1. The State’s Largest System of Higher Education
Washingtonians — at all ages and stages — rely on our open-door colleges to gain the skills they need, when they need them, and at a more affordable cost. Last year, over 356,000 students chose Washington’s community and technical colleges, making our system of 34 colleges the largest system of higher education in Washington.

2. A Vital Niche
Offering a mix of job training programs, degrees, and classes that transfer to four-year universities, community and technical colleges fill an important niche in higher education.

3. A Less Expensive Option
Our colleges are a considerably less expensive option at $4,230 per year for a full-time student.

4. A Pathway to Bachelor’s Degrees
Nearly 40% of public baccalaureate graduates in Washington start at a community or technical college. Students who transfer from two-year colleges to four-year universities do just as well as those who started as freshmen, with similar GPAs and credits earned.

5. Training for In-Demand Jobs
Our colleges provide the job training students want and employers need. These “high demand” programs — in fields like dental hygiene, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing — move people into good jobs and help us compete in the global economy. Eight percent of students in our workforce programs already have bachelor’s degrees.¹

6. Value Added
Community and technical colleges and our current and former students add $20.5 billion to Washington’s economy each year.³

7. A Diverse Student Body
The median age of our students is 26. Forty-seven percent work, 25% are parents, 39% receive need-based financial aid, and 48% are students of color.⁴

8. A First Step
Our colleges provide adult basic education, high school completion programs, and precollege (or “remedial”) education, providing that first, most important stepping stone to job training, certificates, and degrees.

¹. 39%: The Role of Transfer in the Attainment of Baccalaureate Degrees at Washington’s Public Bachelor’s Degree Institutions, class of 2016, May 4, 2018. STEM refers to science, technology, engineering and math.
². SBCTC 2019-20 enrollment dashboard. Data sorted for fall quarter with “other” prior education category excluded.
⁴. SBCTC 2019-20 enrollment dashboard. In comparison, 32 percent of the state’s population identifies as people of color.