



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

Title: Foundational Discussion Part II	
As related to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal One: Develop and support policies to close the achievement and opportunity gaps. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Two: Develop comprehensive accountability, recognition, and supports for students, schools, and districts. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Three: Ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet career and college ready standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Four: Provide effective oversight of the K-12 system. <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Relevant to Board roles:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy leadership <input type="checkbox"/> System oversight <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Convening and facilitating
Policy considerations / Key questions:	What should be the dominant focus of the Board's work over the next year or more? Based on what was learned during the past six months on student supports, student planning, assessments, and multi-cultural perspectives on career readiness, what policy recommendations should the Board consider?
Relevant to business item:	No specific business item is associated with these materials.
Materials included in packet:	One document for this Foundational Discussion is on the Retreat Preparation Page of the SBE website, titled: "Planning Our Work Ahead." Two documents are included here and are provided as background information to the Foundational Discussion. These documents summarize the Board's work on Student Transitions: 1. Memo on "Multi-Cultural Perspectives on Career Readiness" Community Forum Engagement. This memo describes the community forum process. 2. Report on "Preparing Students for the Next Step: Secondary to Postsecondary Student Transitions." This is a summary report of the work on student transitions.
Synopsis:	During this segment of the retreat, members will engage with one another to focus on near and long-term board initiatives and planning. The goal of this discussion is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring key initiatives on career readiness and student transitions, to a place of understanding and execution.• Prepare for a possible major initiative as part of the Board's next three-year Strategic Plan (beginning in Fall 2018).



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“MULTI-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON CAREER READINESS” COMMUNITY FORUM ENGAGEMENT

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
2017 Community Forums

MULTI-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON CAREER READINESS

3 CITIES
EVERETT, WALLA WALLA, SPOKANE

Participants in Western and Eastern Washington had a chance to share their ideas for improving career readiness with State Board members

ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED
58

EOGOAC & all member organizations represented on the EOGOAC, school districts, community colleges, local area four year colleges, nonprofits, advocacy organizations, community organizations

111 PARTICIPANTS

Participants included: Parents, students, school board members, teachers, administrators, nonprofit and advocacy organization representatives, and community organization representatives and leaders

IDEAS FROM PARTICIPANTS
3 THEMES

1. The importance of relationships and mentoring for students in school
2. The need for trauma-informed instruction as well as implicit bias and cultural competency training
3. The need to prepare students to think about postsecondary plans sooner

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This year, the State Board decided on a theme of “Multi-Cultural Perspectives on Career Readiness” for our community forums in March (Everett), May (Walla Walla), and July (Spokane). Staff created an event page for each community forum for interested participants to RSVP. We made the event page available in both English and Spanish, and sent out invitations in Spanish for schools, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations to share with their networks. Staff sent reminders to all registered participants the day before the forum. We also offered accommodations for participants, including having a translator present, if requested. Although no accommodations were requested, we believe it is important to continue offering accommodation and translator options in the future. Staff believe this continues to show that SBE wants to make any necessary accommodations to hear from diverse audiences.

Staff decided to focus outreach efforts by intentionally reaching out to diverse communities through inviting stakeholders via individual emails. Staff reached out to 58 organizations for our three community forums (see infographic to left). Our first step for each of the three community forums was to reach out to area schools and postsecondary education institutions within approximately an hour of the community forum location. We asked organizations to share the invitation with their networks and constituent audiences. We also asked these organizations for recommendations on other individuals and organizations to invite. All of the suggested individuals and organizations were sent personal email invitations as well. Staff also spent significant time researching and inviting area community organizations and nonprofits, especially those serving diverse audiences.

“These community forums are a good way to develop a relationship with remote communities—we can put faces to names and the purpose of the Board.” –Bill Erickson, Community member and active volunteer with Latino Club and Equity and Access Committee projects

—Walla Walla Community Forum

SBE received many feedback forms from community forum participants (See right and next page for feedback excerpts).

Many feedback forms echoed suggestions discussed during the forum as well as expressed appreciation for the State Board’s traveling across the state and holding community forums to provide community members a chance to speak with and have their suggestions listened to by Board members.

SBE promised community forum participants that they would be kept up-to-date on how SBE will use their suggestions. Linda Drake has finished the Student Transitions report and it will be uploaded to the website soon. We envision a Student Transitions page on our website, which will include the report executive summary, summary of feedback we received across all three community forums, infographics, community forum photos, a reflection video on the forums that include Board member reflections, and a link to the full report. Once it is—staff will reach out to all forum participants who registered and provided contact information and send them a copy of the report, as well as direct them to our Student Transitions webpage on our website. Staff will also advertise the report and website via social media and our Constant Contact email lists.

*“Keep scheduling more opportunities to gather student voice on important issues in education” –
Dr. Deborah Tully, Whitworth University, Associate
Dean of Teacher Education and School
Partnerships*

—Spokane Community Forum

If you have questions regarding this memo, please contact Alissa Muller at alissa.muller@k12.wa.us.



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

Introduction

The purpose of a high school diploma, according to state statute, is “to declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner.” (RCW 28A.230.090). To further this purpose, the State Board of Education (SBE) has worked for over a decade, in partnership with an array of other agencies and organizations, to raise standards and set ambitious goals for student achievement. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of thousands of educators that the system has adapted to these changes. Indicators that are available, such as graduation rates and achievement on standardized tests, have maintained buoyancy and even risen slightly during this period. Tens of thousands of young people in Washington exit the K-12 system every year and go on to postsecondary education and careers. Still, the transition from high school to postsecondary education and life is anything but seamless. It is a difficult transition for many of our students and an overwhelming transition for some. Are there statewide policies that could erase some of the seams for all students? Are there practices that the Board could promote that would help more students over the hurdles?

To answer these questions, from March through July 2017, the State Board of Education conducted an extended look at student transitions, particularly the transition from high school to postsecondary education and careers. During this examination of transitions, particular effort was made to hear from people from historically underserved populations. The Board focused on four topics 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 State Board of Education cannot make decisions, cannot think about education and what the needs of students are, in a vacuum. We make every effort to get out there and engage with communities so we can understand what it takes for kids to get through school and be career and college ready when they are done.”

—Kevin Laverty, Acting Chair, Washington State Board of Education

The topics of the meetings and the forums dealt with different aspects of the broad subject of student secondary to postsecondary transitions: 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. Throughout the effort, the Board intentionally engaged students so the Board could hear their perspectives. 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.

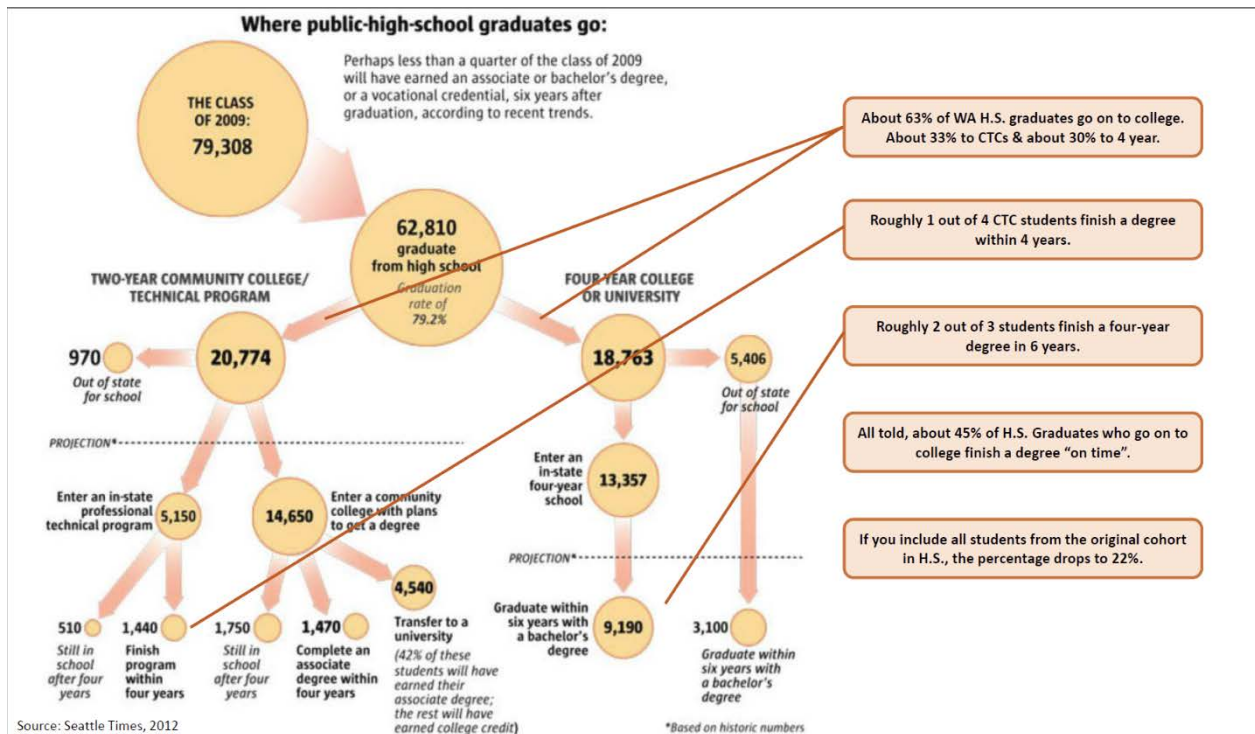
This report summarizes the Board’s exploration of student transitions in sections:

- 1) **Where Are We Now?**—a description of the current system as background information with a focus on the broad topics discussed in the meeting series—planning, supports, and assessment.
- 2) **What Have We Learned?**—this section highlights *some* of the information shared with the Board by the students, educators, and members of the public at the meetings and public forums, including a

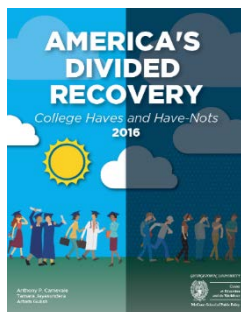
summary of the feedback received from participants at the forums on **Multi-Cultural Perspectives on Career Readiness**. A great deal of valuable information was provided by many people around the state who generously shared their knowledge and experiences with the Board. This report summarizes only a small part. Board meeting materials, including links to video recordings of presentations are available on the State Board website and are linked-to throughout this report.

3) **Where Do We Go From Here?**—a discussion of options for further work for the state and for the Board to consider in strategic planning and the adoption of future legislative agendas.

Figure 1 is from the Seattle Times, 2012, and shows where students go post high school.



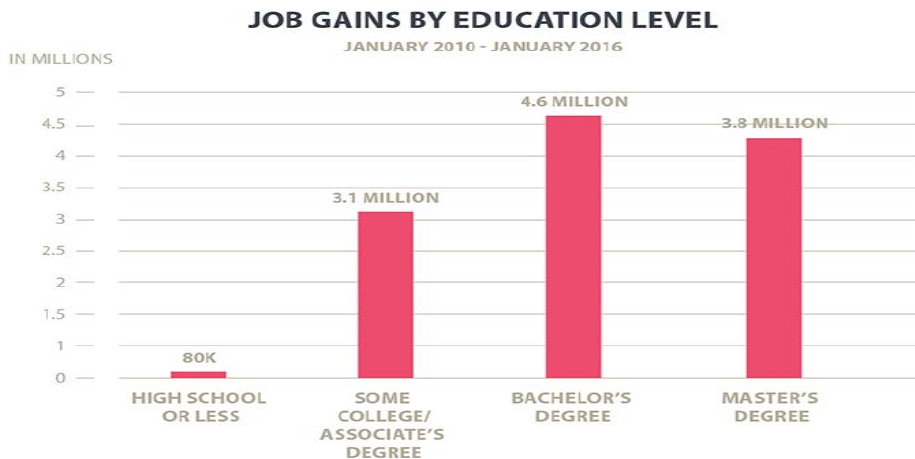
Where Are We Now?



At the March meeting, staff presented a graphic (Figure 1) from the Seattle Times, 2012, that summarizes the postsecondary educational pathways and the number of students who pursued those paths in the Class of 2009. Approximately 45% of high school graduates complete a two- or four-year degree on time, and only 22% of a 9th grade cohort. While some students may choose to go directly into a job, opportunities for workers with only a high school credential are shrinking. Those with at least some college education filled 11.5 million of the 11.6 million jobs created during the recovery, according to [America's Divided Recovery](#), a report from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce.¹ Clearly, as the Washington Student Achievement Council says in their [2015 Roadmap Report](#), "we need more than business as usual." For the sake of individual students, as well the economic health of the state, it is a worthwhile effort by the Board and the state to explore ways to help students successfully transition from secondary to postsecondary education and careers.

¹ Carnevale, A, T. Jayasundera, and A. Gulish. (2016). *America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots*. Center on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

Figure 2 is a figure from America’s Divided Recovery report that shows the job gains by education level.



Where are We Now?—Secondary to Postsecondary Planning

Efforts to help students develop the skills and knowledge to successfully transition are wide-reaching and across educational sectors. Efforts range from individual counselors or teachers with a gift for connecting and inspiring students to multi-district and college cooperatives and non-profit organizations dedicated to supporting students through high school and into higher education, careers or beyond. The March 2017 board meeting focused on planning for postsecondary success.

The meeting [materials](#) prepared for the March Board meeting included background information on student transitions and planning, and background information on youth apprenticeships.

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 HSBP has been a graduation requirement since the Class of 2009 ([WAC 180-51-061](#)). Until recently, districts had complete responsibility for determining how the plan looked and functioned in their districts. As a result, some districts have plans implemented through a multi-year process, and other districts may employ a simple check-list filled out once during the student’s high school career.

The [March 2017 Board meeting](#) focused on **Planning**. The Board heard from:

- WISPC (a cooperative of Educational Service Districts and school districts for information technology services) about its [HSBP tool](#)
- OSPI on [high school and beyond planning](#)
- A representative of the [MESA program](#)
- [Everett School District and Everett Community College administrators](#) and Edmonds School District and Edmonds Community Colleges about connecting high school students to college
- Community colleges on [Guided Pathways](#)
- Everett School District on its [College and Career Readiness Seminar Course](#)

The 2017 Legislative session enacted [ESHB 2224](#) (Chapter 31, Laws of 2017) which creates a state-wide HSBP structure. The law directs that the HSBP:

- Guides a student’s high school experience and prepares a student for postsecondary education or training and career.
- Must be initiated during the 7th or 8th grade.
- Must start with a career interest and skills inventory.
- Must be updated to reflect assessment results, and assess progress, changing interests, goals, and needs.

- Must identify available interventions, academic support, and courses that are designed for students who have not yet met high school graduation standards.
- Districts are encouraged to involve parents and guardians in the developing and updating of the HSBP.
- Required elements must include:
 - Identification of career goals, aided by the skills and interest inventory.
 - Identification of education goals.
 - A four-year plan for course-taking that fulfills graduation requirements and aligns with career and education goals.
 - By the end of the 12th grade, a resume, or activity log.

Activities and programs that high schools use to inform and connect students to postsecondary education and training include:

- Guidance and counseling
 - May use the [Career Guidance Washington](#) curriculum
 - May employ tools such as [WSIPC](#)'s online high school and beyond planning tool, or other available systems such as Naviance or Career Cruising. (The WSIPC tool is available at no cost to members, and for a one-time set-up fee to non-members).
- College fairs, college and university visits, work site visits
- Building relationships between high school guidance counselors and college and university admissions staff (such as through the [Washington Council for High School College Relations](#))
- Building relationships between secondary and postsecondary teaching staff by working together on curricula alignment such as:
 - [Math and English Bridge Courses](#)
 - [Tech Prep](#) agreements in Career and Technical Education fields
- [Dual credit programs](#)
- Programs such as:
 - [The College Success Foundation](#)
 - [Gear Up](#)
 - [AVID](#)
 - [The Road Map Project](#)
 - [Core Plus](#)
 - [Pre-Apprenticeship Programs](#)
 - Many others

Greater clarity and definition for the HSBP has been a legislative priority of the SBE since the 2015 session, and the Board strongly supported the Legislature's actions regarding the HSPB in ESHB 2224.

While the HSBP is at the center of state policy for postsecondary planning, many practices and programs are available for helping high school students connect to postsecondary opportunities (as shown in the box to the left).

Some resources are available to all students, such as Career Guidance Washington, a curriculum provided by OSPI at no cost to districts that includes high school and beyond lesson plans. Some programs and initiatives, such as Math and English Bridge Courses, are only available in some districts. And some opportunities are limited by geography—students in remote districts may have limited access to Running Start, college or university visits, or opportunities to connect with employers. As with many aspects of the educational system in our highly diverse state, opportunities for informing and connecting students to postsecondary education, training, and careers is highly variable.

Where are We Now?—Supports for Secondary to Postsecondary Transitions

The May 2017 student transitions segment of the Board meeting focused on supports for student transitions. [Materials](#) prepared for the meeting included 1) an analysis by staff of programs and reforms that support student transitions as represented in the state's budget provisos, 2) a comparison of broad recommendations for student supports made by the SBE, the Educational

Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, and the Washington Student Achievement Council, and 3) a look at key transition data (some of the data is shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5).

The [May 2017 Board Meeting](#) focused on **Supports.**

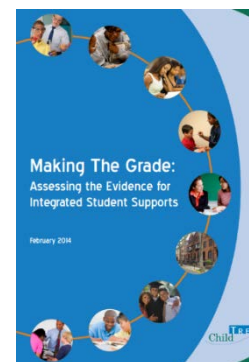
The Board heard from:

- OSPI's Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, on [Washington's Integrated Student Supports Workgroup--Presentation](#)
- Walla Walla Community College, Walla Walla Public Schools, and College Place School District Administrators
- A panel of community college and high school students

At the meeting, Board members had the opportunity to visit Lincoln High School, a school that has been in the vanguard of efforts to employ trauma-informed teaching practices, and visit with educators and students. Discussing trauma-informed teaching practices and social-emotional learning, and hearing from students who had substantial, multiple, personal and educational challenges, were key elements of the May meeting. Districts have also found such programs as [AVID](#) and [Gear Up](#) to be effective, although

there is a desire to scale-up or expand the practices to more students. Several of the college students who spoke to the Board mentioned that the [TRIO program](#), a program to support low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented student obtain a quality education, was critical to helping them with the transition to postsecondary education and to helping them persist in their postsecondary education.

In 2016, the Legislature passed a law relating to implementation of strategies to close the educational opportunity gap, based on the recommendations of the EOGOAC (the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee). The law directed the development of the [Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol](#). The purpose of the protocol is, in part, to support a school-based approach to promoting success of all students through a coordination and integration of district and non-district providers of academic and nonacademic supports for both students and families. Access to particular supports may vary depending on a student's region, district, and school, as well as with the student's personal situation such as health, homelessness, transportation needs, English language learner status or responsibilities outside of school for work or family care. The Integrated Student Supports Protocol work is informed by a synthesis of the evidence supporting integrated student supports, [Making The Grade: Assessing the Evidence for Integrated Student Supports](#), a report by Child Trends.² The work will encompass looking at supports that include physical and mental health, in-school and expanded learning time, school climate and effectiveness, parent education and family counseling, and social services for families in need. The protocol is intended to address opportunity gaps through matching available supports to a student's individual needs. At the May meeting, the Board heard an update on the workgroup which is in the process of developing policy recommendations for the protocol.



Perhaps even more than for postsecondary planning, supports for the secondary to postsecondary transition are extremely varied around the state. All districts and high schools likely provide some supports for high school students, but different schools and districts employ different techniques, engage different programs, and implement different practices in helping students successfully navigate the transition.

² Child Trends (2014). Publication #2014-07.

Where are We Now?—Assessments and Secondary to Postsecondary Transitions

The student transitions segment of the July meeting focused on assessments and their connection with secondary to postsecondary transitions. [July 2017 Board meeting materials](#) included a brief discussion of some of the issues concerning assessments that the Board may face during the next few years, and background information on common assessments used in secondary to postsecondary transitions.

The July 2017 Board Meeting focused on **Assessments** and the Board heard from:

- The Smarter Balanced Consortium—[Presentation](#) and [Flier](#)
- [The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges](#)
- Washington State University and Eastern Washington University Admissions and the [Washington Council of Presidents](#)

What percentage of the K-12 population experience a challenging transition related to program status (English Learner, Special Education, Migrant, or Section 504 status)?

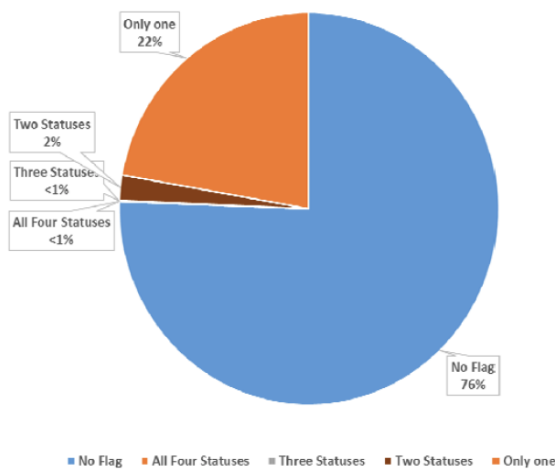


Figure 3, 4, and 5 are figures from May 2017 meeting key transition data presentation.

Figure 3 shows that about a quarter of all students may experience challenging transitions related to program status.

What percentage of the Class of 2008 was considered "mobile?"

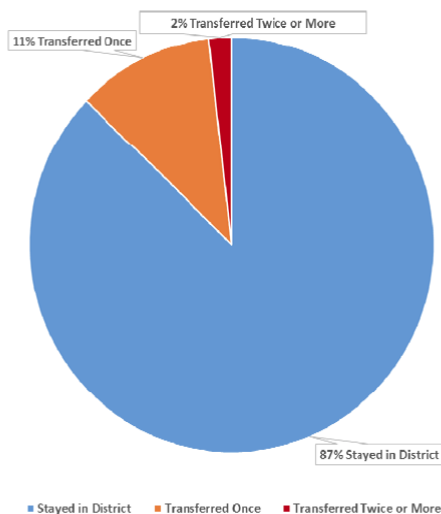


Figure 4. About thirteen percent of high school students are considered mobile.

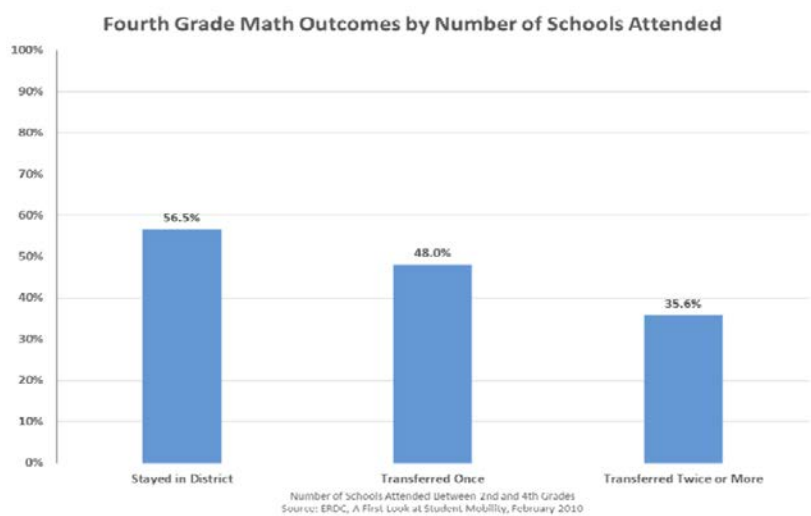


Figure 5. Mobile students have a more difficult time achieving good outcomes.

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. The Smarter Balanced Assessments, aligned to the learning standards in math and English Language Arts, have been implemented since 2014-2015. The Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science, the WCAS, will be implemented for the first time in 2017-2018. High school students take state assessments in math, English Language Arts and science. Attaining a graduation score set by the State Board of Education is required for graduation on the math and English Language Arts exams. Students who do not meet the graduation standard on the assessments may retake the test, or demonstrate meeting the standard through approved assessment alternatives. By law, assessment alternatives must be “comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the statewide student assessment and be objective in its determination of student achievement of the state standards” (RCW 28A.655.061). Current assessment alternatives include the grade-point average comparison and meeting a graduation score identified by the State Board of Education on college admissions SAT or ACT tests, Advanced Placement tests or International Baccalaureate examinations.

Students who meet the graduation standard on the state assessments or by meeting standard through an approved alternative assessment earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA). Students who receive special education services may access additional alternatives to earn a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA).

Since the meeting materials were created, [ESHB 2224](#) (chapter 31, laws of 2017) was passed into law. The new law includes some significant changes to the assessment system including:

1. Starting in the 2018-2019 school year, locally-determined course and assessment options will be available for students who do not meet the graduation standard on state high school assessments.
2. A science assessment will not be required for graduation until the Class of 2021.
3. Beginning with the Class of 2020, the math and English Language Arts Smarter Balanced Assessments will be administered in the tenth grade.
4. An expedited appeals process will be available for students in the Class of 2014 through the Class of 2018 for students who met or will meet all graduation requirements except the assessment requirement.
5. Collections of Evidence are eliminated as an assessment alternative.
6. Dual credit courses that earn college credit in math and English are approved alternatives to meeting standard on the state high school assessment.

Graduation scores on the Smarter Balanced tests are identified by the SBE, in consultation with the OSPI. The SBE has also approved the Smarter Balanced Consortium threshold score that identifies achievement levels on the Smarter Balanced assessments. Earning a Level 3 achievement level is tied to a student being on-track to be college- and career-ready by the time they graduate. The SBE has established an intent in rule ([WAC 180-17-100](#)) that the graduation requirement ultimately should align with career and college readiness, but that there is a necessity of a minimum proficiency standard for graduation while educators and students adapt to new standards. In January 2015 the Board adopted a [position statement](#) articulating an “equal impact” approach to setting the minimum proficiency graduation standard, that the initial graduation score would be set such that the tests would “impact students in the next few years approximately equally to how students have been impacted by exit exams during the past few years.” Based on test results from 2014-2015, the Board set minimum proficiency [graduation scores](#) corresponding approximately to a Level 2.6 on both the English Language Arts and math Smarter Balanced assessment. Because participation rates were so low for 11th graders, 10th grade test results were used for establishing the initial graduation scores.

In addition to high school state assessments, most students in high school will take additional tests associated with the transition from secondary to postsecondary education or training. Students planning on attending a community or technical college will most likely take the ACT or SAT, and may take placement tests. Some students may earn a professional/technical certificate by passing a test, and there are tests associated with apprenticeship programs, employment, and the military.

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. Bridge to College courses are designed for students who scored below a career- and college-ready Level 3 to be ready for college by the time they graduate.

What Have We Learned?

Some of the most impactful experiences for Board members during this extended look at student transitions were listening to and talking with people who participated in three public forums. One hundred and eleven participants, plus board members and staff, attended the three “Multi-Cultural Perspectives for Career Readiness” community forums in Everett, Walla Walla, and Spokane. Parents, students, school board members, teachers, administrators, and community organization representatives and leaders attended. Invitations and notices about the forums were sent to districts, colleges, universities and community organizations in each of the regions where the forums were held. At two of the forums, student panels shared their experiences about secondary to postsecondary transitions and their views of career readiness. In addition, the Board heard from students at both the March and May Board meetings as well.



Figure 6. Student panel at May 2017 public forum.

The Board endeavored to invite participants from diverse, historically underserved groups. A memo on the process of holding the forums is included in the September 2017 Board meeting materials.

What Have We Learned?—From Forum Participants: Multi-Cultural Perspectives of Career Readiness

The summary below is from staff’s notes on participant discussion and comes from the topics that received the most frequent mentions across the three forums. To see exact transcriptions from each forum, click here for: [Everett](#) (p. 32-37), [Walla Walla](#) (p. 29-39), and Spokane (included in the Consent Agenda section of the September board meeting packet). The recommendations in this section are from participants, and are not SBE staff or member recommendations. These recommendations will be discussed and considered by the Board as part of strategic planning, and may be incorporated into the Board’s strategic plan moving forward.

Students of color and low-income students face a variety of barriers to success in high school. In order to increase career readiness for *all* students, the suggestions SBE heard were around three major themes:

1. The critical importance of relationships and mentoring for students in school.
2. The need to provide early and ongoing training for all educators around implicit bias, cultural competency, and trauma-informed instruction.
3. The need to facilitate students to contemplate postsecondary plans earlier in their K-12 era.

Barriers to success in high school: The most frequently heard barriers to success included **lack of preparedness for transitions and information about postsecondary options**. Many individuals also talked about low expectations from adults in the system, due in-part to institutional racism (which became a self-fulfilling prophecy). Students also struggled with grades and balancing job and homework demands with applying for postsecondary institutions and scholarships. The other major barrier focused on students not being taught practical skills in two areas: “soft skills” and financial literacy skills. A possibility emerged around having a **career preparation course to address the lack of “soft skills”** which would focus on networking, teamwork, communication, formal interviews, informational interviews, how to ask for help, and other “soft” skills. A **financial literacy class** could address taxes and personal economics, as well as the cost of higher education and how various careers might pay for that cost.



Figure 7. May 2017 school visit.

The need for relationships and mentoring for students in school: This need focuses both on teachers and counselors in school. For counselors: Recommendations included ensuring that each student be assigned to a counselor (or other educator) just to **check in about how the student’s life is outside of school and to be able to connect individual students to needed resources**. Counselors should also ask what students want to get out of their curriculum sooner (elementary) and more frequently as students’ postsecondary plans change. For teachers: SBE frequently heard how important it was to have a teacher that takes a personal interest in students and

cares enough to pursue them, urge them to take difficult classes and follow their passions. For either/or both teachers and counselors: Some recommendations could be taken up by either a teacher or counselor. These included needing a staff member at each high school to run a specific support network/program for students of color to get connected and help them navigate the system (the support network could be comprised of community members). This would also allow students of color to be connected with mentor professionals as positive role models in a variety of job pathways.

The importance of understanding implicit bias, cultural competency, and trauma-informed instruction for teachers: Many individuals voiced the need for this training for teachers and all staff at schools. Ideally, this would prepare school staff to give students of color the space and voice to express themselves and their experience as they are maturing developmentally. This could occur through an ethnic studies

course or by working multi-cultural perspectives into curriculum to help meet the need of students of color to have a language for their experience. It was also noted that the system must **increase representation of people of color in the teaching field** so students have teachers who look like them as role models and teachers.

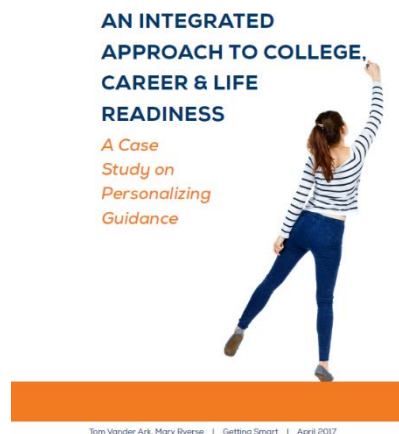
The need to prepare students to think about postsecondary plans sooner: This need focuses both on the need to provide students with all of their postsecondary options sooner as well as the need for expanded career and technical education. An overwhelming majority of participants recommended the introduction of **post-secondary options to students in middle school**, and to get parents on board at the same time. All postsecondary options should be highlighted, including four-year universities, two-year colleges, trades, apprenticeships and the military. The cost and financial aid options for these should be highlighted as well. Participants also frequently referenced the fact that there is no standard system to help students reflect on what their skills are and what they might want to do post-high school. A system should be created that **helps students find and foster their strengths**, and see how these connect to future postsecondary job pathways. Additionally, parents and students mentioned that frequently students seek out people they have a connection with, which are generally teachers, not counselors. Therefore, **a professional development system needs to be created for teachers on post-secondary options to share with students**. Counselors could lead this professional development effort at each school. For career and technical education: Participants noted how this helps students explore and create a postsecondary plan. They expressed the need for high school students to have more opportunities to explore different careers, job shadow, and do internships.

What Have We Learned?—About Planning for Postsecondary Opportunities

Planning for postsecondary education and careers integrated into personalized guidance for students can positively impact the percentage of students who meet the requirements for 4-year college entrance, graduation rates, and 2- and 4-year college attendance, according to [An Integrated Approach to College Career & Life Readiness](#),³ a report on College Spark Washington’s College Readiness Initiative. The initiative analyzed the effectiveness of [Career Guidance Washington](#), the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction’s (OSPI) program for student postsecondary planning, as well as [AVID](#) (Advancement Via Individual Determination).

The report shows that the benefit of individualized guidance using Career Guidance Washington was relatively higher for low-income students and students from some racial and ethnic groups. In other words, there are indications that **good guidance and planning closes opportunity gaps**.

The Board has discussed the development of [a career and college readiness planning credit-bearing course](#). At the March meeting, the Board heard from a district that has developed and implemented such a course. The Everett school district’s senior seminar course is helping students develop transition skills and knowledge, and has seen good outcomes for graduation rates and the rate of students continuing into postsecondary education or training. The seminar course was developed in close cooperation with Everett Community College. Not only has the district’s over-all graduation rate improved, but the graduation rate of historically underserved student



Tom Vander Ark, Mary Ryerse | Getting Smart | April 2017

³ Vander Ark, T., and M. Ryerse. (2017) *An Integrated Approach to College, Career & Life Readiness: A Case Study on Personalized Guidance*. (2017). Getting Smart. <http://www.gettingsmart.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CS-CGWpaperEN-25Apr2017.pdf>

groups has improved at a greater rate than the “all” student group—suggesting the district is successfully implementing strategies that close opportunity gaps.

What Have We Learned?—About Supports for Student Transitions

Much of what the Board heard at the community forums concerning student supports was echoed in what the Board heard at the May Board meeting. Successful programs and initiatives, as well as the update on the work of the ISS Workgroup, emphasized individualized student supports—supports that address the particular challenges of each student.

Students who shared information with the Board in student panels at the meeting, and in community forums emphasized the importance of one-on-one student/adult interactions. Students and adults who participated in the forums who had overcome considerable personal challenges as teenagers, tended to recall a single individual who made an impact. This was someone, usually an educator and/or a support program staff-person, who not only provided students with concrete help, but who also inspired and encouraged the student to persist and stay on-track.

While counselors have the knowledge, skills and training to help students, the number of students they serve in the typical high schools remains very high (400 or more students per counselor). Schools more effectively support students when administrators, counselors, and teachers have aligned their efforts to help students with transitions.

What Have We Learned?—About Assessments and Secondary to Postsecondary Transitions

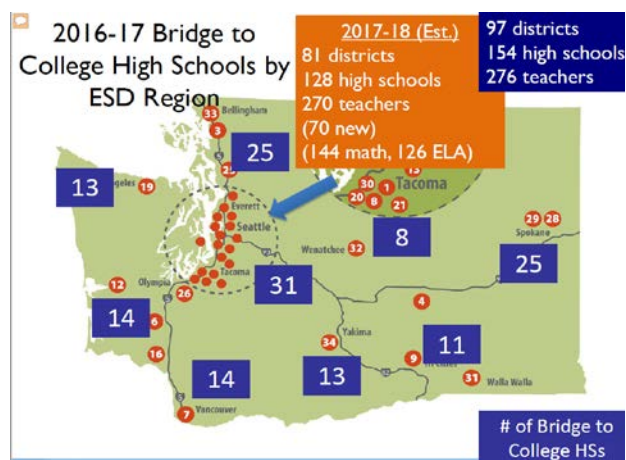
ESHB 2224 requires that the main administration of the Smarter Balanced high school tests is in tenth grade. At the July Board meeting, members heard from [Tony Alpert, the Executive Director of the Smarter Balanced Consortium](#) who assured members that the Consortium will work with the state on Washington’s state assessment needs. The consortium and OSPI’s assessment office will be evaluating what changes, if any, need to be made to adapt the high school tests to 10th graders. The Board will need to stay abreast of any such changes as it pertains to the Board’s responsibility to set a career- and college-ready achievement level on the Smarter Balanced assessments for tenth graders.

The agreements by Washington’s institutions of higher education to use the Smarter Balanced assessments for college course placement is an innovative start to helping make the tests more relevant, and perhaps in time, streamline the number of assessments that high school students take. More work, however, needs to be done for students and institutions to be able to easily use the tests. According to the representatives from higher education that the Board heard from in July, very few students have accessed the opportunity to use their Smarter Balanced results in this way.

Bridge Courses are well-reviewed by students and teachers, and provide an engaging and effective curriculum, but they are not yet available in all districts. Figure 6 shows the distribution of Bridge to College High Schools.

Representatives from higher education expressed that some students are not using Dual Credit programs effectively. Some students may over-extend in high school by taking too many Advanced Placement courses and not be able to be successful. Some students in the Running Start Program are not ready for the college environment. And some high school students do not take advantage of Dual Credit programs who should. Admissions directors wished high

Figure 6. Distribution of Bridge to College High Schools, from Dr. Bill Moore of the State Board of Community and Technical College’s [presentation](#) at the July 2017 Board meeting.



school students were better informed about Dual Credit, financial aid and the admissions process. While assessments play a role in admissions, assessment results are often not the determining factor in college admissions.

The secondary to postsecondary transition remains a complex process. Continued secondary to postsecondary, educator-to-educator communication and collaboration is needed to help students understand the process, and to streamline the process where possible.

Where Do We Go From Here?

At the September 2017 Board meeting, members will be reviewing the agency's strategic plan and begin a discussion of prospective legislative priorities for the 2018 short session. In 2019, the Board will develop its next three-year strategic plan. How might the Board take what has been learned about student transitions, identify good practices, and translate that into policy? As a state policy organization in a "local control" state, there is continuous need to review the appropriate ways of taking actions. What are the best ways to promote good practices, and what other agencies and organizations would be effective partners and collaborators in this work?

This sections outline possible areas for further work of the Board stemming from this six-month exploration of student secondary to postsecondary transitions.

Enhance the High School and Beyond Plan

This year's legislative action ESHB 2224 establishes requirements of all high school and beyond plans, and is a significant step forward in adding definition and structure to the HSBP. However, mere compliance with new law will not necessarily result in good outcomes for students unless districts implement the plan in a way that is meaningful for students. The Board may consider continuing to partner with OSPI, the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Board, the Washington Student Achievement Council, the EOGOAC, and other organizations, to identify and promote good practices that enhance the HSBP. Ways of enhancing the plan may include:

- Expanding the use of the HSBP in teaching career readiness skills, including career readiness "soft skills" and deeper learning competencies such as problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, self-regulation and an academic mind-set.
- Supporting ways to make career option information more readily available to students, including in rural and remote areas.
- Supporting and encouraging credit-bearing HSBP courses, such as Everett School District's senior seminar course.
- Working with the community and technical college system to connect HSBPs to Guided Pathways and Metamajors.

Expand and Streamline the Use of High School State Assessments

The assessment system has been undergoing a period of transition, as new standards and assessments are implemented. For the assessment system to have relevance, assessments should be useful at all levels—for students and parents as an objective check on student progress and to direct appropriate course-taking or supports, for teachers and administrators to check on classroom and school progress and to monitor and reduce gaps, and for higher education to assist in smooth student transitions. Ways of helping to expand and streamline the uses of high school assessments include:

- 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, taking into consideration how students may meaningfully demonstrate readiness for their next steps. Supporting expansion of Bridge to College Courses.
- 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, and implementation of the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS), as well as alternative assessment options for science. The Board will be considering approval of the score that meets standard on the WCAS, and scores on college admissions tests as alternatives.
- Revisit scores for graduation on the Smarter Balanced tests.

Support Counselors and Programs that Help Inform and Guide Students on Postsecondary Options

Counselors generally have a large number of students to serve. In panels, students mentioned that it was often teachers who gave them useful transition information and encouragement. Frequently it is one-on-one relationships that help student successfully navigate the educational system, and the transition across boundaries, and those relationships maybe with teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or any other adult the student connects with. What are policies that can help foster the conditions that let meaningful guidance happen in schools? Possible opportunities for Board actions include:

- 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. Investigating adult mentors outside of school, student peers, state websites that are more usable and integrated into the HSBP, and counselors providing guidance information and professional development with other educators.
- Advocating for all schools to incorporate the 2016 Social Emotional Learning Benchmarks (SELB) Workgroup report (i.e. guiding principles, standards and benchmarks, implementation strategies) into their curriculum.
- Advocating for the prototypical school funding model to include family engagement coordinators, counselors, and/or psychologists.

“We had a great opportunity this past year to meet with students and communities throughout the state. What I think is most important that comes from this is us, as State Board members, learning what real people are going through, what children are going through who often come from disadvantaged backgrounds, to achieve in education and ultimately to achieve the goals they have in life.” —Kevin Laverty, Acting Chair, Washington State Board of Education

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