
Memorandum

Date: June 10, 2026

To: Deans, Directors, and Departments of Participating Professional Student Exchange Programs (PSEP)

WICHE Certifying Officers

Western State Higher Education Executive Officers

CC: WICHE Commissioners

WICHE Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council

RE: Approved Support Fee Adjustments for the 2027-28 and 2028-29 Biennium for Students Enrolled in WICHE PSEP

Approved Support Fee Increases for the 2027-28 and 2028-29 Biennium

On May 18, 2026, at the WICHE Commission meeting in Seattle, WA, WICHE Commissioners approved a 4.5% increase in the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP) support fees only in fields where the difference between resident tuition and nonresident tuition did not meet or exceed the 2025-26 support fee amount on average across programs. The increase applies to the following fields only:

Occupational Therapy

Osteopathic Medicine

Optometry

Physical Therapy

Pharmacy

Podiatry

The support fee amounts for dentistry, allopathic medicine, physician assistant, and veterinary medicine will remain steady at the 2026-27 rates, which were approved in May 2024.

The selective support fee increases are higher than the average annual HECA (Higher Education Cost Adjustment) increase in 2024 and 2025 to allow for fields whose support fee amounts do not cover the tuition differential (on average) to “catch up” to fields whose amounts meet or exceed the tuition differential without causing undue strain on state budgets. In February 2026, a memo describing the proposed PSEP support fee increases (and all other changes outlined below) for the next biennium was sent to cooperating programs via a survey for their review and comment. WICHE Certifying Officers were consulted and shared the proposed increase with their State Higher Education Executive Officers. Staff also consulted with WICHE Commissioners on the Programs and Services Committee in March 2026.

Table 1 (below) lists the per-student fee rate for new and continuing students by field and academic year.

Table 1. Approved Support Fees for the 2027-28 and 2028-29 Biennium

Field	AY 2026-27**	AY 2027-28	AY 2028-29
Allopathic Medicine*	\$38,875	\$38,875	\$38,875
Dentistry*	\$32,550	\$32,550	\$32,550
Occupational Therapy	\$17,025	\$17,791	\$18,592
Optometry	\$22,400	\$23,408	\$24,461
Osteopathic Medicine	\$27,875	\$29,129	\$30,440
Pharmacy	\$9,925	\$10,372	\$10,838
Physical Therapy	\$18,750	\$19,594	\$20,475
Physician Assistant*	\$22,225	\$22,225	\$22,225
Podiatry	\$19,325	\$20,195	\$21,103
Veterinary Medicine*	\$38,550	\$38,550	\$38,550

* No increase in the next biennium

** Voted on in 2024

The chart of support fee amounts can be found here: www.wiche.edu/tuition-savings/psep/whats-a-psep-award-worth/. We encourage you to bookmark the URL and save a copy of this memorandum for future reference.

Support Fee Structure for Accelerated Programs

At the May 18th meeting, the WICHE Commission also voted to end the modified support fee structure for accelerated programs. Heretofore, students enrolled in accelerated programs received larger annual support fees than students enrolled in standard length programs (e.g. a student enrolled in a 3-year program for a field where the standard length is 4 years would receive all 4 years' worth of funding in 3 larger payments). This was designed to support what was assumed to be higher tuition rates at accelerated programs. Upon an analysis of cost across PSEP programs, it was determined that the price of accelerated programs were not significantly higher than similar, standard-length programs within the same sector. Beginning with the 2027-28 and 2028-29 biennium, new students entering into accelerated programs will receive the standard support fee amount for the field. Students in all fields will only receive funding for the terms they are enrolled (e.g. if a program is 5 semesters instead of 6 they will receive 2.5 years' worth of funding). Students already receiving funding prior to 2027-28 will continue to receive the accelerated rate until they have completed their program or exhausted the approved years of support for their field.

Occupational Therapy Support Fee Structure

The WICHE Commission also voted to adjust the support fee structure for occupational therapy (OT) at its May 18th meeting. Historically, OT programs were primarily master's programs with a program length of approximately 2.66 years. The support fee was designed with this program structure in mind; enrolled students received the standard support fee in year 1 and 1.66x the standard rate in year 2 to account for the remaining .66 years of support in year 3. In recent years, OT programs have changed; many are now offered as 3 year doctorate programs, and most remaining master's programs are offered in a 2 year structure. To better match the program structures as they are today, OT students will all be supported at the standard rate. Students enrolled in master's programs will be supported for 2 years maximum, and students enrolled in doctoral programs will be supported for 3 years maximum. Students will not receive funding beyond the length of their program. This change will be effective beginning with the 2027-28 and 2028-29 biennium for new students. Students already receiving funding prior to 2027-28 will continue to receive the modified structure until their funding is exhausted or they graduate.

Contact Us

If you have questions about PSEP and how to apply the support fees, contact Malerie Barnes at mbarnes@wiche.edu or Kate Springsteen at kspringsteen@wiche.edu for assistance.

Thank You for Making a Difference!

You, your program staff, and your faculty play vital roles in building the West's professional healthcare workforce. We appreciate your commitment to our WICHE PSEP students and want to express our heartfelt gratitude for all you and your colleagues do to assist our students.

Warmly,



Malerie Barnes

Director, Student Access Programs