



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE NEXT STEP: SECONDARY TO POSTSECONDARY STUDENT TRANSITIONS Executive Summary

Are there statewide policies or practices would help more students successfully transition from secondary to postsecondary education and careers? To address this question, from March through July 2017, the State Board of Education conducted an extended look at student transitions. Particular effort was made to hear from people from historically underserved populations. The Board also intentionally engaged students so their perspectives could be heard. Four topics were explored during three consecutive meetings of the Board, and during three public forums where members met and listened to people from communities in different regions of the state. The topics of the meetings and the forums were: 1) **Planning**, 2) **Supports**, 3) **Assessments**, and 4) **Multi-Cultural Perspectives on Career**



Readiness. The forums and meetings were held in Everett in March, Walla Walla in May, and Spokane in July. Educators from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Washington Student Achievement Council, The Council of Presidents, Educational Service Districts, school districts, community colleges, and universities, as well as students and representatives of non-profit

organizations, helped the Board plan this exploration and lent their expertise to this endeavor. This report, *Preparing Students for the Next Step: Secondary to Postsecondary Student Transitions*, summarizes the Board's work over this three-meeting arc, and is organized into three sections: 1) **Where Are We Now?**, 2) **What Have We Learned?**, and 3) **Where Do We Go From Here?**

Where Are We Now?

A central part of state policy that addresses planning for the secondary to postsecondary student transition is the **High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP)**. The Board heard from districts about best practices in planning for postsecondary opportunities, as well as about resources available to districts, including Career Guidance Washington, a curriculum developed by OSPI, and the HSBP tool developed by WSIPC, a consortium of districts.

At the May Board meeting, members heard an update on the Integrated Student Supports Workgroup, which will make recommendations on the development of an Integrated Student Supports Protocol. The development of the protocol, which is based on recommendations of the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, is to support a school-based approach to promoting success of all students through coordination and integration of district and non-district providers of academic and non-academic supports for students and families.

The high school assessment system has been in a period of change since the state adopted new learning standards: the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. New legislation, ESHB 2224 modified the high school assessment system, by providing more options for students to graduate and more flexibility in assessment alternatives.

Washington State has taken a leadership role in efforts to make the Smarter Balanced assessments useful and relevant to a student's high school experience, through [agreements](#) by Washington's institutions of higher education to use Smarter Balanced assessment results for college placement and through the collaboration between higher education and OSPI on the development of [Bridge to College](#) courses.

What Have We Learned?

Participants at the community forums, Multi-Cultural Perspectives of Career Readiness, shared their experiences, observations, opinions with the Board. Recommendations from forum participants included (among others):

- Counselors and educators checking into how students are doing in life outside of high school
- Increasing representation of people of color in the teaching field
- Introducing postsecondary options to students earlier, in middle school
- Professional development for educators for understanding implicit bias, cultural competency, and trauma-informed instruction

At the forums and at the Board meetings, members repeatedly heard about the importance of one-on-one student/adult interactions, and about the importance of mentoring. District and non-profit programs shared information about their practices for helping support students through the secondary to postsecondary transition.



Where Do We Go From Here?

Some topics for consideration by the Board for next steps arose out of this examination on student transitions. Area for further work may include:

- Enhance the High School and Beyond Plan
 - Expanding the use of the HSBP in teaching career readiness skills.
 - Supporting ways to make career option information more readily available to students
 - Supporting and encouraging credit-bearing HSBP courses.
 - Working with the community and technical college system to connect HSBPs to Guided Pathways and Meta-majors.
 - Expand and streamline the use of high school state assessments
 - Encouraging institutions of higher education to consider the use of high school assessment results in both placement and admittance decisions.
 - Helping to coordinate the institutions of higher education receiving assessment results through transcripts or data sharing.
 - Supporting meaningful and rigorous assessment alternatives.
 - Creating a high quality path to graduation for students who score at a Level 1 on Smarter Balanced Assessments.
 - Planning and preparing for full implementation of Next Generation Science Standards.
 - Revisit scores for graduation on the Smarter Balanced tests.
 - Support counselors and programs that help inform and guide students on postsecondary options
 - Supporting professional development for teachers to provide career and college transition information to students.
 - Helping small or remote districts to provide counseling services and career resources to students.
 - Exploring and supporting what could be done to increase the impact of counselors and amplify available resources.
 - Advocating for all schools to incorporate the 2016 Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks (SELB) Workgroup report recommendation.
 - Advocating for the prototypical school funding model to include family engagement coordinators, counselors, and/or psychologists.
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