

CONSENT ITEM (RESOLUTION 26-02-04)

February 19, 2026

Tab 5

Tacoma Community College - Proposed Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

Brief Description

In October 2025, the State Board adopted a revised approval process, selection criteria, and application materials for community and technical colleges seeking to offer an applied baccalaureate program. The final step in the approval process requires State Board action on the college's application to offer the proposed bachelor's degree.

How does this item link to the State Board's Strategic Plan?

In June 2023, the State Board adopted an updated strategic plan, which focuses on four goals: increase access and retention among populations who can benefit the most from college; improve completion and transfer rates for students across all program types; provide flexible career-training options that are responsive to the needs of businesses and industries; and secure resources and develop systemwide strategies to support colleges' financial sustainability and resiliency. Colleges offering baccalaureate degrees meet the needs of changing economies by increasing the number of skilled employees in the areas of greatest demand. Through bachelor level degrees, colleges create greater access to higher education by enrolling underserved populations, particularly place-bound working adults, and ensure community and technical colleges are affordable and accessible for students. Community and technical college bachelor's degree programs provide access for students who have been historically underserved by and had limited access to bachelor's-level education. They also meet the local workforce needs and allow students to remain in their home communities.

Background information and analysis

Tacoma Community College (TCC) is proposing to offer a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) degree, an expansion that builds directly upon their Associate of Arts in Computer Science Direct Transfer Agreement (AA in CS DTA) degree, which was established in 2016 and has both consistent enrollment and successful student outcomes. The proposed program is designed to create a seamless pathway to a baccalaureate degree for TCC's current students and those throughout the broader South Puget Sound region, addressing a critical need for accessible, local higher education in computer science.

The program learning outcomes for computer science were developed to align with the guidelines from the Computing Accreditation Commission of the American Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). The curriculum includes coursework in both theoretical computer science (discrete mathematics, data structures, and algorithms) and applied computer science (cloud computing, information security, software engineering) as well as courses in Artificial Intelligence and

Machine Learning, Ethical Decision Making, and Professional and Organizational Communication.

The program design features robust support systems for students in partnership with both on-campus and industry partners. The program is offered in a cohort model, leveraging evidence that indicates peer/community support helps students' persistence and likelihood of successful program completion. The Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) program on campus provides a layer of academic and personal support, with a goal of increasing diversity in STEM fields including computer science. In addition, Tacoma Community College is establishing partnerships with workforce intermediaries Mentors in Tech (MinT) and CodeDay that provides students with tech industry-specific career mentoring and coaching, opportunities for accessible micro-internships and industry-mentored capstone projects, and connections to the professional community. These collaborations are intended to support student success as they progress through the academic program and transition into employment.

The Statement of Need for the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science was presented by Tacoma Community College at the October 2025 board meeting. If approved, this program will be Tacoma Community College's eighth bachelor's degree offering and Tacoma Community College will be the 16th college in our system to be authorized to offer a BS Computer Science program.

Recommendation/preferred result

This proposal meets criteria established by statute and Board policy based on staff review and feedback from peer reviewers from the community and technical college system. Staff recommends State Board action on the following:

- Resolution 26-02-04 approving Tacoma Community College's Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

Policy Manual Change Yes No

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**STATE OF WASHINGTON
STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES
RESOLUTION 26-02-04**

A resolution to approve Tacoma Community College's application to offer a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science upon recommendation of the State Board for Community and Technical College staff.

WHEREAS, Substitute Senate Bill 5401, passed by the 2021 Washington State Legislature, authorizes the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to approve bachelor of science degree programs in computer science offered by community and technical colleges; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the Washington State Legislature's requirement, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges developed objective criteria for the approval of community and technical college applied baccalaureate degrees; and


WHEREAS, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges staff found that Tacoma Community College's application provided evidence that met or exceeded all objective selection criteria and will expand baccalaureate degree capacity in the state;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges approves the recommendation to authorize Tacoma Community College's Bachelor of Science in Computer Science;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges authorizes the Executive Director to make adjustments to this action, including any necessary changes to the state board's policy manual, as necessary, for actions taken by the Governor, Legislature, data corrections, externally imposed restrictions or guidelines, uniform accounting and reporting requirements, and unanticipated changes in state or federal law.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED on February 19, 2026

Attest



Nate Humphrey, secretary



Martin Valadez, chair