

## **CONSENT ITEM (RESOLUTION 26-02-05)**

February 19, 2026

Tab 5

### **Tacoma Community College - Proposed Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN)**

#### **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**

The proposed Registered Nurse (RN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at Tacoma Community College (TCC) intends to provide an additional pathway to a BSN degree, expand and increase capacity to grow the local BSN-prepared nurse workforce in a high-demand field, attract a more inclusive workforce that reflects the diversity of the surrounding population, and remove barriers to admitting potential diverse nursing students. The RN-to-BSN program will build upon a solid foundation of existing programs, including the Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to RN, and Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program, which has been offered at TCC since 1965, and with National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) pass rates exceeding the national average for the past seven years.

The end-to-end program design, from admissions to coursework to clinical practice experiences, is structured with flexible options for students. Hybrid flexible (HyFlex) is an instructional modality that combines face-to-face and online learning, allowing students to choose how they participate in each

class session: either in-person, remotely via live video, or online asynchronously. Information sessions and application workshops will be offered via HyFlex and fully online formats, making them accessible to applicants who live outside of Tacoma, work full time, or have caregiving responsibilities. The RN to BSN curriculum itself is designed as HyFlex and largely online, with practice experiences arranged in the student's local community wherever possible, which allows students to remain employed, fulfill family obligations, and avoid relocation costs.

Students will have two options for BSN program entry: (1) as a Registered Nurse (RN) or (2) through conditional early enrollment as an ADN Nursing student in their second year of full-time RN study. The application process to the program has been developed to reduce barriers to admission by aligning with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) holistic admissions guidelines. To reduce structural barriers for place-bound, rural, and working nurses, all application steps can be completed online. If the number of qualified applicants exceeds the available capacity, the program will use a two-step selection process that maintains principles of open access that avoids overreliance on GPA ranking and high stakes testing that disproportionately disadvantages students from historically underrepresented groups: all qualified applicants who meet the published criteria will have an equal chance of selection.

The proposed BSN program curriculum was developed to meet requirements specified by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) for BSN-prepared nurses. Prior to implementation of the program, Tacoma Community College will seek program approval from the Washington Board of Nursing (WABON). The RN-to-BSN program also aligns with Tacoma Community College's existing Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS), Community Health Professional program, where selected courses in population and global health, health equity, and health promotion are co-taught and shared between the BAS and BSN programs. In this environment, nursing students and community health students are exposed to the roles that each profession serves in case management, care coordination, local health department work, community outreach, social services, and community health organizing and provides students with experience working in interprofessional teams that share a goal of improving health outcomes for patients.

Tacoma Community College's Associate Dean of Nursing has initiated conversations to develop a formal collaboration with the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) School of Nursing and Healthcare Leadership to create an ADN to Master of Nursing (MN) enrollment pathway. This pathway allows students who have completed the first year of the ADN program to begin upper-division RN-to-BSN coursework at either TCC or UWT during summer quarters, with full reciprocal acceptance of BSN coursework between the two institutions. After completing the BSN, students can transition directly into UWT's Master of Nursing (MN) program designed for working nurses. This partnership is especially beneficial for place-bound nurses in South Puget Sound, who will be able to progress from ADN to BSN to MN in approximately five to six years without relocating or stepping away from the workforce.

The Statement of Need for this proposed program was presented at the October 2024 State Board meeting. If approved, this program will be Tacoma Community College's seventh bachelor's degree offering and would be the ninth college in our system to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing 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 26-02-05 approving Tacoma Community College's Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Policy Manual Change Yes  No

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**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES  
RESOLUTION 26-02-05**

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

**WHEREAS**, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2483, passed by the 2012 Washington State Legislature, authorizes the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to approve all applied baccalaureate degree programs 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 Nursing;

**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