

Draft Meeting Summary
AHECC: Apprenticeships and Higher Education Coordinating Committee
May 28, 2026 | 10:00am-2:30pm
Zoom

Attendees: *See Appendix A*

William D. Ruckelshaus Facilitation Team: Chris Page, Director of Projects; Melissa Girbach, Associate Facilitator; Gaby Diamond, Project Specialist

Council on Adult Experiential Learning Staff: Matt Waltz, Chief Growth Officer

Welcome & Introductions

Chris Page welcomed members and asked them to introduce themselves with their name, role, and affiliation.

Approve Agenda and Meeting Summary

Melissa Girbach recapped the April 9th meeting and asked members if they had any changes or comments from the meeting summary. Some members requested additional time to review the summary and will bring those comments to the Facilitation Team.

The group discussed additional edits to the March 5th meeting summary, which the group discussed. The following changes were made:

- Under the section titled, “50% Tuition Waiver and Survey” the second bullet point: remove the language about FTE allocation and identify that tuition is being paid.
- Under the section titled “Return on Investment (ROI) in Apprenticeship Learning” the first bullet point: add language around apprentices who earn 6,000 hours (or three years) or more can earn and MOT or Apprenticeship AAS.

The Committee approved the March 5th meeting summary with those edits. The Facilitation Team will bring the April 9th meeting summary to the next meeting on June 16th.

Updates from Committee Members

Several AHECC members attended the Apprenticeships for America (AFA) conference and shared highlights:

- There is an overall general shift towards states incorporating degree pathways for apprentices. Washington needs to figure out ways to bring better alignment between federal and state resources to advance opportunities.
- A lot of people in other states are facing the same challenges Washington is facing, especially expanding programs.
- Members noted that other states have more integrated workforce boards and education agencies, which helps business services understand apprenticeship better.
 - California’s structure and funding models were interesting to some members.
- Maryland’s structure is integrated and has many opportunities for incentives for employers. Their Governor also encouraged and adopted a goal to have 45% of high school graduates graduate with an industry credential or be in registered apprenticeship.

- One member suggested that the AHECC might want to consider a goal as a recommendation.

Funding Model Visual

Melissa shared the draft diagram of the funding model for members to give feedback:

- Include a note that the Career Connect Washington (CCW) funds are no longer available because the Legislature pulled the enrollment enhancement dollars. A member suggested adding a date range to the diagram to show that update.
- It could be helpful to name some of the fund sources on the diagram.
- Tuition is not paid by every apprentice into the system, so it should be represented twice, from the apprentice to college and again from apprenticeship sponsors to the college.
- A member suggested a larger global model, and then a smaller model specific to tuition.

DRAFT Potential Recommendations

Chris shared the potential recommendations on screen for members to see. A member asked if there was a way to abstain from agreeing to a recommendation, as they do not see their organization advocating for the recommendations but do not want to block consensus. Yes, the final report will note which member(s) abstained from consensus when the final decision point occurs for any given recommendation.

To see the track changes version of this document go to the AHECC Resource Library then open the Committee Materials folder and find the document titled, “[AHECC Potential Recs for 5-28-26 DRAFT](#)”. If you need access to the resource folder, please reach out to the Facilitation Team. The following recommendations were discussed:

Top Level Recommendation: The Legislature should fully fund the core FTE allocation for SBCTC and RAP funding that flows through L&I.

Recommendation #1: *Once top-level recommendation is fulfilled, AHECC recommends the Legislature allocate long-term funding for the “Apprenticeship Enhancement:” ongoing funding to support the effective partnerships between an apprenticeship and college at the local level without the restrictive and limited approach of the past, so the unique contractual structure for program delivery can be successful for both parties.*

Rationale for the specifics below: If we know what it costs for a college to partner with an apprenticeship program and for the apprenticeship program to sponsor with a college, it quantifies a public good that deserves targeted state funds (separate from the FTE allocation).

How this could work (NOTE: “college” in this case include both CTCs and universities):

- **INTENT:** Focus on enhancing effective existing structures as local parties (colleges and RAPs) negotiate their own agreements.
- **MECHANICS:** Create the “Apprenticeship Enhancement” funding allocation (in addition to the core FTE allocation for SBCTC and RAP admin funding for L&I) to flow through SBCTC (for CTCs) and L&I (for RAPs), based on which party bears more responsibility for which

costs. The allocation would recognize the value that both sides bring to the relationship and would establish the resources needed to support:

- A. Apprenticeship programs whose apprentices are located on or off campuses, or a mixture of both.*
- B. The entity that employs and pays for instruction.*
- C. The entity that supplies direct instruction costs (materials, equipment, textbooks, supplies, etc.)*
- D. CTCs/institutions and apprenticeship programs that work together to support existing degree pathways for apprentices and assist apprentices in degree attainment, e.g.:*
 - *Parties working to embed Gen Ed requirements into RSI.*
 - *Work to crosswalk RSI and OJT with CTC credit and degree requirements*

This also would help cover wraparound services, recruitment and retention, and other needs.

Member Feedback on Recommendation #1:

- If the top-level recommendation is fulfilled, there will be no need to negotiate a contract between the college and RAP because both sides will have their costs met. An MOU could be developed, but remuneration becomes irrelevant if both sides are fully funded.
 - To reflect this input, Chris added language, “This also would help cover wraparound services, recruitment and retention, and other needs.”
 - Members discussed the top-level recommendations and wanted to make clear that any subsequent recommendations would reflect the assumption that the Legislature should first FULLY FUND programs at both colleges and RAPs.
- All language around a “legislatively established formula” was removed.
- A member suggested adding a note to explain that the term ‘college’ is inclusive of CTCs and universities.

Recommendation #2: *Recommend the Legislature establish incentives for mechanisms to support apprentices in obtaining degrees and continued education, specifically;*

- *Messaging by RAPs, employers, apprentice program sponsors, and colleges around the value for apprentices obtaining higher ed credentials and degrees.*
- *Encouraging new RAPs to build curriculum with the goal of apprentice degree attainment, e.g., tying RSI to higher ed requirements, embedding Gen Ed learning into apprentice learning, etc.*
- *Apprentice programs and colleges that offer mechanisms that help apprentices obtain degrees (stackable, portable, industry-recognized higher ed credits, credentials, AAS-transfer, and other bridges to degrees). These mechanisms should be informed by data on apprentices’ demand for degrees in various industries and sectors.*

Member Feedback on Recommendation #2:

- There is already work completed, and more being done, to transcribe RSI and help apprentices find pathways to earn an AAS that leads to a BAS in CTCs. The work should

focus on the messaging apprentices receive detailing that there are pathways to degrees that do exist.

- Language around a direct transfer agreement (DTA) should be removed because that is a local agreement between colleges and four-year universities.
- The three main barriers to apprentices earning a degree are:
 - The ability to pay for additional credits
 - The incorporation of Gen Eds into RSI curriculum and,
 - Advisory support to the apprentice and navigating the system
- Members would like to see data on the number of apprentices obtaining degrees versus those not obtaining degrees.
- Members discussed the need for new models to consider building programs with degree attainment in mind.

Recommendation #3: *Create incentive programs/mechanisms for apprentices to complete the learning required to obtain credits and degrees. The funding needs to be flexible and responsive to changes (most notably including technology) and focus on apprentice retention in and completion of the student role.*

Related to General Education (Gen Ed) classes & credits:

- *Encourage key parties (state agencies, JATCs, apprenticeship program sponsors) to establish a regular model and proactive for apprentices to complete Gen Ed classes early in their program.*
 - *Consider building in Gen Ed requirements into apprenticeship preparation / bridge programs.*
 - *Identify opportunities to assess / assign credit for prior learning. NOTE: college would need to recognize it AND apprenticeship program would need to give advance standing.*
- *Allow candidates for Multi-Occupational Trades degree to take (and get credit for) Gen Ed classes at a different institution than they took RSI.*
- *Encourage colleges to work with apprenticeship programs to raise awareness of what classes are needed for certain credentials / degrees.*

Member Feedback on Recommendation #3:

- The focus should be on general degree completion. It would help to see apprentices' learning be recognized through things like credit for prior learning.
- The group removed "incentives" in the first bullet point because the intention is to create a regular model to make Gen Ed completion possible and to support the process happening regularly.
- Members discussed "Pay for Performance", but they did not decide to include it in the recommendation since it is a specific tool, and the goal of this recommendation should be broad.
- There are other potential ways apprentices can get to degree attainment besides Gen Eds, like credit for OJT and credits in RSI. There are multiple avenues to focus on helping apprentices attain degrees.

Recommendation #4: *Leverage (and modify, as needed) apprentice reporting requirements to increase the number of credits an apprentice receives. (Many apprenticeship programs use apps or have robust learning management systems to track their education).*

- *Multiple ways an apprentice can fulfill Gen Ed requirements / outcomes. They track both time and learning components.*
- *While decisions to assign credit occur at the local college level, there is potential for a statewide framework. (CAEL doing work now to look at this.) Would help to have consistency around how colleges handle PLAs; where RAPs work with multiple colleges, colleges could potentially work together on PLAs.*
- *To allow the learning to gain recognition by the college once it is reported: instructors or curriculum developers (at colleges and apprentice programs) could work to identify and validate Gen Ed competencies in RTI/RSI. This takes time, effort, and funding. Can AI help with this?*
- *This involves Prior Learning Assessments and ties to the suggestion to embed Gen Ed classes into early learning (RSI and OJT) of apprentice programs*

Member Feedback on Recommendation #4:

- A member suggested the use of AI to help transcribe credits, but other members noted that there are not enough data or consistent data to upload to an AI model and ensure that the information is correct.
- There are a few different ways to show how students have reached the required competencies consistent with Gen Ed requirements. Some programs RSI and training curriculum are proprietary, which could complicate the cross-walking of courses and on the job training.
- CTCs already use prior learning assessments to assess OJT credentials, and because so few apprentices have pursued degrees, the bounds of what's allowable to give credit haven't been tested.
- A consistent message or statewide framework could be introduced, and SBCTC can suggest colleges use that, but individual colleges have every right to say no or implement credentialing through a different framework.
- Not every program is the same or uses the same tracking system, so the facilitation team added language about a "learning management system" to allow for flexibility of what system the apprenticeship is already using.

Recap Discussion, Action Items, and Next Steps

Chris thanked members for the great discussion and their participation throughout the whole process. The Facilitation Team will consolidate the document and share it with members in advance of the June 16th meeting.

Appendix A: Attendees X=attended (all virtual)

Committee member	Attend	Alternate member	Attend
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Andrea Anderson, Sr. Director of Program Development and Education, Apprenti			
Heather Hudson, Deputy Policy Advisor – Childcare, Education, and Workforce, Governor’s Office (ex-officio)?		Dawn Gearhart	
Maryann Brathwaite, Executive Director, NW Career Colleges Federation	X		
Marie Bruin, Workforce Education Director, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges	X	Genevieve Howard, Workforce Policy Associate	X
Joyce Hammer, Deputy Executive Director of Education, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges			
Karen Dove, Executive Director, Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Employment for Women			
Julie Garver, Director of Policy and Academic Affairs, Council of Presidents	X		
Rachel McAloon, Apprenticeship Program Manager, Department of Labor and Industries, Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC)		Jordan Shepherd, Apprenticeship Policy Advisor; Brittany Craighead, Compliance Specialist; Todd Tveten	X (Todd)
Kimberly Hetrick, Director, Career Connect Washington		Therese Williams, Associate Director	
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		Lyle Irimata, Assistant Director, Needs Based Programs, Contracts and Reporting	X
Kairie Pierce, Sector Lead, Innovation Workforce, Department of Commerce			
Heather Kurtenbach, Executive Secretary, Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council		Erin Frasier, Assistant Executive Secretary, Washington State Building Trades	
Christina Riley, Independent Consultant & Co-Chair of Tribal Subcommittee of State Apprenticeship Council	X		
Halene Sigmund, President, Construction Industry Training Council of Washington			

April Sims, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO		Shana Peschek, Machinists Institute	X
		Ryan Davis, Machinists Institute	
Donald Smith, Policy Manager, Long-Term Care Workforce		Eleni Papadakis, Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board	
		Maddy Thompson, Executive Director	
Sheila Steiner, Senior Director, Policy and Engagement, Independent Colleges of Washington		Terri Standish-Kuon, President and Chief Executive Officer	
Lynn Strickland, Executive Director, AJAC	X		
Becky Wallace, Assistant Superintendent, Secondary Education and Pathways for Preparation, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction	X	Krista Fox, Director of Career and Technical Education	
Emily Wittman, Government Affairs Director for Education, Workforce and Healthcare, Association of Washington Business			
Additional Members			
Heather Winfrey, Curriculum Coordinator, Seattle Area Pipe Trades			
Cori Morris, Professional Development Navigator, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs			
Laura Kingston, Executive Dean, Georgetown- South Seattle College			
Matt Poischbeg, Advanced Manufacturing Skills Center (AMSC)/ Washington Aerospace Training & Research (WATR) Edmonds College	X		