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“I’ve been able to clearly see what classes I need to take, and who I need to talk to in order to make sure that my needs are being met and that I can graduate on time. It makes me feel wonderful to know that there are people who care about your success and that will help you along the way. ... I believe other colleges should consider adopting the Guided Pathways program because it just works. It’s targeted for students, so you could graduate and take on the career that you would absolutely love.”

Daniel Dino-Slofer, Pierce College student



GUIDED PATHWAYS PROGRESS REPORT

Washington’s community and technical colleges are using Guided Pathways to help students make better course selections, minimize achievement gaps, and increase the number of students who graduate with a high value certificate or degree. It simplifies and clarifies career and course choices. Clear pathways are designed through college and into careers, whether students enter those careers directly after graduation or transfer to a university for more study. Students get intensive, targeted advising to choose a path, support to stay on the path and learn what they need for graduation, seamless transfer and the workforce.

How much has the Legislature invested in Guided Pathways?

The Washington state Legislature invested \$3 million into Guided Pathways, \$1.5 million in FY 2018 and FY 2019. Through an application process, 12 colleges received in fall 2017 an allocation from the Legislature’s appropriation to work on their Guided Pathways efforts. Their lessons learned help the state’s 22 other colleges as they also work to restructure the way they serve students.

How does Guided Pathways support Washington state education goals?

Guided Pathways touches on each focus area of Washington’s 2023 educational attainment goals: ensuring access, enhancing learning and preparing for future challenges. Results will move the state toward its high school diploma and postsecondary credential attainment goals.

Why is Guided Pathways a Washington’s community and technical college priority?

Guided Pathways works. Results from Florida and New York show the sooner students enter a program of study, the more likely they are to graduate.

- 40 percent of first-year students who earned at least 12 quarter credits in their focus area completed a credential in six years, compared to 16 percent who did not.¹
- 51 percent of students who entered a program of study in year 1 earned a credential or transferred to a four-year university within five years. Compare this to 32 percent of students who began their program in year 2, and 20 percent who began their program in year 3.²

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Guided Pathways success: early indicators

Still in its early stages, the 12 state-funded Guided Pathways colleges are already seeing results in their student achievement and retention. Furthest along in its implementation, Pierce College's **graduation rates have doubled**. Other colleges expect to see similar results once students reach their end of their programs.

Here are some of the ways colleges use Guided Pathways to help students through their time in college, in and out of the classroom.

Closing equity gaps

- Data showed Pierce College trustees that while graduation rates were going up, equity gaps were staying the same. Armed with that, the board could **set specific, measurable goals** to close those gaps.
- At South Seattle College, Completion Coaches help students in every step of their education in ways like tracking degree progress, helping change paths, and keeping on track to graduation. From the 2015-16 to the 2017-18 school year, South's Completion Coaches **served over 1,200 students** and saw a **126 percent increase** in students receiving support services.

Student support services

- South Puget Sound Community College implemented comprehensive tutoring services. In the 2016-17 school year, its learning center tutors and activities **served 1,860 students** in 16,255 sessions, 39 percent of which were for math.
- Knowing that students who develop educational plans are more likely to stay enrolled, South Seattle College's Advising and Counseling is working to promote proactive planning. From the 2015-16 to the 2017-18 school year, South students **created 5,570 educational plans** with the college seeing a **20 percent increase** in degree-seeking students.
- To encourage students to stay in school, South Puget Sound Community College implemented a "register early policy." The college found that students who register early are more likely to have **higher GPAs** and **continue their education** into the next quarter.

Instructional support

- South Puget Sound Community College found students who took its Enhanced Student Success class were about **14 percent more likely** to continue their education into the following year than students who do not take the class.
- When Pierce College faculty saw data showing wide ranges of student success across different sections of the same class, they began working on curriculum and how they impact their classrooms. After two years of work, average student success rate in English 101 **increased by nearly 10 percent**.

1. Denley, T. (2016, October). Choice architecture, academic foci and guided pathways. Presentation to the AACC Pathways Institute, Denver, CO.
2. Jenkins, D., & Cho, S.-W. (2014). Get with the program ... and finish it: Building guided pathways to accelerate student learning and success. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2013(164), 27–35. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/early-momentum-metrics-college-improvement.pdf>



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