

2027–29 OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST

September 11, 2026

Washington's community and technical colleges are facing growing operating cost pressures that are limiting their ability to sustain instruction, student services, and workforce education. For the 2027–29 biennium, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) requests the following priority investments:

Fully Fund Compensation and Central Service Increases



Under current funding policies, CTCs must use tuition revenue and other local funds to cover part of the cost of state-approved compensation increases and statewide central (administrative) services.

As these costs continue to grow, CTCs have fewer flexible dollars available for instruction, student support, workforce training, and other core services. In addition, CTCs often rely on reserves or one-time savings to manage these costs — but those strategies are not sustainable.

Fully funding compensation and central service increases will help **preserve tuition revenue for educational purposes, strengthen CTCs' financial stability, and keep resources focused on students**. This request would provide full state funding for:

- Initiative 732 cost-of-living adjustments under RCW 28B.50.465 and RCW 28B.50.468.
- Classified employee collective bargaining agreements.
- Exempt and non-represented employee salary increases.
- Other legislatively approved cost increases, including employee pay and central government services

Fully Fund Rising Utility Costs



Over the last five years, utility costs have increased more than 35% across all CTC campuses. These increases have offset our energy conservation efforts. While we have reduced our overall energy consumption, our utility costs continue to rise.

Because of these increases, CTCs are forced to absorb growing costs for essential services, such as electricity, water, and sewer.

Rising utility costs are unavoidable and place increasing pressure on CTC's operating budget. As a result, CTCs have fewer resources available to serve students, support communities, and deliver mission-centered services.

Additional state support will help ensure limited CTC resources **remain focused on instruction, student services, and workforce training** rather than covering unavoidable utility expenses.

Increased state support will also **help keep campuses safe, functional, and accessible to the students who rely on them most**, especially low-income, first-generation, and historically underrepresented students.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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