Intermediaries for scale where the work fits with WICHE's mission and expertise. If consulting opportunities consistent with WICHE's mission are unavailable in FY 2025, staff will recommend removing this item from the Workplan.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing and bringing to the Commission for approval, along with ideas generated by commissioners.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: The Policy unit will continue to identify areas where WICHE can help build policy- and practice-relevant research focused on organizational priorities, including student access and success, postsecondary value, and reaching underserved populations, including rural students, military and veteran students, adult learners, incarcerated individuals, and students of color. Additionally, this work could include topic-specific research and analysis.

LEVERAGING WORK-BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND MEET WORKFORCE DEMANDS IN RURAL AREAS: The goal of this work would be to help facilitate the development of partnerships among institutions and businesses to ensure effective linkages between the workplace and the classroom through co-op/internship programs. Staff believe this approach may have particular benefits for rural areas.

STATE POLICIES TO SUPPORT MEETING STUDENTS' BASIC NEEDS: Housing and food security are crucial issues for students across the West (and the United States as a whole). While campus-level supports such as food banks and emergency grants and loans can help, this effort would examine state- and territory-level policies that can improve student outcomes, including better alignment of social services and education programs, improved access to benefit programs, and other approaches.

WESTERN POLICY FORUM: An annual convening designed to advance WICHE's mission by bringing together key postsecondary leaders in the Western region to learn about successful strategies around access and success, accountability, finance, workforce, and innovation.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

IDAHO ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE GROWTH INITIATIVE: The Idaho State Board of Education commissioned an analysis from WICHE to explore whether Idaho was producing enough

engineering and computer science graduates to meet the needs of the state's economy in response to concerns raised by industry leaders. Guided by an industry advisory group, the WICHE team reviewed existing research, analyzed data, modeled the projected supply of graduates, and conducted a range of employer engagement activities to identify evidence of a substantial gap between supply and demand for graduates in these fields. The [final report](#) details the key areas in the educational pipeline where the state might consider investing to increase the supply of graduates.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: WICHE completed an initial component of our planned broader effort in this space, bringing together health and postsecondary education leaders from several states who have focused on large-scale efforts to improve behavioral health and wellness. Although this work is considered completed, staff are committed to building on this effort. Commitment from Lumina Foundation to support an initial convening of exemplar states and systems focused on improving behavioral health and wellness in postsecondary education. Additionally, conversations continue with other partners about large-scale efforts to scale healthy practices through policy.

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
WCET Member Services and Support	A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	425 member institutions, agencies, organizations
Digital Learning Practice	A/F, A/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, Every Learner Everywhere, other organizations
Digital Learning Policy	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET members, SAN, NASASPS, NC-SARA, other organizations
WCET Annual Meeting	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Leadership Summit	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET members, sponsors
WCET Webcast Series	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	Various, depending on the topic
wcetMIX (Member Information Exchange) and Member-only Resources	A/S, W/S, I	U.S. and Canada	WCET staff	WCET, SAN, and member leadership
State System of Multi-Institutional Consortia Digital Learning Leaders	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	WCET staff	Higher education systems and multi-institution consortia
State Authorization Network (SAN)	A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	149 members representing ~ 900 institutions, regional compacts, NASASPS, NC-SARA
WCET Steering Committee Annual Priorities	A/F, A/S, I, V/A	U.S.	WCET staff	WCET-elected Steering Committee and other members

WCET MEMBERSHIP SERVICES AND SUPPORT helps colleges, universities, higher education organizations, state agencies, and companies understand both the practice and policy of digital learning by providing timely information and a collaborative community. The popular WCET *Frontiers* blog features promising practices, innovations, emerging policies, compliance advice, and member profiles. The WCET *Frontiers* podcast series was introduced to provide engaging interviews about solutions and innovations in the practice and policy of digital learning in higher education.

WCET, the State Authorization Network (SAN), and Every Learner Everywhere (ELE) continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING PRACTICES** that have an impact on faculty and students. These groups are noted for their experience in providing members and the field with information on digital learning practices that enhance student success. Past areas of focus include artificial intelligence, digital student support services, digital accessibility, assessment and academic integrity, microcredentials, and learning analytics.

WCET and SAN continue to collaborate to provide in-depth analysis of **DIGITAL LEARNING POLICIES** (federal, state, accreditation, and regulatory) that have an impact on faculty and students. WCET and SAN are noted for their expertise on policy issues, including consumer protections for digital learning students, regular and substantive interaction for distance education, state authorization of out-of-state activities, out-of-state professional licensure regulatory requirements, and digital learning definitions.

WCET events include the **ANNUAL MEETING, MEMBER-ONLY LEADERSHIP VIRTUAL SUMMIT, AND MONTHLY WEBCAST SERIES**. WCET's annual meeting is an in-person event, bringing together up to 400 leaders and practitioners interested in good practices in digital learning in postsecondary education. Members and non-members attend. The 2023 Annual Meeting had 316 attendees and had many multiple sessions of various topics. The member-only Virtual Summit takes place in the spring and is a half-day, single topic-focused event. The 2023 Virtual Summit had over 140 attendees, and the 2024 Virtual Summit focused on artificial intelligence. The monthly Webcast Series showcases innovative practices and effective policies in digital learning, with an average attendance of 150 members and non-members.

WCETMIX is a digital platform to support communication, collaboration, and resource-sharing among WCET members with approximately 5,000 participants (members and non-members). Members are invited to communicate through WCET's popular *wcetNEWS* and *wcetDISCUSS* digital forums. SAN also uses *wcetMIX* to support communication and sharing among its members.

The **STATE SYSTEM OF MULTI-INSTITUTIONAL CONSORTIA DIGITAL LEARNING LEADERS** meet monthly to share their unique challenges and solutions in using cooperation and shared services to better meet the needs of students, faculty, and administrators at their member institutions.

The **STATE AUTHORIZATION NETWORK (SAN)** is a membership organization, created in 2011 as a division of WCET, that empowers its members to successfully resolve state and federal regulatory challenges to improve student consumer protections in digital and experiential learning across state lines. SAN serves postsecondary institutional staff who must translate and implement educational technology regulations as well as the agencies that support that work. Related issues include state institutional approvals, reciprocity, professional licensure, employment law issues, international compliance, and military-related considerations. SAN does this through providing members with an online library of resources and tools, policy analysis, virtual and in-person trainings, and facilitating communication so that members can cooperate to identify common needs, track emerging policies and regulations, evaluate their efficacy, and share lessons learned. SAN is developing a second edition of its Professional Licensure Handbook that will assist the public in navigating federal professional licensure regulations.

Each year, the **WCET STEERING COMMITTEE** selects **ANNUAL PRIORITIES** to provide insights and resources to assist members. Working groups are formed to advise and assist in developing webinars, conference sessions, blog posts, reports, and other resources to inform the membership. The selected topics for 2024 were:

- ▶ **Artificial Intelligence** – As these tools become ubiquitous, how do we tackle the instructional, academic integrity, and equity issues related to generative artificial intelligence?
- ▶ **Digital Learning Economics** – As higher education faces affordability challenges, what are the costs of digital learning and how can digital learning assist in making higher education more affordable and accessible?

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Artificial Intelligence: Policy and Practice in Higher Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	0.5	WCET, external consultants, and other digital learning nonprofits as needed
Emerging Federal Policies	A/F, I, V/A	U.S.	Internal	2	WCET, SAN, WICHE Policy unit
Every Learner Everywhere	A/F, A/S, I	U.S.	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Oct 2022 – Dec 2024) \$66,88,840	1.5-5.8 / 2017-25	13 partner organizations
A Hole in State Policy – Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	V/A, W/S, A/S, I	U.S.	\$77,000	.25 in FY 2024 and FY 2025	Pew Charitable Trusts, WCET, WICHE Policy Unit

The impact of **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** has undergone an extensive buildup and now upon us. In November 2023, OpenAI released ChatGPT, a chat interface for its GPT large language model AI. Using the chat interface, users can make a seemingly endless array of queries of GPT 4 that result in often stunning responses. The relative ease in getting the program to create everything from poems to short answers to complete essays has led many faculty and administrators to worry about the academic integrity of coursework. Others are urging faculty to rethink assessment practices and find ways to integrate generative artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT, into coursework. Artificial Intelligence will remain one of WCET’s focus areas in 2024 and will include the production of several blogs, webinars, and both public and member-only reports. This work is being funded through internal investment but may lead to additional funding opportunities.

The years 2024 and 2025 will be unusually full of **EMERGING FEDERAL POLICY** discussions regarding digital learning in higher education. Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Veterans Administration have rules regarding professional licensure programs. The department has undertaken rulemaking on accreditation, distance education Title IV tracking, and state authorization for distance education, and digital books and resources that will be finalized in Fall 2024. The department has also indicated that it will release new guidance on third-party services and online program managers in 2024. NC-SARA is facilitating the new SARA Policy Modification Process intended to be more inclusive and transparent. Legislation is likely in U.S. Congress on short-term Pell grants and on housing allowance for Veterans studying at a distance. WCET and SAN staff will continue to follow these policy proposals and inform members.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE (ELE) is a network of 13 partner organizations working collaboratively to help institutions use new technology to innovate in teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes for Black, Latino, and Indigenous, poverty-affected, and first-generation students. WCET is an intermediary for the network, which is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is also one of the participating partners. The most involved partner organizations include Achieving the Dream, American Public and Land-Grant Universities, and the Online Learning Consortium. Service topics include information on adaptive learning, equitable pedagogical practices in digital learning, evidence-based teaching practices for digital learning, and techniques for putting students first in the classroom.

In collaboration with the WICHE Policy Analysis and Research unit, WCET will work on **A HOLE IN STATE POLICY: ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**. This project will examine the role that alternative providers play in the development and offering of postsecondary credentials. The Policy Analysis and Research unit (assisted by WCET) will work with key state partners to develop appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative providers of postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that states can leverage the advantages of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability
 Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Price and Cost of Distance Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A		National	Internal	0.5 1 year	WICHE Policy Unit

In 2017, WCET conducted national research on the **PRICE AND COST OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**. A survey of institutions sought to collect information on the price that institutions charge students for a distance education course and the cost to create that course. The work led to the realization that the views of practitioners and policymakers are completely at odds. An update of the 2017 analysis is needed for the post-COVID higher education world.

Completed Projects

Work that staff finished in FY 2024:

WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT FOR WCET AND SAN: WCET and SAN used the services of WebAIM, part of the Institute for Disability Research, Policy, & Practice, at Utah State University, to improve its website accessibility. SAN has begun a similar extensive review of its website with WebAIM, with the hopes to have the work completed in the next fiscal year.

EVERY LEARNER EVERYWHERE has successfully closed out five grants and one contract and has primarily transitioned to using a new three-year network investment grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The focus of this year has been on the major reinvestment grant, and with its new deliverables focused on a new governance system, new technical assistance providers, selecting and onboarding new equity-first organizations, and creating a menu of services, an institutional digital learning assessment tool, and quality service standards. The network continued to be a recognized leader in equity in digital learning through multiple conference presentations, resources, and blog posts. Additionally, Every Learner onboarded a new director in June 2023, after the previous one resigned in February 2023.

The **WCET ANNUAL MEETING** took place in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October 2023. The 35th Annual Meeting had over 300 attendees. Sessions covered an array of digital learning and higher education topics including information about recently released regulations, artificial intelligence, the array of digital learning definitions and need for clarity, microcredential strategies, accreditation challenges and changes, and quality in digital learning. The Annual Summit for Women in eLearning (ASWE) was held in conjunction with the WCET Annual Meeting; this is the first time ASWE was held in-person and had 72 attendees.

The **MEMBER-ONLY VIRTUAL SUMMIT** topic for 2023 was the evolving business models for higher education, which resonated with WCET members as many institutions were seeking strategies for increasing revenue and retention. Over 140 people participated in the one-day virtual event. The 2024 event focused on artificial intelligence and higher education.

The **WCET WEBCAST SERIES** is popular with the WCET community because it is free and open to all, featuring experts and practitioners who share pragmatic advice and lessons learned on digital learning topics. Topics for 2023 include accessibility considerations in open education, effective tools and strategies for AI and academic integrity, microcredentials, and enrollment challenges.

The **WCET ONLINE COMMUNITY** moved to a new platform in March 2024. The new platform, Sengii, provides a better user experience by allowing WCET members to navigate the platform and discussions more intuitively. The original platform, Higher Logic, had become increasingly cost-prohibitive.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Setting Definitions for Learning Modalities	A/S, A/F, I		U.S. and Canada	\$150-200,000 (initially)	0.5 1 year	Canadian Digital Learning Research Association

SETTING DEFINITIONS FOR LEARNING MODALITIES: WCET and the Canadian Digital Learning Research Association will build on an existing body of work to create more standard definitions for digital learning modalities. In a recent survey by WCET, only 52% of institutions stated they had an institution-wide definition of distance learning, 41% had definitions for online learning, and 20% had definitions for hyflex learning. This leaves students, faculty, and other groups and agencies guessing what each institution calls these experiences. Developing these definitions could serve policy at the federal, regional, and/or state levels while also allowing for local flexibility. Most importantly, such definitions would provide better clarity for students to know what to expect when they enroll and participate in a course described with these terms.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Current Activities – Ongoing Services and Resources

Continuing work supported by membership dues or by fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
BHP Member Service and Support	A/S, I	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health authorities
Western States Decision Support Group (WSDSG): Annual Membership Program	A/S, I, V/A	Western	WICHE BHP staff	WICHE-region state behavioral health data specialists

BHP MEMBER SERVICE AND SUPPORT: The WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions are asked to contribute a nominal support fee of \$15,000 to the WICHE BHP to be a member of the Behavioral Health Oversight Council, to provide guidance to and collaboration. As part of the regional collaborative, states will have a platform to perform regional collaborative projects; have access to regional training to support workforce development and system improvement; have available to them consultation and technical assistance on a variety of policy issues; and be part of an interstate networking and resource sharing collaborative.

WESTERN STATES DECISION SUPPORT GROUP (WSDSG) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM: Since 1985, the WICHE BHP has been managing the WSDSG, an information-sharing membership-based network for behavioral health data and evaluation staff and managers from WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions. The WICHE BHP manages quarterly conference calls to discuss emerging behavioral health data and system evaluation issues and provides ongoing support to WSDSG members. The WICHE BHP also organizes an annual meeting with training and presentations for WSDSG members to stay apprised of developments and best practices in the field of behavioral health data and evaluation. Funding is based on an annual membership fee of \$6,000.

Current Activities – Projects and Initiatives

Continuing (or new) work supported by grants, contracts, or fees. All work in this category is considered high priority.

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychology Internship Consortium – Interns and Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	Western	\$150,000	7/23-6/24	State of Alaska; Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
Alaska Psychiatric Institute – Regulatory Compliance Technical Assistance	A/S, V/A	Western	\$197,100	4 years	State of Alaska
Arizona Evidence-Based Practices Fidelity Monitoring*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$915,428	6.5 7/23-6/24	State of Arizona
Arizona – Mercy Care C.A.R.E.S. Training	W/S, V/A	Western	\$70,000	2/24-3/25	Mercy Care
Colorado Behavioral Health Administration Technical Assistance	W/S, A/S	Western	\$168,015	0.75 11/23-6/24	State of Colorado
Guam Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western and Pacific Jurisdictions	\$62,745	0.5 10/23-9/24	U.S. Territory of Guam
Hawai'i Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$1,929,212	0.5 7/23-6/24	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Clinical Psychologists*	W/S	Western	\$100,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Hawai'i Recruitment of School-Based Behavioral Health and Social Workers	W/S	Western	\$125,000	Ongoing	State of Hawai'i
Idaho Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$125,000	7/23-6/24	State of Idaho
Montana PACT Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$221,400	1.5 7/23-6/24	State of Montana
Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MP-MHTTC)	A/S, W/S	Western	\$449,809	1.5 8/23-9/24	University of North Dakota
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC)	A/F, A/S, I	Western	\$649,500	3	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
NASMHPD Technical Assistance	W/S	Pacific Jurisdictions	\$48,750	2/24–9/24	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

PROJECT	FOCUS	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE	PARTNERS
National Institutes of Health Behavioral Health Aide Assessment	W/S	Western	\$153,088	0.75 4 years	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; Northwest Indian College; University of Alaska – Anchorage
Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$358,094	0.25 8/23-8/25	State of Nevada
New Mexico Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$157,223	0.25 8/23-8/24	State of New Mexico; Indian Health Service
Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Program*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$3,000	7/23-6/24	State of Oregon
Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)	W/S	Western	\$869,509	3 9/23-8/24	JBS International
Rural Veteran Suicide Prevention – Together With Veterans	W/S	U.S.	\$3,063,425	4.5 4/23-3/24	U.S. Veterans Administration’s Office of Rural Health and Office of Suicide Prevention
Sanford Health Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$200,000	0.5 3 Years	Sanford Health
South Dakota IMP(ACT) Fidelity Reviews*	W/S, V/A	Western	\$49,900	0.25 6/23-5/24	State of South Dakota
South Dakota Psychology Internship Consortium	A/S, W/S	Western	\$175,000	0.25 8/22-11/24	State of South Dakota
University of Wisconsin Technical Assistance	A/S, W/S	U.S.	\$52,659	0.4 9/23-8/24	University of Wisconsin
Utah Psychology Internship Consortium*	A/S, W/S	Western	\$26,400	7/23-6/24	State of Utah

* WICHE expects these projects will be renewed, or they have already been renewed, for FY 2025.

ALASKA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (AK-PIC) INTERNS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

The WICHE BHP supports the ongoing operations of the AK-PIC for interns and faculty, including its engagement in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and achievement/maintenance of American Psychological Association (APA) accreditation. The AK-PIC consists of a multisite consortium of Alaska agencies that maintain at least one supervising psychologist onsite to provide supervision and didactic training to interns.

ALASKA PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE – REGULATORY COMPLIANCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP was selected through a competitive bidding process to assist the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) in maintaining compliance with regulating agencies through review of policies, health information management, infection control, milieu management, risk management, medical staff credentialing, pharmacy practices, and life safety code and environment of care. The WICHE BHP will perform reviews and provide guidance on how to address shortcomings in policies and execution.

ARIZONA EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES (EBPS) FIDELITY MONITORING: The WICHE BHP partners with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to support the implementation and fidelity reviews of four EBPs in the Maricopa County public behavioral health system. The WICHE BHP supports a team of fidelity reviewers who review approximately 20 different providers in Maricopa County each year. In FY 2024, the project was expanded to include fidelity reviews throughout the balance of the state of Arizona.

ARIZONA MERCY CARE C.A.R.E.S. TRAINING: The WICHE BHP collaborates with Arizona-based Mercy Care through its C.A.R.E.S (Community Action Resources Education and Service) community giving initiative to plan and provide training to increase workforce expertise by implementing training strategies for evidence-based practices: Trauma-informed Care for Children, Youth and Adults; Transition to Independence Model; Infant-Toddler Mental Health Coalition of Arizona 0-5 Training; and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders including Opioids.

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide technical assistance in the development of a Crisis Professional Training Curriculum consisting of 24 distinct modules. The WICHE BHP is augmenting the BHA staff with Crisis Professional Expertise by supporting the work of a Crisis Professional Advisory Board and reviewing curriculum modules.

GUAM PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (GU-PIC): The WICHE BHP has partnered with the U.S. Territory of Guam to develop an accreditable psychology internship consortium to serve Guam and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and build the behavioral health workforces there. The WICHE BHP assists by guiding all phases of developing a psychology internship consortium to attract and retain qualified and highly trained behavioral health professionals in the territories. Guam-PIC graduated its first intern from the program in AY 2022-23.

HAWAI'I PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (HI-PIC): The WICHE BHP supports the state of Hawai'i in developing and operating an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is the establishment of a pipeline to build Hawai'i's behavioral health workforce. Three Hawai'i state agencies (the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the newly formed Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) will provide funding to support HI-PIC. Currently, 10 interns are participating in HI-PIC.

HAWAI'I RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS: The Hawai'i Department of Education contracts with the WICHE BHP to recruit and contract with clinical psychologists to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands.

HAWAI'I RECRUITMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND SOCIAL WORKERS: The WICHE BHP is assisting the Hawai'i Department of Education with marketing, recruitment,

screening, and referral services for school-based behavioral health (SBBH) and social work professionals to fill public school vacancies across the Hawaiian Islands. This effort is designed to increase the employment of SBBH and social work professionals.

IDAHO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (ID-PIC): The WICHE BHP is assisting the State of Idaho in continuing to operate an accredited psychology internship consortium. A primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Idaho's behavioral health workforce, especially in rural and underserved areas. The Idaho State Board of Education received funding from the Idaho Legislature to support WICHE's assistance in restructuring and expanding an existing unaccredited internship program and pursuing American Psychological Association accreditation.

MONTANA PACT FIDELITY REVIEWS: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services' Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division has contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to the division on the implementation of its Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). This project includes conducting fidelity reviews for 14 PACT programs operating across the state, developing plans and focused training to promote the improvement of services, and consultation on outcomes and dashboard development.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS MENTAL HEALTH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTER (MP-MHTTC): The MP-MHTTC is a six-year partnership between the WICHE BHP and the University of North Dakota to provide comprehensive training, resources, and technical assistance to mental health providers and other practitioners across a six-state area. Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the center specializes in rural and frontier mental health in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The project is in the final year of its six-year award.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER (MP ROTAC): In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance to rural communities across the continuum of care.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTORS (NASMHPD) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is a subcontractor to NASMHPD on its Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Technical Assistance Coalition and Transformation Transfer Initiative. The BHP has been focused on implementing and expanding 988 crisis services in rural and frontier regions through a series of training and technical assistance sessions for providers across the country. Additionally, the BHP will assist the CNMI in developing a behavioral health aide certification program.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE ASSESSMENT: The WICHE BHP, in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research (CANHR) and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), was awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) research grant. This project evaluates the behavioral health aide program, focusing on efficacy, implementation, and best practices. As behavioral health workforce issues continue to grow in tribal areas, this research has the potential to significantly influence the development of new programs across the West.

NEVADA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NV-PIC): The WICHE BHP assists the State of Nevada in the continued operation of an accredited psychology internship consortium. The primary goal of the internship program is to establish a pipeline to build Nevada's behavioral health workforce. The Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health and Nevada WICHE provides support and funding for the BHP's ongoing development and operation of the Nevada Psychology Internship Consortium.

NEW MEXICO PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (NM-PIC): The WICHE BHP is working with partner agencies to develop a doctoral psychology internship consortium for the State of New Mexico. A primary goal of the internship program is to help develop New Mexico's behavioral health workforce in rural and underserved areas. Through funding from the New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division, the New Mexico Department of Health, and the federal Indian Health Services, the WICHE BHP is facilitating program development and helping to ensure the program meets American Psychological Association accreditation standards.

OREGON STATE HOSPITAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (OSH-PIP): The WICHE BHP continues to assist the Oregon State Hospital Psychology Internship Training Program by supporting and maintaining the internship's website.

RURAL COMMUNITIES OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM (RCORP): The WICHE BHP has partnered with JBS International to reduce morbidity and mortality associated with opioid overdoses and psychostimulant misuse in high-risk communities by strengthening the organizational and infrastructural capacity of multi-sector consortia. As a partner in this project, the WICHE BHP provides technical assistance to 66 rural planning and implementation opioid grantees and psychostimulant grantees funded for three years by the Health Resources and Services Administration.

RURAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION – TOGETHER WITH VETERANS: The WICHE BHP is collaborating with the Denver-based federal Veterans Administration, Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) to develop and implement Together With Veterans (TWV), a Veteran suicide prevention program for rural communities. The program became operational in FY 2019, with four initial sites (two in Colorado, one in Montana, and one in North Carolina). Since then, the TWV program has been implemented in 38 rural communities, with 14 of those communities having completed their three-year commitment to the program. The TWV program sites are located in rural communities throughout the country, stretching from as far east as New Hampshire and as far west as Guam.

SANFORD HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SH-PIC): The WICHE BHP worked with the leadership of Sanford Health to help develop a psychology internship designed to provide a broad and culturally relevant training program to support the preparation and retention of doctoral-level psychologists in North Dakota and Minnesota. Sanford Health has an extensive national footprint and is a leading agency in advancing integrated health services (physical and behavioral). The internship development began primarily with Sanford's integrated health sites in North Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA IMP(ACT) FIDELITY REVIEWS: The WICHE BHP is continuing to assist the South Dakota Division of Behavioral Health to evaluate the fidelity of the evidence-based practice Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) at community behavioral health clinics in three locations in South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (SD-PIC): The University of South Dakota contracted with the WICHE BHP to develop a psychology internship consortium. The WICHE BHP is

working with the state to identify core partners for the internship, including the South Dakota Human Services Center in Yankton and other community-based partners. WICHE's work will extend from planning and development to supporting achieving accreditation of the internship program.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP is working in partnership with the University of Wisconsin through a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant to provide education and training to graduate students, practitioners, educators, and trainers. These learning collaboratives will focus on the integration of substance use disorder and mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery in rural communities. The WICHE BHP will provide expert trainers for a series of six trainings over 12 weeks, twice a year, for the next three years. Many expert trainers will be provided in conjunction with the ongoing work of WICHE's Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP).

UTAH PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP CONSORTIUM (UT-PIC): The WICHE BHP works with partner agencies to develop the internship consortium's self-study. This will help ensure the program meets the American Psychological Association accreditation standards and assist with the accreditation process.

New Directions

Projects that might need WICHE President approval for which staff is actively seeking funding, prioritized as follows:

Focus: **A/F** Affordability & Finance **A/S** Access & Success **W/S** Workforce & Society **I** Innovation **V/A** Value & Accountability

Project prioritization: ■ Relevance (mission critical) ■ Opportunity (funding) ■ Competence (staff/consultants)

PROJECT	FOCUS	PRIORITY	GEO SCOPE	FUNDING	STAFF FTE / TIMELINE	PARTNERS
Expansion of Behavioral Health Aide Model in Pacific Jurisdictions	W/S, A/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	Pacific Jurisdictions Native Alaskan Tribal Health Consortium
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	TBD	Western states
Mental Health Needs Classification System	W/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	State of Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center - Recompete	A/F, A/S, I	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Western	TBD	1 year	U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

EXPANSION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE (BHA) MODEL IN PACIFIC JURISDICTIONS: The WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Community Guidance Center in the CNMI to launch a pilot project implementing the BHA model of a local community behavioral health paraprofessional worker, modeled after the Alaska BHA program. Concurrently, the WICHE BHP is providing technical assistance to the Pacific Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (PBHCC) to establish a certification system for BHAs. Current funding has been provided to WICHE from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), and there is interest from the other Pacific Jurisdictions to expand this effort. The WICHE BHP is exploring funding sources to support such expansion.

IMPROVING POLICY AND PRACTICE TO SUPPORT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ON CAMPUS: The Policy unit will continue exploring ways to improve behavioral health in postsecondary education, building on a recently completed successful project. This work will likely focus on several potential approaches, including meeting future behavioral health workforce needs, building supportive state- and system-level networks to improve the dissemination of promising approaches, and catalyzing the adoption of broad-based approaches to student health and wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM: The WICHE BHP is working with the newly formed Hawai'i Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to explore the possibility of assisting the department in the development of a classification system to accurately assess the mental health needs of the department's patient population. This project would be designed to improve the types and quantity of services the department provides to its incarcerated population.

MOUNTAIN PLAINS RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER – RECOMPETE: In October of 2022, the WICHE BHP was awarded a two-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC), which is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprising Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The WICHE BHP will need to recompile for a new five-year funding opportunity to continue its work with MP ROTAC.

Potential Future Projects

Work that staff are considering pursuing:

COLORADO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The State of Colorado's Behavioral Health Administration has approached the WICHE BHP regarding an opportunity to continue supporting the Crisis Professional Curriculum project in Phase II of the project.

STUDENT WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH: The WICHE BHP continues to seek opportunities and funding to partner with the Policy and Analysis unit and Lumina Foundation to support and improve college student wellness and mental health, to improve college completion and degree attainment for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, income, or mental health status.

Previously considered projects that we propose to remove from the Workplan: None at this time.

Completed Projects

Work that staff completed in FY 2024:

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY – TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED SUPERVISION OF POST-GRADUATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide outreach, research, and documentation specific to best practices for supervising doctoral-level practitioners of psychology pursuing state licensure. The WICHE BHP reviewed accepted practices for supervision, including in-person, telephone, and video conferencing modalities for remote locations, ultimately presenting a policy analysis paper to the licensure boards in Alaska.

AVONDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT REACCREDITATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The WICHE BHP supported the Avondale Elementary School District's reaccreditation of its Doctoral School Psychology Internship Program by providing technical assistance in its submission of reaccreditation to the American Psychological Association.

HAWAI'I EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES – RATES STUDY: The Early Intervention Services Section (EIS) of the Hawai'i Department of Health contracted with the WICHE BHP to complete another comparative review of early childhood services compensation methodology and pricing structures for both contracted services and related professional salaries such as general educator, occupational and physical therapists, and speech language pathologist. The EIS rates study compared Hawai'i rates to those in other, analogous states to ensure competitive pay to help maintain a sufficient workforce.

MONTANA CRISIS SYSTEM: The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assess and make recommendations regarding Montana's implementation of its Mobile Crisis System, including an assessment of individual crisis-stabilization facilities, existing mobile crisis response teams, and its crisis-system data reporting and technology solutions. In addition to a high-level statewide assessment, the WICHE BHP also assessed seven county-based crisis services.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) ONLINE PUBLICATION UPDATE: The NIH contracted with the WICHE BHP to update its publication, *Mental Health and Rural America: An Overview and Annotated Bibliography*. The revision expanded the publication's focus to include substance use and addiction, with particular emphasis on opioid addiction in rural and frontier areas of the United States.

NORTH DAKOTA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE STUDY: The University of North Dakota (UND) contracted with the WICHE BHP to provide consultation and technical assistance to UND as part of the North Dakota Behavioral Health Plan Aim 7: Behavioral Health Workforce. WICHE convened and facilitated a Behavioral Health Workforce Summit with key stakeholders and developed a Behavioral Health Workforce Strategic Plan.

SOUTH DAKOTA HUMAN SERVICES CENTER OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW: The South Dakota Department of Social Services contracted with the WICHE BHP to assist the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.

SOUTH DAKOTA HSC OPTIMAL CAPACITY REVIEW – PHASE II: Provided policy guidance, technical assistance, and support for the implementation of focused programming and staffing models, assisting the state in establishing the optimal capacity and patient programming at the South Dakota Human Services Center.

COLLABORATIONS ACROSS WICHE UNITS

Focus: A/F Affordability & Finance A/S Access & Success W/S Workforce & Society I Innovation V/A Value & Accountability

PROJECT	FOCUS	UNITS	ACTIVITY CATEGORY	PARTNERS
A Hole in State Policy: Alternative Providers in Postsecondary Education	A/S, W/S, I, V/A	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives	In this project, the Policy unit will work with WCET and Pew Charitable Trusts to consider appropriate frameworks to address the rise of alternative credentials in postsecondary education. This work will help ensure that WICHE states and Pacific Island jurisdictions can take advantage of legitimately innovative and disruptive ideas while also protecting students from the predatory practices of substandard providers.
Cybersecurity Training for Senior Nontechnical Leaders	I	Policy Analysis and Research, WCET	Projects and Initiatives (DHS-funded and seeking funding)	The work entails interplay between WICHE’s cyber fellow (under WCET auspices) and Policy Analysis and Research staff. The WICHE President is working with the teams to develop a sustainability plan.
Evolving Higher Education Policy Issues	A/S, I	WCET, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (variously funded)	Through WCET’s <i>Frontiers</i> blog and other avenues, these units contribute to the field by engaging on emerging issues on which WICHE has policy and research insights and context. This often leads to collaboration or co-publication in areas that recently have ranged from state authorization of distance learning to changes in IPEDS outcome measures data with implications for attainment metrics.
Improving Policy and Practice to Support Behavioral Health on Campus	A/S, W/S	Policy Analysis and Research, Behavioral Health Program	Projects and Initiatives (variously funded)	This prospective convening of state policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders would take advantage of WICHE Policy unit and Behavioral Health Program expertise alike to identify policy and practice gaps related to campus behavioral health services and systems.
No Holding Back: Using Data to Review and Revise Administrative Hold Policies among Public Postsecondary Institutions in the Western Region	A/S, A/F	Programs and Services, Policy Analysis and Research	Projects and Initiatives (grant-funded)	WICHE’s Programs and Services unit and Policy Analysis and Research unit collaborated with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions to provide institutions in the West with tools to (re)evaluate their administrative hold policies to improve student success and to use their data in policy formation better. We will continue disseminating these resources and seek new partners interested in continued application of the tools and policy implications.

ACTION ITEM

Conflict of Interest Policy for the WICHE Commission

Background

As a 501(c)(3) organization, WICHE is required to complete Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt Form Income Tax). On that form, Question 12a asks whether the organization had a “written conflict of interest policy” for the previous year. While not legally required, in 2022, the Commission approved a Conflict of Interest Policy that is to be reviewed and approved every other year (included below). If approved, current commissioners will be asked to sign this Conflict of Interest form, and new commissioners will be asked to sign the form during onboarding.

Action Requested

President Michelau is asking the Commission to approve the proposed Conflict of Interest Policy.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY OF WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

ARTICLE I Purpose

The purpose of this Conflict of Interest Policy (this “*Policy*”) is to protect the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, a public interstate agency (“*WICHE*”), when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer of WICHE or a Commissioner of WICHE (referred to collectively herein as the “*Commission*”) or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit entities.

ARTICLE II Definitions

1. **Interested Person.** Any Commissioner, principal officer, or member of a committee designated by the Commission, who has a direct or indirect Financial Interest (as defined below) is an Interested Person.
2. **Financial Interest.** A person has a Financial Interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
 - a. an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which WICHE has a transaction or arrangement;
 - b. a compensation arrangement with WICHE or with any entity or individual with which

WICHE has a transaction or arrangement; or

- c. a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which WICHE is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A Financial Interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a Financial Interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Commission decides that a conflict of interest exists.

ARTICLE III **Procedures**

1. Duty to Disclose. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an Interested Person must disclose the existence of a Financial Interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Commission.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of a Financial Interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the Interested Person, he/she shall leave the meeting of the Commission while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Commissioners shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.

a. An Interested Person may make a presentation to the Commission, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

b. The Commission shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

c. After exercising due diligence, the Commission shall determine whether WICHE can obtain, with reasonable efforts, a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Commission shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Commissioners whether the transaction or arrangement is in WICHE's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

a. If the Commission has reasonable cause to believe an Interested Person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, the Commission shall inform such Interested Person of the basis for such belief and afford the Interested Person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the Interested Person's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Commission determines the Interested Person has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

ARTICLE IV
Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the Commission shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a Financial Interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the Financial Interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Commission's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

ARTICLE V
Compensation

A Commissioner who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from WICHE for services provided to WICHE in a capacity other than his or her capacity as a Commissioner is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to such person's compensation.

ARTICLE VI
Annual Statements

Each Commissioner, principal officer, and member of a committee designated by the Commission shall annually sign a statement (substantially in the form of **Exhibit A** attached hereto) which affirms such person:

- a. has received a copy of this Policy;
- b. has read and understands this Policy;
- c. has agreed to comply with this Policy; and
- d. understands that in order to maintain WICHE's federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

ARTICLE VII
Periodic Reviews

To ensure WICHE operates in a manner consistent with its charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm's-length bargaining.
- b. whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to WICHE's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

ARTICLE VIII
Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, WICHE may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Commissioners of their responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

* * * * *

The foregoing Conflict of Interest Policy was adopted by WICHE's Commission effective as of _____.

Demarée Michelau, Secretary

Exhibit A

Form of Conflict of Interest Statement

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The undersigned Commissioner or officer of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, a public interstate agency (“**WICHE**”), hereby acknowledges and agrees that he or she:

- A. has received a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy (the “**Policy**”) of WICHE;
- B. has read and understands the Policy;
- C. has agreed to comply with the Policy; and
- D. understands that in order for WICHE to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

This Conflict of Interest Statement is effective as of _____.

Printed Name

State

Signature

Date

ACTION ITEM

Affirmation of the Code of Ethics for the WICHE Commission

Background

The Commission is expected to abide by a Code of Ethics, which is reviewed annually. Below is the current Code of Ethics with minor suggested revisions redlined:

Commission Code of Ethics

The Western Regional Education Compact calls upon commissioners appointed by each participating state to oversee the development of WICHE's programs in order to strengthen higher education's contribution to the social and economic life of the region. Ethical practices are essential to the creation, implementation, and continued operation of effective, equitable programs that benefit the **citizens residents** of the West.

It is essential that WICHE espouse its own standards of ethical conduct since codes differ by state **and Pacific Island jurisdictions** and do not apply to an interstate agency such as WICHE. In this regard, each WICHE commissioner agrees individually to:

- ▶ Fulfill his or her responsibilities in a professional manner, with honesty, integrity, dignity, fairness, and civility
- ▶ Act in an informed, competent, and responsible manner, and with due diligence to provisions of the Western Regional Education Compact, the WICHE bylaws, and the approved policies and procedures of the organization
- ▶ Avoid possible conflicts of interest between his or her responsibilities as a state-appointed official and the multistate organization's policies, procedures, and operations. Should a potential conflict arise, a commissioner has the responsibility to disclose this to the commission and to recuse herself or himself from any discussion or actions with regard to the potential conflict of interest
- ▶ Foster high standards of professional and ethical conduct within WICHE and the Commission
- ▶ Support the principles of due process and civil and human rights of all individuals while being vigilant to resolve circumstances of discrimination, inequity, inappropriate behavior, harassment, or abuse within WICHE
- ▶ Assure that allegations of ethics violations raised by any staff person or **citizen person** served by WICHE concerning a member of the staff or the Commission are thoroughly investigated and resolved
- ▶ Refrain from accepting duties, incurring obligations, accepting gifts or favors of monetary value, or engaging in private business or professional activities where there is, or would appear to be, a conflict between the commissioner's personal interests and the interests of WICHE or its member **or affiliated states or Pacific Island jurisdictions**
- ▶ Avoid exploiting his or her position for personal gain through the use of political, social, religious, economic, or other influence
- ▶ Obey local, state, and national laws and pursue any changes in those laws, policies, and regulations only through legal, ethical, and otherwise appropriate means
- ▶ Support this WICHE Code of Ethics **(Conduct)** as a fundamental underpinning for the values, the decisions, and the actions of the Commission and the organization

Where appropriate, any adjustments made to the Commission's Code of Ethics will also be reflected in the respective Codes of Ethics for the WICHE president and staff.

Action Requested

Affirmation of the Code of Ethics for the Commission with minor changes noted to align with the mission and current membership.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

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WICHE COMMISSION

The WICHE Commission oversees the development of WICHE programs and ensures that the Western Regional Education Compact is carried out for the benefit of the residents of the West. WICHE's 48 commissioners, who are appointed by the governors of the 15 Western states and U.S. Pacific Territories and the presidents of the Freely Associated States, are leaders in higher education; they include state higher education executive officers, college and university presidents, legislators, business and community leaders, and other key partners. * Executive Committee member

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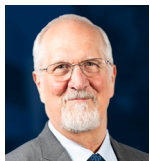
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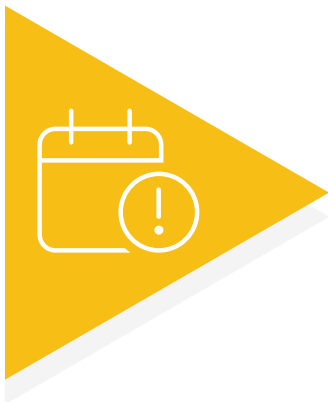
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Approved Future Commission Meeting Dates

- ▶ November 14 -15, 2024 – Honolulu, Hawai'i
- ▶ May 5-6, 2025 – Utah
- ▶ November 13-14, 2025 – Colorado

2024 COMMISSION COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Barbara Damron (NM), Vice
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Matt Freeman (ID), Immediate
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Territories and Freely
Associated States/CNMI)
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Kalani Kaneko (U.S. Pacific
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May 2024

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Peace Bransberger, Interim Director, Program
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Margo Colalancia, Director of Student Access
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Onnika Hanson-White, Administrative Assistant III
Kay Hulstrom, Associate Director, Operations
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Camelia Naranjo, Interim Assistant Director -
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Gina Brimner, Director of Special Projects
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Kristy Crawford, Fidelity Reviewer
Janell Daly, Senior Administrative Coordinator
Margie DeAnda, Administrative Assistant II
Karly Dickinson, Psychologist - Technical
Assistance Associate
Madison Dupre, Administrative Assistant III
Nicole Eastin, Fidelity Reviewer
Ashley Fortier, Technical Assistance Lead -
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John Gomez, Director of Operations
Vanessa Gonzalez, Technical Assistance
Associate, RCORP/ROTAC
Caitylyn Grubb, Program Evaluation and
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Andie Hancock, Budget Coordinator
Todd Helvig, Director of Education and Training
Miah Jacobs-Brichford, Fidelity Reviewer
Andrew Martinez, Budget Manager
Mikayla Nelson, Administrative Assistant III,
Together with Veterans
Bobbi Perkins, Director, Mountain Plains
ROTAC/Technical Assistance Lead
Annette Robertson, Senior EPB Fidelity Reviewer
Allison Treu, Quality Assurance and Fidelity
Reviewer
Ivory Tubbs, Technical Expert Lead, RCORP

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Karen Cangialosi, Director, Every Learner Everywhere
Emilie Cook, Manager, Digital Marketing and Communications, Every Learner Everywhere
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Cheryl Dowd, Senior Director, State Authorization Network and WCET Policy Innovations
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Megan Raymond, Senior Director, Membership and Programs
Jana Walser-Smith, Director, Interstate Compliance and SAN Member Outreach

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Nathaniel Longmore, Digital Communications Coordinator

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IT SERVICES

Dave Clark, Chief of Digital Services
Chris Cartwright, IT Systems Engineer

*Works across both units

April 2024

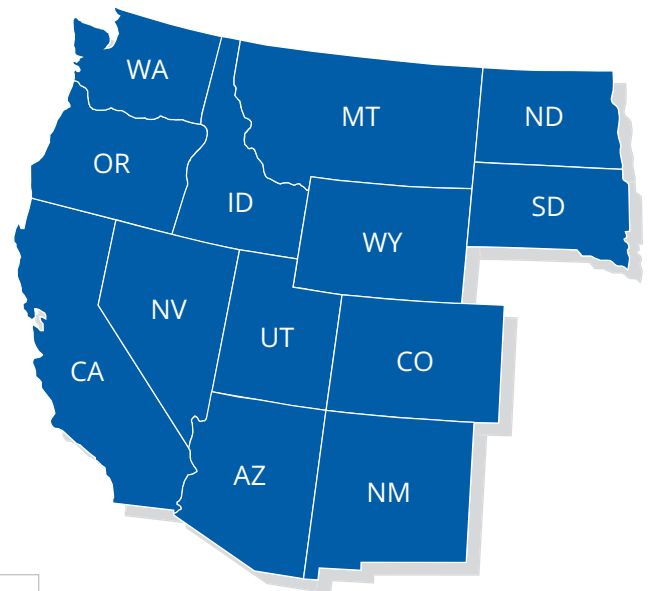
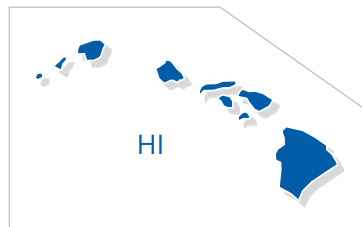
WICHE ORGANIZATION



WICHE REGION

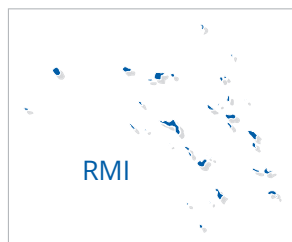
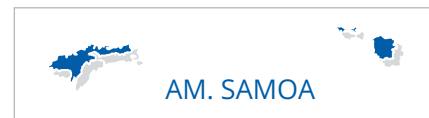
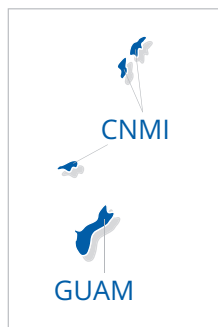
WICHE STATES

- Alaska (AK)
- Arizona (AZ)
- California (CA)
- Colorado (CO)
- Hawai'i (HI)
- Idaho (ID)
- Montana (MT)
- Nevada (NV)
- New Mexico (NM)
- North Dakota (ND)
- Oregon (OR)
- South Dakota (SD)
- Utah (UT)
- Washington (WA)
- Wyoming (WY)



U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES & FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES

- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)
- Guam
- Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
- Republic of Palau



*Not to scale

HIGHER EDUCATION ACRONYMS

Higher education uses many acronyms, so much so that the actual names of organizations are sometimes almost lost to memory. Below, a list of acronyms and the organizations they refer to (plus a few others).

AACC	American Association of Community Colleges	aacc.nche.edu
AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers	aacrao.org
AACTE	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education	aacte.org
AAC&U	Association of American Colleges and Universities	aacu.org
AANAPISI	Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions	apiascholars.org
AASCU	American Association of State Colleges and Universities	aascu.org
AASHE	Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education	aashe.org
AAU	Association of American Universities	aau.edu
ACA	American Counseling Association	counseling.org
ACCT	Association of Community College Trustees	acct.org
ACE	American Council on Education	acenet.edu
ACT	College admission testing program	act.org
ACTA	American Council of Trustees and Alumni	goacta.org
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	ada.gov
AEI	American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research	aei.org
AERA	American Educational Research Association	aera.net
AGB	Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges	agb.org
AHRQ	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	ahrq.gov
AIHEC	American Indian Higher Education Consortium	aihec.org
AIR	American Institutes of Research	air.org
AIR	Association for Institutional Research	airweb.org
ALLIANCE	Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-alliance-of-community-college-academic-leaders
APA	American Psychological Association	apa.org
APLU	Association of Public and Land-grant Universities	aplu.org
ASHE	Association for the Study of Higher Education	ashe.ws
ATD	Achieving the Dream	achievingthedream.org
BHOC	WICHE 's Behavioral Health Oversight Council	
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	gatesfoundation.org
CAE	Council for Aid to Education	cae.org
CAEL	Council for Adult and Experiential Learning	cael.org
CASE	Council for Advancement and Support of Education	case.org
CBEN	Competency Based Education Network	cbenetwork.org
CBO	Congressional Budget Office	cbo.gov
CCA	Complete College America	completecollege.org
CCME	Council of College and Military Educators	ccmeonline.org
CCTC	Council of Chairs of Training Councils (APA, Internships)	cctcpsychology.org
CGS	Council of Graduate Schools	cgsnet.org
CHEA	Council for Higher Education Accreditation	chea.org

CIC	Council of Independent Colleges	cic.edu
CLASP	Center for Law and Social Policy	clasphome.org
CMHC	Community Mental Health Centers	cms.gov
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	cms.gov
CNMI	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	doi.gov/oia/islands/cnmi
COA	APA Accreditation	accreditation.apa.coa
COE	Council for Opportunity in Education	coenet.org
CONAHEC	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration	conahec.org
CONASEP	CONAHEC's Student Exchange Program	conahecstudentexchange.org
CSG-WEST	Council of State Governments - West	csgwest.org
CSPN	College Savings Plan Network	collegesavings.org
CUE	Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California	cue.usc.edu
DEAC	Distance Education Accrediting Commission	deac.org
DQC	Data Quality Campaign	dataqualitycampaign.org
ECS	Education Commission of the States	ecs.org
ED	- U.S. Dept. of Education links:	
ED-ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	ed.gov/essa
ED-FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	studentprivacy.ed.gov
ED-FSA	Federal Student Aid	ed.gov/about/offices/list/fsa
ED-IES	Institute of Education Sciences	ies.ed.gov
ED-NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
ED-OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education	ed.gov/octae
ED-OESE	Office of Elementary & Secondary Education	oese.ed.gov
ED-OPE	Office of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope
ED-OSERS	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services	ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers
ED-FIPSE	Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education	ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/fipse
EDUCAUSE	An association for higher ed change via technology and info resources	educause.edu
ELE	Every Learner Everywhere	everylearnereverywhere.org
EPI	Educational Policy Institute	educationalpolicy.org
ETS	Educational Testing Service	ets.org
Excelencia	Excelencia in Education	edexcelencia.org
FORHP	Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA)	hrsa.gov/rural-health
FORUM	Western Academic Leadership Forum	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/western-academic-leadership-forum/
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Center	ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/federally-qualified-health-centers
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations	gdpr.edu
GME	Graduate Medical Education	aamc.org/professional-development/affinity-groups/gea/gme
HACU	Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities	hacu.net
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities	hbculifestyle.com
HBLI	Hispanic Border Leadership Institute	asu.edu/educ/hbli
HEA	Higher Education Act	acenet.edu/policy-advocacy/pages/HEA-ED/Higher-Education-Act.aspx
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	hhs.gov
HLC	Higher Learning Commission	hlcommission.org

HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration	hrs.gov
IES	Institute for Education Sciences	ies.ed.gov/
IHEP	Institute for Higher Education Policy	ihep.org
IIE	Institute of International Education	iie.org
iNACOL	Aurora Institute	aurora-institute.org
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System	nces.ed.gov/ipeds
JFF	Jobs for the Future	jff.org
M-SARA	Midwestern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	mhec.org/programs/midwestern-state-authorization-reciprocity-agreement
McREL	Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning	mcrel.org
MHA	Mental Health America	mhanational.org
MHEC	Midwestern Higher Education Compact	mhec.org
MHTTC	Mental Health Technology Transfer Centers	mhttcnetwork.org
MIRECC	Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center	mirecc.va.gov
MSA/CHE	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education	middlestates.org
N-SARA	New England State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	nebhe.org/sara
NAAL	National Assessment of Adult Literacy	nces.ed.gov/naal
NACAC	National Association of College Admissions Counselors	nacacnet.org
NACIQI	National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity	sites.ed.gov/naciqi
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers	nacubo.org
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress	nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard
NAFEO	National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education	nafeonation.org
NAFSA	An association of international educators	nafsa.org
NAICU	National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities	naicu.edu
NALEO	National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials	naleo.org
NARMH	National Association for Rural Mental Health	narmh.org
NASASPS	National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools	nasasps.org
NASDTEC	National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification	nasdtec.net
NASFAA	National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators	nasfaa.org
NASH	National Association of System Heads	nashonline.org
NASMHPD	National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors	nasmhpd.org
NASNTI	Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program	www2.ed.gov/programs/nasnti
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators	naspa.org
NASSGAP	National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs	nassgap.org
NASW	National Association of Social Workers	socialworkers.org
NC-SARA	National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements	nc-sara.org
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools	northcentralassociation.org
NCAN	National College Access Network	collegeaccess.org
NCAT	The National Center for Academic Transformation	thencat.org
NCCC	National Consortium for College Completion	n/a
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics	nces.ed.gov
NCHEMS	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems	nchems.org
NCPR	National Center for Postsecondary Research	postsecondaryresearch.org

NCSL	National Conference of State Legislatures	ncsl.org
NEASC-CIHE	New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education	neasc.org
NEBHE	New England Board of Higher Education	nebhe.org
NGA	National Governors Association	nga.org
NIH	National Institutes of Health (HHS)	nih.gov
NILOA	National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment	learningoutcomeassessment.org
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health (HHS-NIH)	nimh.nih.gov
NLA/SLA	New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability	newleadershipalliance.org
NPEC	National Postsecondary Education Cooperative	nces.ed.gov/npec
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rule Making	fcc.gov/general/rulemaking-fcc
NPSAS	National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey	nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas
NRHA	National Rural Health Association	ruralhealthweb.org
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse	studentclearinghouse.org
NSSE	National Survey on Student Engagement	nsse.indiana.edu
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities	www.nwccu.org
OCE	Online Course Exchange (WICHE)	wiche.edu/oce
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	www.oecd.org
OER	Open Educational Resources	wiche.edu/open-educational-resources-in-the-west-to-advance-college-affordability
OLC	Online Learning Consortium	onlinelearningconsortium.org
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment	oecd.org/pisa
PESC	Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council	pesc.org
PPIC	Public Policy Institute of California	ppic.org
PSEP	Professional Student Exchange Program	wiche.edu/psep
RMAIR	Rocky Mountain Association for Institutional Research	rmair.org
S-SARA	Southern State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	sreb.org/state-authorization-sara
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges	sacscoc.org
SAN	State Authorization Network	wcetsan.wiche.edu
SBAC	Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium	www.smarterbalanced.org
SCUP	Society for College and University Planning	scup.org
SFARN	Student Financial Aid Research Network	pellinstitute.org/sfarn.shtml
SHEEO	State Higher Education Executive Officers Association	sheeo.org
<i>SHEEO Offices in the West:</i>		
ABOR	Arizona Board of Regents	abor.asu.edu
ACPE	Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education	acpe.alaska.gov/
CCHE	Colorado Commission on Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov/cche.html
CDHE	Colorado Department of Higher Education	highered.colorado.gov
ISBE	Idaho State Board of Education	www.boardofed.idaho.gov
MUS	Montana University System	mus.edu
NDUS	North Dakota University System	ndus.edu
NMC	Northern Marianas College	marianas.edu
NMHED	New Mexico Higher Education Department	hed.state.nm.us
NSHE	Nevada System of Higher Education	nshe.nevada.edu/

HECC	Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission	education.oregon.gov
SDBOR	South Dakota Board of Regents	ris.sdbor.edu
UAS	University of Alaska System	alaska.edu
UH	University of Hawai'i System	hawaii.edu
USBR	Utah State Board of Regents	utahsbr.edu
USHE	Utah System of Higher Education	ushe.edu
UW	University of Wyoming	uwyo.edu
WSAC	Washington Student Achievement Council	wsac.wa.gov
WCCC	Wyoming Community College Commission	commission.wcc.edu
SHEPC	State Higher Education Policy Center	n/a
SLDS	State Longitudinal Data System	nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/
SMHA	State Mental Health Authority	amhsa.gov
SONA	Student Organization of North America	conahec.org/conahec/sona
SPRC	Suicide Prevention Resource Center	sprc.org
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board	sreb.org
SREC	Southern Regional Electronic Campus	electroniccampus.org
SSA	Single State Agency for Substance Abuse	samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ssadirectory.pdf
SURA	Southeastern Universities Research Association	sura.org
SVA	Student Veterans of America	studentveterans.org
TCUs	Tribal Colleges and Universities	sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities
UCEA	University Council for Educational Administration	ucea.org
UNCF	United Negro College Fund	uncf.org
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization	unesco.org
UPCEA	University Professional Continuing Education Association	upcea.edu
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	va.gov
W-SARA	Western State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement	wiche.edu/collaboration-leadership/w-sara
WAGS	Western Association of Graduate Schools	wagsonline.org
WASC-ACCJC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges	accjc.org
WCET	WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies	wcet.wiche.edu
WDQC	Workforce Data Quality Campaign	dataqualitycampaign.org
WDQI	Workforce Data Quality Initiative	dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/wdqi
WGA	Western Governors' Association	westgov.org
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education	wiche.edu
WIN	Western Institute of Nursing	winursing.org
WIOA	Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act	dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa
WPSHA	Western Psychiatric State Hospital Association	wpsaha.org
WRGP	Western Regional Graduate Program	wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wrgp
WSDSG	Western States Decision Support Group (WICHE BH Data Analysis Group)	wiche.edu/western-states-decision-support-group
WUE	Western Undergraduate Exchange	wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wue
YI	Young Invincibles	younginvincibles.org

On behalf of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, thank you for attending the May 2024 Commission Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. As evidenced by our insightful and spirited conversations, the benefits of postsecondary education are clear: A more educated workforce makes our communities stronger. With you as our trusted partner, WICHE remains committed to leveraging the strengths and assets of the West's colleges and universities to create a highly skilled and competitive workforce.

Our next Commission meeting is November 14-15, 2024, in Honolulu, Hawai'i. *A hui hou*, that is, until we meet again.

- **Demi Michelau**, WICHE President



Fire Canyon, Valley of Fire State Park, Nevada

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