

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Pathways to Higher Education Credentials and Funding for Apprenticeships Year Two Integrated Summary Report



Prepared for the Washington State Legislature
by the **William D. Ruckelshaus Center** with input from
Education Northwest



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Introduction

Senate Bill (SB) 5764 (2022) directs the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to contract with the William D. Ruckelshaus Center (the Center) to

- Carry out research, evaluation, consultation with interested parties (a collaborative process), and reporting to develop opportunities for apprentices to receive credit toward higher education degrees, as well as to
- Make recommendations to the legislature on a sustainable funding model for apprenticeship.

The legislation outlines a five-year process, beginning in 2022 and ending in 2027.

This is the Center's Year 2 progress report on the tasks outlined in SB 5764, which are being addressed through a collaborative process by a committee of interested parties convened by the Center: the Apprenticeship and Higher Education Coordinating Committee (AHECC). A list of AHECC participants and their alternates is in Appendix A. The Center has structured this high-level integrated summary to respond to the tasks outlined in SB 5764. The headers in this report largely reflect the language of the legislation verbatim.

The Center uses collaborative processes to enable parties to develop trust and seek agreed on outcomes that benefit all participants, rather than each party seeking its own individual aims at the expense of others. There are several key steps to this process, including:

- Getting the right people to the table,
- Developing a set of shared agreements that create a space where participants feel comfortable to open up,
- Ensuring that everyone has access to the same set of facts and information,
- Developing a set of shared interests that can be the basis for collaborative decision-making (see Appendix C).

Collaborative processes take time, particularly where there is a lack of trust, power imbalances, and unresolved grievances among participants. It takes time to understand the interests of other parties, develop a shared set of facts, and build the trust needed to develop collaborative and/or consensus-based solutions. The AHECC's progress is indicated in the following issues summary section – some issue areas are in the beginning stage; others are not planned to begin until later in the project timeline, and still others have begun to demonstrate progress. While the AHECC has yet to develop recommendations, its members have begun to build the foundation for collaboration in years 3 and 4. An overview of the AHECC's meeting agendas and accomplishments can be found in Appendix B.

This Year 2 report also includes two contracted reports from Education Northwest (EDNW), a nonprofit applied research organization. Under the direction of the Center, EDNW produced a brief on Apprenticeship Data Systems to support the work of the AHECC, as well as a unique survey of apprentices and former apprentices related to demand for degrees to respond to SB 5764. The reports are in appendices E and D, respectively.

Preliminary findings on SB 5764 tasks¹

Evaluate paths to credentials for apprentices

Building on the Year 1 report done by EDNW, the AHECC has been educating itself on different pathways to credentials. For example, at its October 3 meeting, the Committee heard a presentation from the Machinists Institute, Renton Technical College, and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning on the successful effort to enable journeying machinist apprentices to obtain a concurrent competency-based Multi-Occupational Trades (MOT) degree without required extra general education courses. (See Figure 1 for a description of the MOT degree.)

Recommendations on the requirements and benefits of expanding the multi-occupational trades degree

The AHECC has just begun discussing the MOT degree and will provide recommendations on the requirements and benefits of it in future reports.

Exploration of other credentials that will support transfer to baccalaureate degrees or other advanced credentials for apprentices

The AHECC has also just begun discussion on other credentials that will support transfer to baccalaureate degrees or other advanced credentials for apprentices. Based on the work of the Committee, the Center will provide evaluation and/or reporting in future reports.

This evaluation may include options for instructional modality for apprentices and analysis of the opportunities and limitations for incorporating general education course requirements into degree pathways for apprentices

As the AHECC continues to evaluate paths to credentials for apprentices, it will consider issues such as instructional modality and the opportunities and limitations for incorporating general education course requirements into degree pathways for apprentices, which will be included in future reports.

The evaluation may also include reviewing credit articulation within the college system, prior learning assessments, and competency-based models

The AHECC has begun to explore credit articulation within the community and technical college system, including prior learning assessments and competency-based models. The Center will include additional information on credit articulation in the college system in future reports, based on further discussion by

Figure 1.

Multi-Occupational Trades (MOT) degree: Allows journeyed, state-registered apprentices that complete up to a certain number of hours of on-the-job training and related supplemental instruction, to obtain an associate degree. The degree can be earned either by completing a certain number of extra general education credits or through competency-based credit award.

Types of MOT degrees include:

- Associate of Applied Science (AAS): A two-year degree for students who want to start a career immediately after graduation. Does not transfer to a university.
- Associate of Applied Science-Transfer (AAS-T): A two-year, job-training degree to prepare students for immediate employment.

MOT degrees, as well as Associate of Technical Arts (ATA) and Associate of Applied Technology (AAT) technical degrees, transfer only to applied baccalaureate degrees at community and technical colleges (CTCs) or universities that have an agreement with the CTC issuing the MOT degree.

Source: William D. Ruckelshaus Center, Situation Assessment of Pathways to Higher Education Credentials and Funding for Apprenticeship, November 2023.

¹ Each lettered header in this section is a specific task from SB 5764, largely verbatim.

the Committee.

Examine national best practices in delivery and award of educational credentials to apprentices

Under the Center's direction, EDNW began to explore national practices in delivery and award of educational credentials to apprentices in Year 1 and produced a report, available on the Center's website here: <https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/>

The AHECC will continue to explore national and state practices, and the Center will report on these efforts in years 3 and 4 of this project.

This exploration may include assessment of the governance structures and operational models for delivery of apprenticeship degree pathways, including operational considerations and costs associated with operational models

Based on the AHECC's discussions, the Center may provide additional information on other states' governance structures and operational models, including operational considerations and associated costs, in future reports.

Apprentices' demand for degrees

Demand for degrees by those in a state-registered apprenticeship program

A search of the literature found no publicly available research on the potential demand for degrees among U.S. apprentices. Interviewees for the Year 1 situation assessment conducted by the Center (<https://ruckelshauscenter.wsu.edu/projects/current-projects/>), universally said they believed that there was little to no demand for degrees among apprentices.

In order to obtain data on this question, the Center directed EDNW to conduct a survey of state-registered apprentices and former apprentices about their interest in obtaining degrees as well as perceived barriers to obtaining credits and degrees. EDNW surveyed 651 current state-registered apprentices and 151 individuals who have completed a state-registered apprenticeship in Washington State. The survey's findings give unprecedented voice to Washington's state-registered apprentices. The Center and EDNW could not identify any similar past surveys of apprentices, who can be difficult to reach because they are distributed in small programs across dozens of trades and professions around the state.

The results indicate that the majority of current apprentices in the state are interested in both two-year (71%) and four-year degrees (65%). This was true for both building and construction trades apprentices, who represent 84 percent² of apprentices today, as well as apprentices in other professions and trades. The survey also found that apprentices of color are more likely to be interested in a degree. More research is needed to understand the gap between apprentices' interest in degrees and their pursuit of them and why different demographic groups are more or less interested in obtaining a degree. The AHECC will be discussing and providing feedback to the survey results at its December 3, 2024, meeting.

For those who have completed a state-registered apprenticeship program

The interest in degrees among those who had completed their state-registered apprenticeship, a group that is even more difficult to reach than current apprentices, was almost as high as for current

² Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council, Quarterly Report, April 2023.

apprentices. The survey found that the majority of state-registered apprenticeship completers are interested in both two-year (73%) and four-year degrees (69 %).³

The survey also asked current and former state-registered apprentices how they learned about apprenticeship, whether they are receiving or received college credit as part of their apprenticeship, whether a degree would help them in their career, and perceived barriers to apprenticeship. The full findings are in the Demand for Degrees report in Appendix D. The AHECC has just started to examine the survey's findings in greater detail. The Center anticipates that this will lead to more fruitful discussion and engagement within their shared learning process.

Review the current funding model for apprentices within the CTC system, with consideration of the use of state funds for apprenticeship, and national funding structures for apprenticeship programs that could be applied within Washington state

Washington College Grant for Apprenticeship (WG-A)

The Washington College Grant for Apprenticeship (WG-A) is a part of the Washington College Grant (WCG). The AHECC heard a presentation from WSAC and the nonprofit Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women (ANEW), about their progress in making awards to state-registered apprentices. ANEW was contracted as a third-party administrator to work directly with registered apprenticeship programs and make WG-A award distributions to apprentices.

During the 2023-2024 fiscal year WSAC and ANEW granted over \$2.7 million to just over 836 apprentices. The majority of apprentices who received funding were in the building trades. WSAC was also able to grant \$282,585 to 566 Bridge Grant recipients. Next year, up to 2,500 apprentices are expected to benefit. The AHECC will continue to evaluate and discuss this and make recommendations in Year 3 or 4.

This funding model review may include institutional costs of developing, administering, delivering, hosting, instructing, and contracting RSI

The larger discussion of the funding model for RSI will be discussed by the AHECC in years 3 and 4 and the outcomes of those discussions will be included in future reports.

Identify and remove barriers for apprentices to access the Washington College Grant for Apprenticeship program and all other student services and support programs and resources

The AHECC discussed barriers to WG-A funding and possible responses to those barriers at several meetings but has not yet formalized recommendations. The AHECC will continue to discuss this and may have a recommendation or recommendations in Year 3.

The AHECC discussed barriers to student services and support programs and resources for state-registered apprentices at community and technical colleges. The Committee also identified several barriers and had a wide-ranging and constructive discussion on possible ways to address these barriers.

One possible solution to eligibility barriers discussed by the AHECC is to *expand WG-A eligibility to all apprentices who have been accepted into a state-registered apprenticeship program*. The primary impact of this action, if implemented, would be to expand eligibility to students who have already earned a bachelor's degree. Before considering this as a recommendation to the legislature, several AHECC members expressed interest in information about how the apprenticeship system and WG-A

³ Notably, this interest in degrees has not translated into pursuit of a degree. In its Year 1 research report, EDNW found that, since 2000, only about 15 percent of apprentices enrolled in a Washington CTC after completing their apprenticeship and, of those, about 13 percent completed a certificate or associate degree. Only around 1 percent of apprentices later enrolled in a Washington four-year public university.

might be impacted by such a change. They asked for support in researching and analyzing the following questions:

- What is the number of current students in the college system and the number of apprentices that already have a degree?
- What is the historical utilization rate of the WG-A?
- What is the potential demand for this expansion of WG-A eligibility
- What is the number of apprentices or potential apprentices this change would affect?
- What are the potential costs to the state?
- Are there any federal statutes that may conflict with such an expansion of eligibility?

The AHECC plans to continue these discussions in Year 3 and requests dedicated funding to support the research to answer the above questions. The AHECC is looking into which organization may be best placed to support this effort.

Closing

The Center thanks the AHECC members and EDNW for their continued participation and partnership. Washington's apprenticeship and higher education systems began separately and over time have evolved very differently. This history has contributed to misunderstandings and a need to build trust among participants. These dynamics typically create barriers to collaborative work. However, in the short amount of time they have been working together, the AHECC has laid the foundation for future progress.

The Center submits this high-level report to provide a brief synopsis of its work in Year 2 on a broad, complex, evolving, and contentious set of topics. Please contact the Project Manager, Tye Ferrell (tye.ferrell@wsu.edu), if you have questions or would like more information. Stay tuned for future reports as the work progresses.

Appendix A: AHECC Roster

Committee member	Alternate member
Andrea Anderson, Sr. Director of Program Development and Education, Apprenti	
John Aultman, Policy Advisor, Governor's Office (ex-officio)	
Maryann Brathwaite, Executive Director, NW Career Colleges Federation	
Marie Bruin, Workforce Education Director, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)	Genevieve Howard, Workforce Policy Associate, SBCTC
Paul Francis, Executive Director, SBCTC	Joyce Hammer, Deputy Director, SBCTC
Karen Dove, Executive Director, Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women	
Julie Garver, Director of Policy and Academic Affairs, Council of Presidents	
Peter Guzman, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Department of Labor and Industries, Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC)	Jordan Shepherd, Management Analyst, or Brittany Craighead, Compliance Specialist, WSATC
Kimberly Hetrick, Director, Career Connect Washington (CCW)	Therese Williams, Associate Director, CCW
Laura Hopkins, Executive Director, SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training Fund	
Brian Jeffries, Policy Director, Washington Roundtable Partnership for Learning	
Inez Olive, Director, Adult Pathways, Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)	Lyle Irimata, Assistant Director, Need Based Programs – Contracts and Reporting, WSAC
Kairie Pierce, Sector Lead, Innovation Workforce, Department of Commerce	
Heather Kurtenbach, Executive Secretary, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council (WSBCTC)	Erin Frasier, Deputy Secretary, WSBCTC
Christina Riley, Independent Consultant & Co-Chair of Tribal Subcommittee of State Apprenticeship Council	
Halene Sigmund, President, Construction Industry Training Council of Washington	
April Sims, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO	Shana Pescheck, Machinists Institute
Donald Smith, Policy Manager, Long-Term Care Workforce	Eleni Papadakis, Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
Sheila Steiner, Senior Director, Policy and Engagement, Independent Colleges of Washington	Terri Standish-Kuon

Lynn Strickland, Executive Director, AJAC	
Becky Wallace, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education and Pathways for Preparation, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)	Krista Fox, Director of Career and Technical Education, OSPI
Emily Wittman, Government Affairs Director for Education, Workforce and Healthcare, Association of Washington Business	

Appendix B: AHECC Meeting Overview



		FEBRUARY—KICK-OFF	MARCH	MAY
Agenda		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed Draft Charter Explored desired outcomes for the process Talked about information needs Discussed the pros and cons of creating workgroups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed Draft Charter (continued) Discussed level-setting and information needs Reviewed Committee composition Explored emerging common interests among Committee members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed emerging shared interests for potential adoption Heard and discussed a presentation on the Washington Grant—Apprenticeship
	Accomplishments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed on Committee Purpose and Goals Agreed on creation of a 'Framing Group' to assist in agenda setting for the Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed on a Committee Charter Agreed on the Committee's first task Agreed on a meeting schedule moving forward
		JULY	AUGUST	OCTOBER
Agenda		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heard and discussed a presentation on national practices Heard and discussed a preliminary presentation on a survey of apprentices Discussed creation of a Workgroup to support the work of the Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued the discussion of barriers and ideas to address apprentices' access to the Washington College Grant program and all other student services, support programs, and resources Discussed the Workgroup roster Heard and discussed a presentation on national practices, prior learning assessments, competency-based models, and emerging governance practices. Toured the Western Washington Sheet Metal Joint Apprenticeship and Training Council facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued the discussion of barriers and ideas to address apprentices' access to the Washington College Grant program and all other student services, support programs, and resources Heard and discussed a presentation on how the Machinist Institute and Renton Technical College, with the support of the Center for Adult and Experiential Learning, accredited the Machinist Institute apprenticeship program, enabling Machinist Institute apprentices to receive a two-year Multi-Occupational Trade Degree when they journey out
	Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed to share information on reports and legislation Committee members are working on at each meeting Agreed on a set of shared Committee interests Identified and suggested ideas to address barriers to apprentice access to the Washington College Grant program and all other student services, support programs, and resources Agreed to create a Workgroup to examine state and national practices that can be applied in Washington State, sustainably funding and growing registered apprenticeships in the future, reviewing credit articulation in Washington's college system, and assessing the governance structures and operational models for delivery of apprenticeship degree pathways 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed on the composition of the Workgroup

Appendix C: AHECC Shared Interests

Apprenticeship and Higher Education Coordinating Committee Shared Interests – Agreed July 11, 2024

We have a shared interest in the following:

1. Expanding career pathways for apprentices is important. State-registered apprenticeship, associate degrees, and baccalaureate degrees all have value as career pathways.
 2. An apprenticeship system that builds on the successes of existing apprenticeships and supports the workforce needs of the future.
 3. More accessible pathways into registered apprenticeship and higher education for all Washington residents, particularly women, people of color, those in rural areas, and others who have historically been excluded.
 4. Increased collaboration and partnership among apprenticeship programs, state agencies, higher education, K-12 education, and businesses.
 5. A sustainable and transparent funding model for the delivery of related supplemental instruction.
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