

WEIAOB Discussion: 2024 Budget and Policy Proposals

This packet contains all materials for 2024 budget and policy proposals that were submitted to the Board. Information from each stakeholder can be found on the following pages:

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**Note: More information about individual 2024 budget and policy proposals from public four-year colleges and universities can be found at abr.ofm.wa.gov.*

2024 SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST

September 2023

The 2024 supplemental operating budget requests of Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions continue the sector’s commitment to removing barriers to college, supporting students throughout their degree program to completion and expanding degree opportunities in high demand by Washington employers. These requests uphold the leadership of Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions in increasing the college-going culture across the state and continue our sector’s catalyzing role in economic and workforce development in every one of our state’s 39 counties for Washington students, families, and business.

Advance Access to College and Support Student Success to Completion (\$9.04 million)

Washington ranks 48th in the nation in participation in four-year public higher education at the undergraduate level for individuals ages 20-34. Half of all Washington students do not attend college after high school, while nearly 70% of family-wage jobs in Washington require a four-year degree. Earning a bachelor’s degree is a critical predictor within a student’s control for earning a good wage and narrowing the racial income gap. Our sector has identified strategic interventions to address the state’s challenges in higher education and provide equitable educational access to and completion of credentials necessary to support the long-term health of our state and economic outcomes for Washingtonians.

CWU \$1.68 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Student Basic Needs • CiHS Instructor Institute 	EWU \$5.2 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend experiential learning opportunities • University MESA Program 	Evergreen \$223 thousand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelton Promise
UW \$785 thousand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE Start-Up Program 	WWU \$1.23 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the Office of Academic Access and Outreach • CiHS Programming 	

High Demand Degrees and Enrollments to Meet Workforce Job Needs (\$12.51 million)

Our sector continues to meet the needs of a 21st-century workforce with increasing and changing credentials. As the state’s largest provider of bachelor’s degrees, the public baccalaureates are investing in the credentials that lead to family-wage jobs and assist Washington businesses fill the jobs of today and the future. Earning a bachelor’s degree is the only and best predictor within a student’s control for earning a good wage in Washington and is more likely to interrupt intergenerational cycles of poverty and close income-based equity gaps than any other pathway.

EWU \$6.96 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental Hygiene 	UW \$2.51 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dentistry RIDE Expansion
WSU \$2.15 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply Chain Management 	WWU \$886 thousand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical and Computer Engineering program expansion

Foundational Strategic Investments (\$17.1 million)

New state investments across our sector would provide foundational funding to ensure the long-term health of our institutions to support degree completion of Washington student and families.

- Eastern Washington University - \$614 thousand – Investment in campus security.
- Eastern Washington University - \$1.6 million – Utility Inflation.
- The Evergreen State College - \$376 thousand – Maintenance and Operations Budget Shift.
- Washington State University - \$12.3 million – Carbon Offset Allowances Climate Commitment Act.
- Washington State University – Funding to Implement Labor Agreements as determined by bargaining.
- Western Washington University – Funding to Implement Labor Agreements as determined by bargaining.



Agency Recommendation Summary

Washington state is experiencing a shortage of computer science professionals to fill an increasing number of technology-related jobs. This gap exists not because of a lack of interest among prospective employees, but due to a persistent shortage of education and training opportunities. Washington’s community and technical colleges system proposes expansion of the number of Bachelor of Science in Computer Science degree programs by at least 15, expanding access to historically underserved populations and align with existing and emerging industry needs.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	48.0	24.0	63.0	63.0	63.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 24J - 1	\$0	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$7,725	\$6,850	\$14,575
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$7,725	\$6,850	\$14,575

Decision Package Description

According to projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Lightcast, in the next 10 years the technology workforce will grow twice as fast as the overall U.S. workforce. Projected growth rates above the national average in fields served by computer science bachelor’s degree holders include:

- Data Scientists and Data Analysts (266%)
- Software Developers and Engineers (180%)
- Web Designers and UI/UX (164%)
- Software QA and Testers (132%)
- IT Support Specialists (21%)

CompTIA’s State of the Tech Workforce 2023 report shows that Washington has the highest concentration (9.4%) of technology workers relative to its overall employment base, which means that residents of the state are more likely to hold a technology job relative to other industry sectors. Washington also ranks fifth in the nation in net technology employment job gains. A skilled workforce will be necessary to meet that robust demand and continue to position Washington as a technology industry leader.

While Washington is experiencing a shortage of computer science professionals to fill available jobs, the gap exists not because of a lack of interest among prospective employees but rather because of a shortage of education and training opportunities. Colleges and universities do not have the existing capacity to educate enough students to keep up with employer demand. Meeting this demand and supporting technology employers is critical to Washington’s economic prosperity in today’s knowledge-driven economy. The technology industry accounts for 21% of Washington’s economy, the most of any state in the nation.

Washington community and technical colleges are uniquely positioned to scale up the production of bachelor’s prepared computer science professionals and create this skilled workforce. In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed SB 5401, which permits all community and technical colleges to offer a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science degree. This authorization opens the door for a dramatic increase in the number of bachelor’s computer science graduates in Washington state; however, the creation and expansion of these programs requires additional resources.

The Washington state community and technical college system is proposing to expand computer science bachelor’s degree program offerings by creating at least 15 new degree programs. With appropriate funding support, these programs would expand access to computer science to historically underserved populations and align with existing and emerging industry needs. Funding would support both one-time startup costs including curriculum development, computer equipment and infrastructure, implementation of course-sharing technology, and outreach resources. Ongoing program costs include recruitment and retention of qualified faculty, student support staff and lab technicians, software, materials, and supplies.

Course-sharing technology will increase access for rural colleges and create cost efficiencies, especially during the startup phase. The recruitment and hiring of qualified computer science faculty is one of the most significant challenges in building and scaling bachelor's level computer science programs. Statewide course-sharing technology would allow students at rural colleges to access faculty and course content that may not be available locally. Additionally, the broad and diverse nature of the computer science field lends itself to a wide range of specializations. Course-sharing technology creates the opportunity for statewide coordination in the offering of these different specializations and assures that students have access to whichever specialization is most appropriate to their career ambitions.

Programs will be developed in all regions of the state with particular emphasis on program development in rural communities where students do not currently have access to bachelor's degree- level computer science education. The expansion of 15 programs can produce at least 375 new graduates annually once programs reach full scale implementation.

Washington's community and technical colleges have a long history of creating programs that are responsive to Washington's ever-changing industry, building strong partnerships with employers to assure students are employment-ready upon graduation and creating education access and opportunities for those students who are furthest from educational justice. A significant expansion of bachelor's degree level computer science programs with the community and technical college system will allow students to remain in their home communities while they pursue education and produce employees who are connected to and prepared for local workforce needs.

Programs developed under this funding will build upon and leverage existing programs and projects. Specifically:

- Funding from Amazon provided during the 2022-23 fiscal year supported early statewide curriculum work and initial program development at 15 colleges. The primary results of this work included:
 - Needs assessment from colleges to determine necessary staffing and equipment to fully implement and scale up bachelor's degree level computer science programs.
 - A draft statewide curriculum that centers equity and access by challenging historical assumptions about computer science curriculum and intentionally integrating industry provided information about the core knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for success in computer science professions.
 - A statewide consortium of committed college faculty and administrators and industry experts and human resources professionals who work together on an ongoing basis to inform program and curriculum development.
- Existing efforts to expand K-12 school dual credit opportunities.
 - All new programs developed will consider ways to integrate dual credit opportunities to leverage the 2023 legislative investments in dual credit pathways and provide seamless entry into computer science for students direct from high school.
- Adult re-engagement and workforce development.
 - All new programs will integrate strategies to engage working adults who desire to transition into the technology workforce or to increase their skills to ascend to higher level industry positions. Colleges will serve time and place-bound students using online, hybrid, and evening instruction and will implement the wrap-around services necessary to support adult learners.

Washington community and technical college system is well positioned to rapidly scale up high-quality, employer-aligned training in computer science. The colleges in our system can build on existing work, infrastructure, and relationships to launch programs that create pathways to economic prosperity for historically underserved communities and meet urgent employer demands. The statewide network of colleges, and their proven track record of working collaboratively and effectively to share resources, will ensure that legislative investments in this area will have both short-term and long-term impacts. Employers from around the state will realize the economic impact of having a skilled workforce made up of trained Washington residents. Students will have pathways to expand their employability and enter high-wage, family sustaining careers without leaving their home communities. Unless these investments are made, Washington's technology industry will continue to serve as a net importer of out-of-state and out of country talent, denying the opportunity for Washington residents to thrive and impeding the growth potential of these companies and communities.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This request would create at least 15 Bachelor of Science in computer science degree programs in fiscal year 2025 and another five in fiscal year 2026 and expand access to historically underserved populations with emphasis on rural communities.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

This request is for initial one-time start-up costs and ongoing needs. Colleges supported by this request could begin enrolling students as early as fall 2025, with full implementation by 2027 (assuming ongoing funding support). Assume 15 new programs FY 2025 and five additional programs in FY 2026.

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science Investment				FY25 15 new	FY26 5 new	FY27 and beyond
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science		one-time per program	ongoing per program			
	Staff compensation and benefits		300,000	4,500,000	6,000,000	6,000,000
	Curriculum and program development	150,000	-	2,250,000	750,000	
	Equipment/software purchase (new programs)	40,000		600,000	200,000	-
	Equipment/software upgrade and maintenance		15,000	-	225,000	300,000
<i>Number of programs</i>				15	20	20
				7,350,000	7,175,000	6,300,000
Curriculum and Program Development		one-time per program	ongoing per program			
	Curriculum	150,000	-	2,250,000	750,000	-
				2,250,000	750,000	-
Statewide Coordination		one-time	ongoing			
	Compensation and benefits - SBCTC staff	250,000	300,000	550,000	300,000	300,000
				550,000	300,000	300,000
Statewide Course-Sharing		one-time	ongoing			
	Implementation and subscription maintenance	1,100,000	250,000	1,100,000	250,000	250,000
				1,100,000	250,000	250,000
TOTAL COST ONE-TIME AND ONGOING				9,000,000	7,725,000	6,850,000

Workforce Assumptions:

As these funds would be administered in a competitive grant process, the college level workforce details are not available now. In general, enrollment increases mean additional resources for faculty, program coordination, and student services.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

The development and expansion of bachelor's degree level computer science programs closely aligns with several of the Governor's Results Washington goal areas and statewide priorities.

World Class Education: Expanding computer science education will increase the number of Washington residents who attain a bachelor's degree in a high demand STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) field.

Prosperous Economy: The technology industry is a substantial driver of Washington's economy. For this industry to continue to grow and innovate, they need a trained and skilled workforce. These programs will create that skilled workforce locally and efficiently.

Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government: The Washington community and technical college system already has infrastructure in place to build and scale up industry- aligned programs. This investment will leverage those existing resources and experience to quickly, effectively, and efficiently meet this labor market need.

This project is also well aligned with the strategic plan and priorities of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). The SBCTC's vision statement centers equity and economic justice:

Leading with racial equity, our colleges maximize student potential and transform lives within a culture of belonging that advances racial, social, and economic justice in service to our diverse communities.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in computer science programs create equitable opportunities for historically underserved students to pursue high-wage, high-demand careers. Additionally, several areas of the agency's strategic plan are well-aligned with this initiative.

Equitable Student Success: Increase access and retention among populations who can benefit the most from college. This includes young adults, working adults, low-income people, people of color, immigrants and refugees, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ+ identifying individuals, rural residents, and single parents. We must be intentional in eliminating inequities in college access and retention for students institutionally marginalized in higher education.

Agile, Career-Relevant Learning: Provide flexible career-training options that are responsive to the needs of businesses and industries, offer Washingtonians access to well-paying jobs and career mobility, and lead to a more resilient and diverse workforce.

Performance Outcomes:

The addition or expansion of at least 15 bachelor's level computer science programs will create more than 300 graduates per year once the programs are fully implemented. The efficiencies described in this proposal, such as state-wide curriculum and course share, lay a foundation for even greater expansion without substantial investment beyond what is requested in the proposal and forecasted for ongoing cost. Agency staff will closely track progress towards goals include the steps for new program approval.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Throughout the past year, employers from around Washington have participated in convenings with college faculty and staff to identify the critical skills and abilities needed for graduate of Bachelor of Science in computer science programs. These employers are committed to ongoing partnership, including providing internship opportunities for students. Additionally, this concept is a recommendation of the state Workforce Education Investment Account Oversight Board (WEIAOB) established in 2019, and it is included in the board’s annual report for 2022 (p. 5): “The WEIAOB recommends that the legislature specifically focuses resources from the WEIA (Workforce Education Investment Account) account onto high-tech degree production.” The concept is also supported by a broad coalition of businesses, higher education institutions, non-profits, and minority community groups.

Our SBCTC strategic plan includes a goal of providing “flexible career-training options that are responsive to the needs of businesses and industries, offer Washingtonians access to well-paying jobs and career mobility, and lead to a more resilient and diverse workforce.” This goal and objective of expanding knowledge of, and participation in, internships and other workplace-based learning opportunities offered by Washington’s 29 federally recognized Tribes may be assisted by this expansion request.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Community and technical colleges are the higher education sector serving the largest percentage of low income, historically underrepresented students of color and first-generation students. These students have historically had limited access to computer science bachelor’s programs, and the high wage high demand jobs that result from this education, due to economic, geographic, and program capacity limitations. The programs developed under this funding request will have an implicit focus on creating access for these historically underserved students and will have a direct, positive impact on racial and social equity.

Target Populations or Communities:

These programs will have a significant equity impact. The estimated median tech wage is \$129,955, 157% higher than median state wage. Obtaining the skills necessary to enter careers in the technology field will substantially improve the economic outcomes for those students who have historically had limited access to entry into this high wage/high demand field. Locating these new programs in the community and technical colleges will serve to diversify the technology industry. In Washington state, individuals who identify as Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian and/or Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, and female are all underrepresented in the technology industry. Developing effective partnerships with industry associations, labor organizations, and Tribal enterprises to ensure pathways align to the skills required by employers is a strategic goal of SBCTC as outlined in our Strategic Plan. Washington’s 34 community and technical colleges serve higher proportions of diverse students and thus are a logical and seamless access point for increasing diversity in the technology workforce pipeline.

Technology Workforce Characteristics/Community and Technical College Enrollments

	% of Technology Workforce	% of Overall Workforce	% of WA CTC Enrollment
Black/African American	3%	5%	11%
Hispanic/Latino	5%	12%	21%
American Indian/Alaska Native	<1%	<1%	4%
Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	2%
Women	25%	48%	57%

Source from CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce 2023

Washington community and technical colleges serve an increasing number of students of color, accounting for 50% of all system enrollments.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This request is not related to Puget Sound recovery efforts.

State Workforce Impacts:

This request does not impact statewide compensation policy or collective bargaining agreements.

Intergovernmental:

Other governmental entities, such as tribal, regional, county or city governments, are not impacted in this request.

Stakeholder Response:

The SBCTC has worked closely for the last year with a wide range of industry partners and stakeholders who support this work. They concur that creating bachelor's level computer science programs in the community and technical colleges is the most efficient and effective way to create a well-trained, employment-ready workforce.

State Facilities Impacts:

This request does not directly impact state facilities.

Changes from Current Law:

The request does not require changes to current law.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This request is not in response to any legal or administrative mandates.

HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions

N/A

Reference Documents

- 2. [Appendix5 IT addendum FINAL.docx](#)
- 3. [2023-25 IT Prioritization Worksheet FINAL.xlsx](#)

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

Yes

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$5,407	\$5,407	\$5,222	\$4,667	\$9,889
Obj. B	\$0	\$1,892	\$1,892	\$1,828	\$1,633	\$3,461
Obj. E	\$0	\$613	\$613	\$525	\$550	\$1,075
Obj. J	\$0	\$1,088	\$1,088	\$150	\$0	\$150

Agency Contact Information

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Agency Recommendation Summary

The high cost of textbooks is a significant barrier for the Washington community and technical college professional technical (ProfTech) students who are economically disadvantaged. With a three-year, \$1.8 million grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) led phase one of the statewide Washington Open ProfTech project producing six open educational resources (OER). SBCTC is seeking matching funds to continue with phase two of the project, offering financial relief from the high cost of textbooks for students and sustaining the momentum and growth of open educational resources in professional technical programs that help to fuel our state’s workforce.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	2.3	1.15	2.3	2.3	2.3
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$0	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$1,200
Total Expenditures	\$0	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$1,200

Decision Package Description

Problem or Opportunity Being Addressed

This request directly responds to the textbook affordability issues for the professional technical (ProfTech) programs and the scarcity of quality open educational resources (OER). Open educational resources are teaching, learning, and research materials that are free, and copyright cleared.

ProfTech programs prepare students across the state for employment in a wide range of industries including agriculture, automotive, aviation, construction, manufacturing, health, homeland security, and hospitality. The enrollment in those programs is significant; In the 2022 academic year, 83,000 Washington community and technical college students were enrolled in ProfTech programs - nearly one-third of all students within the college system.

While the courses in ProfTech programs emphasize developing the technical and employment skills needed for a specific industry, most programs are built on introductory courses that teach fundamental principles. For these courses, faculty typically rely on commercial textbooks that cost between \$150 to \$200. The high textbook costs are a significant barrier to the 40,000 Washington community and technical college ProfTech students who are economically disadvantaged.

Recognizing this financial burden, ProfTech faculty members have sought out more affordable options for course materials, such as open educational resources, though without much success. Open educational resources are scarce and limited in the majority of ProfTech fields. Most large-scale open educational resources providers offer a collection of textbooks in the academic courses only, such as English, Math and Sociology. As a result, most ProfTech students have yet to enjoy the benefit of free, open, high-quality textbooks designed to relieve them from the financial burden of high-cost commercial textbooks.

Proposed Solution

In 2021, SBCTC was awarded a three-year, \$1.8 million FIPSE Open Textbook Pilot grant from the U.S. Department of Education to conduct phase one of the Washington Open ProfTech project, successfully leading the statewide effort to produce six introductory level open educational resources:

- Introduction to Healthcare
- Introduction to Machining
- Introduction to Welding
- Introduction to Early Childhood Education
- Introduction to Criminal Justice

- Introduction to Hospitality

The project has created excitement and expectations among ProfTech faculty members who see an opportunity to participate in the collective authoring of their dream textbooks or course materials. ProfTech programs, traditionally excluded from open educational resource implementation due to a scarcity of materials, are now an integral part of the conversation on campuses.

The Washington Open ProfTech project is in its final year of funding. Building upon the success of phase one, the Open ProfTech project is now seeking to expand and extend its impact. This expansion aims to address the scarcity of quality open educational resources for more high-demand ProfTech courses and further reduce barriers for vulnerable students by creating seven additional open educational resources and ancillary material:

- Introduction to Information Technology
- Introduction to Forensic Science
- Introduction to Computer Aided Design
- Health, Safety and Nutrition
- Principles of CNC Machining
- Principles of Culinary Math
- Introduction to Periodontics

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

The proposed project will expand the current Washington Open ProfTech project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education making seven additional free, copyright cleared textbooks available to the 83,000 ProfTech students.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

The proposed budget would provide matching funds to support continued development of the Washington Open ProfTech project to eliminate textbook costs for high-enrollment courses in select high demand ProfTech programs at community and technical colleges in Washington.

The goal of the three-year project aims to achieve following objectives:

- Create seven open educational resources through collaboration between education and workforce partners in manufacturing, allied health, criminal justice, hospitality, early childhood education, and information technology. These textbooks will focus on the seven highest-demand courses in these fields and will serve as gateway courses for Washington community and technical college students.
- Develop a full package of ancillary materials for each open educational resource, including a quiz set, slide decks for presentations, sample syllabus, and common course cartridges for learning management system (LMS) integration. These materials will support faculty members in seamlessly integrating the open educational resources into their courses.
- Accelerate the adoption of Open ProfTech textbooks in community and technical colleges in Washington.
- Develop a suite of professional development services to assist faculty members in seamlessly adopting and integrating Open ProfTech textbooks into their courses.

Summary of Fiscal Assumptions

\$ 176,000	Compensation (1 FTE Project Manager, 1.25 Project Assistants)
\$ 61,500	Benefits
\$ 302,000	Contract Services
<u>\$ 60,500</u>	Software Subscriptions/Supplies/Travel
\$ 600,000	Total Costs Year 1
\$ 600,000	Total Costs Year 2
\$ 600,000	Total Costs Year 3

Workforce Assumptions:

COMPENSATION				
	FTE	FY25	FY26	FY27
Project Director	0.10	10,700	10,700	10,700
Project Manager	1.00	92,000	92,000	92,000
Project Assistant	1.00	58,500	58,500	58,500
Fiscal Specialist	0.15	8,925	8,925	8,925
TOTAL	2.25	176,000	176,000	176,000

BENEFITS				
	FTE	FY25	FY26	FY27
Project Director	0.10	3,745	3,745	3,745
Project Manager	1.00	32,200	32,200	32,200
Project Assistant	1.00	20,475	20,475	20,475
Fiscal Specialist	0.15	3,124	3,124	3,124
TOTAL	2.25	61,600	61,600	61,600

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

This request contributes to the Governor's Results Washington first goal:

Worldclass education: Providing every Washingtonian a world-class education that prepared him or her for a healthy and productive life, including success in job or career, in the community and as a lifelong learner.

The 2020-30 strategic plan for the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges begins with a vision:

Leading with racial equity, our colleges maximize student potential and transform lives within a culture of belonging that advances racial, social, and economic justice in service to our diverse communities.

This budget request supports the college system's strategic goals:

Increase access and retention among populations who can benefit the most from college. This includes young adults, working adults, low-income people, people of color, immigrants and refugees, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ+ identifying individuals, rural residents, and single parents. We must be intentional in eliminating inequities in college access and retention for students institutionally marginalized in higher education.

Improve completion and transfer rates for all enrolled students across all types of programs and credentials — workforce degrees, transfer degrees, certificates, apprenticeships, and bachelor's degrees. We aim to improve completion rates across-the-board for all students and to improve completion rates faster for students of color. Students must also receive necessary guidance and support about how to efficiently transfer to continue their educational journeys.

Provide flexible career-training options that are responsive to the needs of businesses and industries, offer Washingtonians access to well-paying jobs and career mobility, and lead to a more resilient and diverse workforce.

Secure resources and develop systemwide strategies to support colleges' financial sustainability and resiliency.

Performance Outcomes:

The Washington Open ProfTech project is designed to have a range of positive impacts on faculty members and students, spanning from cost savings to improved completion rates, greater satisfaction with their learning experience, and increased career aspirations. By the end of phase two of the Washington Open ProfTech project performance outcomes include:

1000+ students enrolled in courses utilizing Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials.

35+ faculty members using Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials in their courses.

7+ institutions that implemented the Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials.

40+ courses that utilized Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials.

At least 800 students will complete the course sections that use Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials.

The total cost savings for students at the colleges implementing any of the seven open educational resources will be at least \$200,000 during the pilot (evaluation) phase.

For the students who completed a course that used Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials, positive impact will be observed on students' affective domain, such as their satisfaction, and career aspiration, especially among the students from underserved populations.

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

To promote diversity and inclusion in our employment opportunities, including faculty authors and supporting staff, SBCTC is committed to encouraging applications from individuals who belong to groups that have historically been underrepresented. To achieve this goal, we have established key strategies.

Strategy 1: Use Diverse Recruitment Channels

SBCTC will advertise employment opportunities directly through the state's networks for faculty of color and Indigenous faculty members including: Washington State Faculty and Staff of Color in Higher Education, the largest association representing faculty of color in Washington; Washington Faculty of Color Cross-Institutional Mentorship Program, a SBCTC-sponsored mentoring program that connects Indigenous faculty and faculty of color; WA State DEI Council, comprised of Washington State DEI officers in state agencies; WACAAB (Washington State Community and Technical Colleges American Indian Indigenous Advisory Board), an advisory board charged with: Increasing professional development opportunities for college staff and faculty, Adding and strengthening American Indian and Indigenous Studies programs at colleges, Expanding career and technical education focused on the needs of tribes, and Improving services for Native American students; and SBCTC committees and commissions such as the Diversity and Equity Officers Commission (DEOC), and the Multicultural Student Services Directors Committee (MSSDC).

Strategy 2: Provide an Inclusive Environment for Applicants and Foster Equitable Hiring Process

During the hiring process for the project team and all subsequent communication, SBCTC will be committed to making all applicants feel supported. Some strategies include: use of inclusive language in the application form and interview protocol; completion of implicit bias training for project team; and use of equity [search advocates](#) in hiring process. This will be done in partnership with SBCTC Human Resources and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion office.

Bias may exist in the hiring process itself, as most processes are often designed from a single perspective. To mitigate this, SBCTC will ensure that the hiring process is a collective effort, with input from staff representing a range of perspectives and identities. For instance, the job announcement and interview protocol will be reviewed by multiple staff from various identities to ensure equity.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

SBCTC is committed to providing equitable access and treatment for all participants who are members of the groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. To achieve this mission, SBCTC will employ the following strategies.

Strategy 1: Training and Education

SBCTC will provide targeted training on using inclusive language that is free of bias and demeaning attitudes. Participants will learn how to recognize and avoid common biases in language and use terminology that is respectful to all individuals. Upon the completion of this training, participants will be able to (1) recognize individual characteristics to be mindful of, including age, disability, gender, racial and ethnic identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status and (2) Identify and replace biased language with inclusive alternatives. An inclusive language guide is being developed by SBCTC communications staff and will serve as a guide for all staff.

Strategy 2: Non-Discrimination Policies and Monitoring

SBCTC will ensure clear communication of non-discrimination policies to all project participants. This will involve the provision of relevant information through project manuals, orientation sessions, and regular team meetings.

Strategy 3: Outreach and Targeted Recruitment

SBCTC will leverage the state's networks to advertise employment opportunities directly to faculty of color and Indigenous faculty. This will involve collaborating with two primary networks, Washington State Faculty and Staff of Color in Higher Education, and Washington Faculty of Color Cross-Institutional Mentorship Program. The agency's partnership with these networks will facilitate the widest possible dissemination of employment opportunities to underrepresented groups.

Target Populations or Communities:

The gaps in educational attainment by race and economic status are well documented in Washington State. Community and technical colleges are the higher education sector serving the largest percentage of low-income, historically underrepresented students of color and first-generation students.

This request directly responds to the textbook affordability issues for the professional technical (ProfTech) programs. The enrollment in those programs is significant; In the 2022 academic year, 83,000 Washington community and technical college students were enrolled in ProfTech programs - nearly one-third of all students within the college system.

The high costs of commercial textbooks are a significant barrier to the 40,000 Washington community and technical college ProfTech students

who are economically disadvantaged. The continuation of WA Open ProfTech project will further benefit these vulnerable students.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

This request is not related to Puget Sound recovery efforts.

State Workforce Impacts:

This request does not impact statewide compensation policy or collective bargaining agreements.

Intergovernmental:

Other governmental entities, such as tribal, regional, county or city governments, are not impacted in this request.

Stakeholder Response:

The Washington Open ProfTech project is designed to have a range of positive impacts on faculty members and students; from cost savings to improved completion rates, greater satisfaction with their learning experience, and increased career aspirations.

SBCTC will collaborate with education and workforce partners in the professional technical industries.

For the students who completed a course that used Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials, positive impact will be observed on students' affective domain, such as their satisfaction, and career aspiration, especially among the students from underserved populations.

Faculty members who used Open ProfTech textbooks and ancillary materials will experience a positive impact, such as increased satisfaction, enhanced teaching effectiveness, and improved student engagement.

State Facilities Impacts:

This request does not directly impact state facilities.

Changes from Current Law:

The request does not require changes to current law.

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This request is not in response to any legal or administrative mandates.

HEAL Act Agencies Supplemental Questions

N/A

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. A	\$0	\$176	\$176	\$176	\$176	\$352
Obj. B	\$0	\$61	\$61	\$61	\$61	\$122
Obj. C	\$0	\$302	\$302	\$302	\$302	\$604
Obj. E	\$0	\$61	\$61	\$61	\$61	\$122

Agency Contact Information

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Crosswalking Independent Colleges of Washington Priorities with WEIA Principles and Metrics, Fall 2023 for FY24 Supplemental Budget

Independent Colleges of Washington Policy and Budget Priorities, SFY 2024 Supplemental	WEIAOB Guiding Principles			WEIAOB Performance Metrics						
	Help achieve the goal that 70% of students in each cohort of Washington high school graduates complete a postsecondary credential by age 26.	Provide support for equitable educational access and economic outcomes for systemically underserved students.	Help Washington businesses fill the jobs of the future with qualified Washington students, including current workforce.	Statewide Student Enrollment	FAFSA/WASFA Completion in Grade 12 (and others)	WA College Grant-Eligible Student Enrollment	Postsecondary Completion Rate	High School to Postsecondary Retention	Time to Degree	Economic Outcomes
Fund the statutorily permitted inflationary adjustment for the Washington College Grant maximum award for students attending not-for-profit, private campuses. The maximum award for these Washingtonians has not increased since 2018. A significant portion of the students affected by this equity gap are over the age of 25 and identify as Black, Indigenous, and individuals of color.	☑	☑	☑							
Make it possible for students attending independent (private, not-for-profit) colleges and universities to receive the maximum level of the Washington College Grant	☑	☑	☑							
Extend the Washington College Grant’s maximum time frame to 18 quarters of eligibility (e.g., HB 1156/SB 5711), matching eligibility for the Washington College Grant to 150% time, in alignment with the Pell Grant.	☑	☑	☑							
Extend eligibility for the Washington College Grant maximum award to students from families living on up to 70% MFI (e.g., SB 5703)	☑	☑	☑							
Make the Bridge Grant/supplemental assistance for students with the greatest need permanent.	☑	☑	☑							
Restore State Work Study (SWS) program eligibility to students from other states and graduate students to introduce talent to Washington companies	☑	☑	☑							
Enhance overall funding levels for State Work Study (SWS) funds so more Washington employers can participate and attract new talent.	☑	☑	☑							
Implement targeted programs of support to meet critical enrollment needs in high-demand fields, including introducing capitation aid in programs such as nursing, computer science, engineering, and education as cost-effective means of growing capacity.	☑	☑	☑							
Provide supplemental state financial aid support to students completing high-demand fields such as nursing, computer science, engineering, and education at independent (private, not-for-profit) colleges and universities as cost-effective means of leveraging capacity.	☑	☑	☑							
Extend to private, not-for-profit colleges and universities the ability to access data-sharing agreements with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction authorized in SB 5593.	☑	☑	☑							
Support telehealth mental and behavioral health care access for students, including those at independent (private, not-for-profit) colleges and universities	☑	☑	☑							
Establish a pilot program to provide support for students enrolled in College in the High School courses offered by private, not-for-profit universities at public high schools in the state.	☑	☑	☑							

2024 Legislative Proposals

The following are proposals for the 2024 legislative session:

Increase access to mental and behavioral health care through telehealth

Contract with a telehealth provider to address increasing mental and behavioral health care needs among students at up to four higher education institutions. The proposal includes an external evaluation of students' equitable access and satisfaction of telehealth services at participating pilot institutions.

A few Washington institutions currently augment care with contracted telehealth services, and many more institutions have expressed strong interest, but the cost is prohibitive. This proposal would reduce costs through a multi-institution contract and provide research insights to inform future policy decisions and investments to ensure students' mental healthcare access.

Proposal cost: \$2.2 million

Align Washington College Grant with the Federal Pell Grant eligibility time frame

Currently, students receiving WA Grant can receive aid for up to 125 percent of a 4-year degree (up to 15 quarters of full-time eligibility or its equivalent). This differs from the Federal Pell Grant eligibility time frame, which allows students to receive aid for 150 percent of a four-year degree (up to 18 quarters of full-time eligibility or its equivalent).

This proposal also seeks to align the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) Program and the Passport Program to the federal time frame. CBS currently allows students to receive aid for up to 12 quarters of full-time eligibility, meaning students must earn a credential within four years or lose support. The Passport Program currently requires students to finish their postsecondary education within five years or age 26.

Access to financial aid has been shown to support students' persistence, completion rates, and intergenerational economic mobility.¹ In the 2020-21 school year, about 2,400 students receiving WA Grant aid were within three terms (one academic year) of exceeding the time frame. Just one year later, in 2021-22, that number more than doubled to over 5,900, even as overall enrollment fell and the number of students receiving WA Grant decreased.

The time it takes students to complete a credential may vary depending on their academic or career interests, as well as personal life circumstances such as unforeseen disruptive events. Increasing the eligibility time frame allows students in these situations greater flexibility as they persist toward completion.

Proposal cost: \$8.3 million

¹ <https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022.InterGenEconMobilityFinAid.Snapshot.pdf>

Provide college and career mentorship to students in high school

Expand the State Work Study (SWS) program to support public and nonprofit employers who manage a near-peer mentorship program. The requirement of an employer match will be waived for qualified employers. SWS college students would be hired by school districts, high schools, or community-based organizations to support K-12 students in accessing postsecondary and career pathways. Research has shown that near-peer mentors positively affect postsecondary enrollment, especially for students of color.

Proposal cost: \$1.5 million

Message students about financial aid and postsecondary pathways before 11th grade

Expand OtterBot texting services to reach students and families (around 120,000 College Bound students and 120,000 parents) earlier, starting in middle school. OtterBot is an AI-enabled chatbot that provides College Bound students and parents with timely text messages about financial aid and postsecondary pathways. OtterBot currently supports a diverse student body. For example, over 50 percent of recipients are Hispanic/Latinx. Recent analysis of OtterBot shows that for students who engaged with Otterbot:

- Financial aid completion was 7 percent higher than the rate for all CBS students.
- College enrollment was 5 percent higher than the rate for all CBS students.

Proposal cost: \$1.25 million

Align WA Grant with SNAP and other public benefits programs that meet income eligibility

Allow individuals who are enrolled in SNAP or other public benefit programs that are income-based to automatically meet WA Grant income eligibility.

Proposal cost: \$239,000

Streamline contact information for College Bound students

Last session, SB 5593 passed, requiring OSPI to collect student and parent contact information for data sharing with higher education institutions. WSAC proposes amending the allowable use of this contact information to include sharing information with WSAC to communicate and reach students about state financial aid.

Proposal cost: None