



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

A SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE IMPACTS TO WASHINGTON'S COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

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This report, which includes active links to legislation and other information, is available electronically at the State Board for Community and Technical College's (SBCTC) Legislative Outreach webpage: https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/legislative-outreach/default.aspx.

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A Letter from the Executive Director

Legislators returned to Olympia in January for the 2025 session facing a \$15 billion operating budget shortfall. Focusing on passing balanced operating, capital, and transportation budgets, they adjourned 105 days later on April 27.

In response to the budget gap, the community and technical college system set priorities to minimize budget cuts in order to continue the work of maximizing educational opportunities, continue to open equitable access to postsecondary education, and prepare Washingtonians for current and future workforce needs.

State Board staff and leadership met with legislators and staff in numerous virtual meetings to share the system priorities. Committee testimony, even in policy committee testimony, was focused on the fiscal needs of the college system.

Engagement and attentiveness through this difficult and fast-paced legislative session resulted in several positive outcomes for Washington's community and technical colleges. Successes included:

- Minimal cuts to the community and technical college system in the 2025-2027 biennial operating budget and maintenance of the current level of funding for the remainder of the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- A capital budget that funded \$169 million in minor works and preservation needs at all 34 colleges as well as funding for major construction funding for four vital infrastructure projects.
- Passage of several bills supported by the college system.

As with past legislative sessions, leadership from across the college system — including presidents, college trustees, State Board staff, vice presidents, deans, faculty, students, and community partners — advocated for system priorities. All who participated told their stories to members of the Legislature, positively impacting the decisions and outcomes from a very challenging session.

During the interim period before the start of the 2026 legislative session, the community and technical college system will continue to build relationships with legislators and stakeholders to continue telling the story of our colleges and the benefit we provide to our state. We look forward to continuing our work together as a college system as we focus on our students by preparing them to enter or reenter the workforce, to transfer to continue their education, to build basic skills and knowledge, and to continue their pathways to a better life in Washington state.

Warm Regards,

Chris Bailey, Interim Executive Director

State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Budget Summaries

Capital budget

The 2025-27 biennial capital budget, <u>SB 5195</u>, was signed into law May 20, 2025. The enacted \$7.5 billion budget included \$379 million in new funding that will benefit every community and technical college in the system. The appropriation includes:

- \$169,974,000 for minor repair and program projects throughout the system, \$16.7 million less than the system request. The Legislature made the following changes to minor works:
 - Increased the maximum total cost of individual minor works projects from \$2 million to \$4 million.
 - Collapsed six distinct categories of minor works project funding into a single appropriation.
 - Includes a report to OFM and the Legislature in December of each even year of minor works projects completed and underway.
 - Removed the requirement for agencies to submit minor works project changes to OFM for approval.
 - Reinforces that minor works projects are expected to be funded during the biennium appropriated.
- \$182,840,000 for five major construction projects:
 - o Grays Harbor Community College, Lake Swano Dam
 - Olympic College, Innovation and Technology Learning Center
 - Lower Columbia College, Center for Vocational and Transitional Studies
 - o Columbia Basin Community College, Performing Arts Building Replacement
 - Whatcom Community College, Technology and Engineering Center
- \$3 million for Career Preparation and Launch equipment grants.
- Maintained a \$22.8 million preventive maintenance and facility repair fund swap for operating related expenses.

The State Board's request included reappropriations for major projects that had unspent funds and were still in progress. It also included reappropriations for select minor works projects that had been delayed due to circumstances beyond the colleges' control. The enacted budget incorporated all requested reappropriations, totaling \$307 million.

The Legislature also included \$55 million in local spending authority to five colleges for projects seeking alternative financing authority:

- Columbia Basin College construct student housing
- Edmonds College acquire student housing
- Clover Park Technical College acquire and renovate an Eastside Tacoma training facility
- Renton Technical College continue renovations in Building J
- South Puget Sound Community College construct an athletic field and related support amenities

Operating budget

The 2025-2027 biennial operating budget, <u>ESSB 5167</u>, was signed into law on May 20, 2025. Considering the significant budget challenges faced by the Legislature during the 2025 session, we appreciate that reductions to the community and technical college system were relatively modest. Efforts were made to preserve core programs and services that have the most widespread impact on student success. The two most substantial adjustments to overall funding levels in the biennial budget include the correction of a previous duplication error and a 0.5% reduction to the state general fund.

The 2025 supplemental operating budget preserved the \$28.6 million appropriated to Washington's 34 community and technical colleges for fiscal year 2025.

Policy investments

- \$408,000 ongoing support for the Hospitality Center of Excellence created in 2024
 - Vetoed by Gov. Bob Ferguson
- \$340,000 ongoing funding to expand the student aid outreach and completion initiative program in RCW 28B.50.940 to community and technical colleges located within North Central Educational Services District 171
- \$616,000 continued implementation of the CTE Dual Credit Pilot 2SHB 1273 (one-time funding)
- \$150,000 one-time funding to Edmonds College to provide counseling services, financial assistance, and reentry services to students who are military veterans
- \$7,000 one-time funding for implementation of SB 5189 Competency-Based Education

Policy eliminations and reductions

- \$5 million eliminates funding to promote workforce development in trucking and truckingrelated supply chain industries and the school bus driving industry
- \$6 million eliminates career launch enrollment funding
- \$5.4 million eliminates funding provided for each community and technical college to contract with a community-based organization to assist with financial aid access and support in communities
- \$4 million 50% reduction to the funding available for healthcare opportunity grants
- \$4.67 million 50% reduction to the cybersecurity academic enrollment funding
- \$1.26 million eliminates inflationary increase funding for Centers of Excellence
- \$12.3 million state general fund reduction to higher education
- \$204 thousand Hospitality Center of Excellence

2025 Legislation

State Board staff monitored approximately 150 proposed bills during the 2025 session. Staff represented the interests of the community and technical college system by analyzing bills, providing testimony to legislative committees, and collaborating with legislators, their staff, and college employees on potential amendments and impacts of the legislation.

Below are the bills affecting the community and technical college system that passed the Legislature. Descriptions include:

- Bill number
- Prime sponsor
- Bill short title
- Bill description as signed into law
- Link to the session law
- Any SBCTC or college implications

The information contained in this section will also serve as a resource for State Board and college staff as they track bill implementation.

Administration/governance

SHB 1462 (Duerr): Reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with hydrofluorocarbons

HB 1462 sets the stage for new restrictions on the sale of virgin refrigerants to take effect in 2030 and 2033, along with development of a robust, statewide market in reclaimed refrigerants. The new legislation isn't expected to have a significant impact to college facilities or operations.

Session Law: Chapter 313, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

HB 1486 (Salahuddin): Adding a student member to the State Board

This legislation adds a student member to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The student must be 18 years or older at the time of appointment, enrolled at a CTC, and must serve for one year. The student member must excuse themselves from participating or voting on matters related to hiring, discipline, personnel, or issues pertaining to pending litigation. The State Board is authorized to adopt rules for this purpose.

Session Law: Chapter 91, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SB 1543 (Doglio): Increasing compliance pathways for the clean buildings performance standard

SB 1543 granted the Department of Commerce authority to update the Clean Buildings Performance Standard in alignment with updates to the ASHRAE 100 standard, and to create alternative compliance pathways and metrics. We do not anticipate any significant impact upon our system and will engage in Commerce's newest round of rulemaking later this year.

Session Law: Chapter 264, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

Education/instruction

SB 5189 (Wellman): Supporting implementation of competency-based education

This bill codifies competency-based education for high school programs and expands the implementation of the practice. It all leads to the development of a competency-based high school transcript, with wide stakeholder engagement, for Washington's high school students.

Session Law: Chapter 278, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will participate and guide the development of a competency-based high school diploma.
- The State Board will provide technical assistance to colleges on expanded definition of competency-based education and the use of the competency-based high school transcript.

Tuition and financial aid

HB 1556 (Entenman): High school completers tuition waivers

Removed the age floor of 19 to access tuition and fee waivers for students taking college-levels classes to complete high school diploma requirements, allowing any high school completion student to access these waivers is provided by the college.

Session Law: Chapter 42, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will provide policy guidance for colleges interested in providing this waiver.
- The State Board will provide technical assistance to utilize this waiver in ctcLink.

SB 5543 (Boehnke): Eligibility equity for College Bound Scholarship

This bill added high school equivalency to the eligible credentials for the College Bound Scholarship.

Session Law: Chapter 288, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will provide guidance to the Washington Student Achievement Council on the intent and needs to implement the eligibility expansion.
- The State Board will provide guidance to colleges on the expanded eligibility for the College Bound Scholarship.

Student Services

E2SSB 5355 (Orwall): Improving safety at institutions of higher education while supporting student survivors of sexual assault

This law amends RCW 28B.10.735 and 70.125.110 and adds a chapter to RCW 28B.112.

In RCW 28B.112, postsecondary educational institutions may not propose, request, or pressure students reporting sexual misconduct with law enforcement or a civil court action to enter into a nondisclosure agreement related to the alleged sexual misconduct by another student or employee of the institution.

In RCW 28B.10.735, a state university, regional university, and the state college are to add the phone number of a regional community-based organization focused on the survivors of sexual misconduct to student, faculty, and staff ID cards.

In RCW 70.125.110, the rights of sexual assault survivors have been amended to include additional written information about policies governing the collection and preservation of sexual assault kits and notice of their intended destruction.

Session Law: Chapter 124, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- Community and technical colleges will not propose, request, or pressure students who report sexual misconduct with law enforcement or to enter into a nondisclosure agreement.
- Colleges are exempt from the requirement of adding the contact information for a regional community-based organization focused on sexual assault survivors to ID cards. However, it may be a best practice to do so voluntarily.

Workforce

HB 1167 (Shavers): Educational opportunities for careers in maritime professions

Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to specifically explore opportunities and partnerships to offer watchkeeping credentials approved by the US Coast Guard.

Expanding and strengthening the accessibility, stability, and uniformity of secondary work-integrated learning opportunities, including career and technical education, career connected learning, regional apprenticeship programs, career and technical education core plus programs, work-based learning, internships and externships, opportunities that lead or articulate to public and private postsecondary education programs approved by the US Coast Guard for awarding the standards of training, certification, and watchkeeping credentials, and other types of work-integrated learning.

Session Law: Chapter 252, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will identify a person to sit on the task force.
- The State Board and colleges will coordinate with OSPI to align pathways for students.
- The State Board and colleges will review legislative changes specific to age restrictions in current fields and be prepared to review program requirements related to age.

2SHB 1273 (Paul): CTE dual credit access

The revised legislation is a significant reduction from the original intent. The bill was scaled back due to budget limitations. The substitute legislation, which was partially funded, continues the existing CTE Dual Credit proviso pilot in Northwest Washington. The next two years will focus on implementation of strategies identified in the first two years of this project, continue efforts to share learning across all 34 community and technical colleges, and develop policy and statue language in the final legislative report. Partners in this work include State Board, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, colleges, and local educational services districts.

Session Law: Chapter 104, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will serve as lead agency.
- The State Board will contract with Northwest Educational Service District for key regional deliverables.
- The participating colleges will continue to engage staff, faculty, and K12 partners toward project deliverables.
- The State Board and OSPI will partner on recommended legislative changes to enhance CTE dual credit programs.

ESHB 1414 (Connors): Improving access to career opportunities

Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to expand membership on the statewide career and technical education task force, ensuring representation from specific roles and agencies. The focus of this legislation is to review and propose changes to relevant laws, rules, and policies necessary to improve students' access to sustained interactions with industry and community professionals and provide firsthand engagement with the tasks required for the various career fields, while also maintaining appropriate protection for the safety and welfare of minors. This legislation specifies activities for 16- and 17-year-old students in career training programs.

Session Law: Chapter 61, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board will identify a person to sit on the task force.
- The State Board and colleges will coordinate with OSPI to align pathways for students.
- The State Board and colleges will review legislative changes specific to age restrictions in current fields and be prepared to review program requirements related to age.

ESHB 1533 (Schmidt): Specialty electricians/apprenticeships

For any general journey level electrician apprenticeship program operated by an apprenticeship committee representing a single employer, the employer may use an apprentice registered in the program to perform work under the apprentice's valid specialty electrician certificate of competency while participating in the program and without the employer having to change the apprentice's status in the program if the employer:

- Submits to L&I a detailed attestation of the apprentice's hours worked under the apprentice's valid specialty electrician certificate of competency on a quarterly basis.
- Provides annual notice to the apprentice of the employer's intent to use the apprentice for
 performing specialty work, which must describe the requirements of the bill, and the wage
 the apprentice will be paid for performing the specialty work, and inform the apprentice that
 performing such work for the employer may delay the apprentice's next wage progression in
 the apprenticeship program based on low hour accumulation.

The specialty work does not count toward the hours of work experience required to complete the apprenticeship program. The employer is exempt from the apprenticeship program's standard requiring reasonably continuous employment, so long as the employer provides the apprentice at least 800 working hours each year that count toward the hours of work experience required to complete the program.

Session Law: Chapter 49.04 RCW, 2025 Laws (effective Jan. 1, 2026)

ESSHB 1648 (Dent): Modifying childcare provider qualifications

Extends the timeline for childcare providers to complete staff qualification requirements from Aug. 1, 2026 to at least Aug. 1, 2030. Provides that five years of work experience in licensed childcare qualifies as a demonstration of experience-based competency in fulfillment of staff qualification requirements if the provider has held employment in a licensed childcare without a break in service since Aug. 1, 2021 as of effective date of the legislation or has cumulative five years of employment. Requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to convene a stakeholder group to assist in identifying strategies to improve staff qualifications verification process.

Session Law: Chapter 281, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- Postponing the deadline will likely reduce the surge of prospective students who were aiming to meet staff qualifications by Aug. 1, 2026.
- Providers who were employed prior to the effective date of this legislation will have more time to use the existing alternative work-based pathway to meet staff qualifications, potentially eliminating the need to enroll in CTC programs for this group.

HB 1722 (Connors): Reviewing state restrictions affecting students in CTE programs

Requires specified state agencies to revise rules or policies that have been identified as barriers to 16- and 17-year-old students being able to continue with more advanced coursework or otherwise work in a profession after completing training and certification or licensure. These age restrictions impact when a student can start a program, test for a license or certification, or work in a profession for which they have been issued a certification or license. Industries and training specifically addressed in this legislation include emergency medical services and fire services training.

Session Law: Chapter 98, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

- The State Board and colleges will coordinate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to align pathways for students.
- The State Board and colleges will review legislative changes specific to age restrictions in current fields and be prepared to review program requirements related to age.

EHB 1874 (Morgan): Training requirements for treatment of textured hair

Requires cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, and hair designers to receive training on the care, styling, and treatment of textured hair. In establishing curricula for the training of cosmetologists, barbers, estheticians, and hair designers, the Department of Licensing must include training on the care, styling, and treatment of textured hair which must include:

- techniques for cutting, styling, and chemically treating textured hair
- instruction on products and tools specifically designed for textured hair

- best practices for hair health and scalp care for clients with textured hair
- cultural competency and historical education on the significance of textured hair in diverse communities

The number of training hours required under these licenses is not increased. Textured hair is defined as hair that, rather than lying straight, naturally has a distinct shape or pattern such as coils, curls, kinks, spirals, or waves.

Session Law: Chapter 194, 2025 Laws (effective March 1, 2026)

SBCTC/college implications

Several colleges have programs that are subject to this legislation. They will need to monitor Department of Licensing training requirements communications to ensure that the care for textured hair is incorporated into existing curriculum if not already covered. The new requirements will not change the number of training hours required, and so it is anticipated that colleges will incorporate instruction specific to textured hair resulting in minimal impacts.

SB 5682 (Warnick): Washington Customized Employment Training Program

Extends the expiration date for the Washington Customized Employment Training Program's business and occupation tax credit to July 1, 2031. Modifies the report on the Customized Employment Training Program required to be submitted by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Session Law: Chapter 289, 2025 Laws (effective July 27, 2025)

SBCTC/college implications

This was requested by the State Board.

- The timely extension of the B&O tax credit associated with the Customized Training Program ensures continuity of program operations and promotion of program to businesses.
- The incorporation of Legislative Auditor and Citizens Commission recommendations into the
 reporting requirements made of the State Board ensures that the State Board will have the
 opportunity to communicate efforts it will take to increase visibility and access to the
 program by more businesses across Washington, including non-manufacturing enterprises.

System Involvement

Community and technical college system representatives are essential to a successful legislative session. College presidents, district chancellors, college trustees, and students took extra efforts, outside of regular system meetings, to meet with legislators and their staff from their home and college legislative districts. Members of the State Board, with leadership from Chair Martin Valadez, also participated through meetings, letters, emails, and phone calls to key legislators.

A total of 51 system representatives and State Board staff — 28 college system representatives and 23 State Board staff members — testified 71 times before House and Senate committees:

- Approximately 71 times on bills
- 4 times at work sessions

Through their participation, the college system was well represented. The below list of presidents, chancellors, trustees, students, system advocates, and State Board staff testified on behalf of the community and technical college system during the 2025 legislative session.

SBCTC staff

- Chris Bailey, interim executive director
- Bill Belden, workforce education policy associate
- Nicole Daughtry, policy associate for basic education for adults
- Jennifer Dellinger, policy associate of workforce education
- Travis Dulany, associate director of research
- Will Durden, director of basic education for adults
- Maya Esquivido-Strom, interim director of tribal government affairs
- Isabella Flores, student legislative intern
- Troy Goracke, basic education for adults policy associate
- Choi Halladay, deputy executive director for business operations
- Joyce Hammer, deputy executive director for education
- Arlen Harris, legislative director
- Sam Herriot, government relations liaison
- Julie Huss, director of human resources
- Darrell Jennings, capital budget director
- Carolyn McKinnon, workforce education policy associate
- Christine McMullin, student services policy associate
- Anna Olson, workforce education policy associate
- Jessica Perez, interim policy associate for student services
- Khanh Pham, student legislative intern
- Stephanie Rock, program administrator for dual credit & K-12 alignment
- Jamie Traugott, director of dual credit and K-12 alignment
- Stephanie Winner, operating budget director

Presidents and chancellors

- Suzy Ames, Peninsula College
- Chemene Crawford, Everett Community College
- Bob Mohrbacher, Centralia College
- Amy Morrison, Lake Washington Institute of Technology
- Rosie Rimando-Chareunsap, Seattle Colleges
- Amit Singh, Edmonds College
- Tim Stokes, South Puget Sound Community College

Students

- Kaitlynn Albenesius, Pierce College
- Rick Anderson, Columbia Basin College
- Anna Grapeniuk, South Puget Sound Community College
- Ranayjah Jackson, Green River College
- Daniel Ngoy, Bellevue College
- Randy Phillips, Tacoma Community College
- Marie Santos, South Puget Sound Community College
- Kyra Sung, South Puget Sound Community College
- Rae Watkins, South Puget Sound Community College

Faculty, staff, administrators, and associates

- Kenny Austin, Adult Education Advisory Council
- Jennifer Barber, South Puget Sound Community College
- Patrick G. Blaine, Whatcom Community College
- Krista Francis, Peninsula College
- Colleen Hall, Columbia Basin College
- Jacob Jackson, Renton Technical College
- Jim Mulick, Edmonds College
- Mike Nielsen, Seattle Colleges
- Alyson Rotter, Olympic College
- Denise Shoot, Cannon Construction LLC
- Don Sosnowski, Clover Park Technical College
- Sarah Stiffler, Spokane Community College

System Senate Confirmations

Trustees and State Board members play a critical role in shaping the vision, governance, and accountability of our community and technical college system. Their leadership helps ensure that institutions remain responsive to the educational and workforce needs of local communities. The following section provides details on trustees and State Board members confirmed by the Washington State Senate during the 2025 legislative session in chronological order:

- SGA 9004 Anna Franz, Big Bend Community College
- SGA 9005 Richard E. Leigh Jr., Bellevue College
- SGA 9006 Arlene M. Pierini, Green River College
- SGA 9007 James R. Sayce, Grays Harbor College
- SGA 9008 Therese N. Pasquier, Pierce College
- SGA 9009 Kimberly L. Harper, Columbia Basin
- SGA 9010 Paula Arno Martinez, Wenatchee Valley College
- SGA 9011 Cristhian A. Canseco Juarez, Clark College
- SGA 9012 Joseph S. Bowman IV, Highline College
- SGA 9014 Markiko K. Doerner, Skagit Valley College
- SGA 9015 Alice Phillips, Clover Park Technical College
- SGA 9020 Kelly A. Shepherd, Everett Community College
- SGA 9021 Ozell M. Jackson III, Skagit Valley College
- SGA 9024 Steven H. Yoshihara, Community Colleges of Spokane
- SGA 9049 Chelsea Mason-Placek, State Board
- SGA 9062 Kady. D. Titus, State Board
- SGA 9083 Christopher T. Thomas, Centralia College
- SGA 9088 Steven J. Drew, South Puget Sound Community College
- SGA 9115 Bernal C. Baca, State Board
- SGA 9128 Lauren N. Adler, Pierce College
- SGA 9131 Tasnim S. Tayiba, Edmonds College
- SGA 9173 Wallace Webster II, Edmonds College
- SGA 9177 Yongmi E. Yim, State Board







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