

WSPTA acknowledges that for students, Career Connected Learning (CCL) can turn the promise “to deliver a K-12 education that prepares Washington’s students for career, college and life”¹ into a reality. CCL incorporates real-life, hands-on education into everyday lessons so that K-12 students can explore career options and envision a successful future. This can be achieved with general classroom exploration and through Career & Technical Education (CTE).

Washington state has a huge labor gap in a multitude of careers including STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), manufacturing, construction, healthcare and others.^{2,3}

Background

- A 2016 report on jobs in Washington projects that by 2020, **70% of all job openings in Washington will require some post-secondary education²**, and yet:
 - 25% of all 9th grade students will fail to graduate high school², but 81% of high school dropouts report that relevant, real-world opportunities would have kept them in school.⁴
 - CCL and CTE expand and enhance K-12 outcomes, relevance and increase the Washington state high school graduation rate by 18%.⁵
 - Only 31% of high school graduates earn a post-secondary credential within seven years.²
 - Concentrating on a CTE subject in high school increases the postsecondary completion rate from 31% to 75%.⁴
- Starting the **CTE and STEM commitment in high school is critical for our students and our state’s economic prosperity.**

Washington state has a critical STEM workforce gap and CTE/CCL can help fill that void with family wage jobs and career advancements.³

- Washington **ranks #1 in concentration of STEM jobs** and #3 in STEM job growth.
- BUT, our state is the **#1 importer of degrees in the nation** (proportion of population).
- Washington **ranks 47th in the U.S.** in the production of STEM degrees relative to job openings.
- Washington **ranks last among the top 15 high-tech-intensive states** in the percent of high school graduates who go directly to college.

Previous Legislation

- The “**Launch Year Act**” (HB1808 (2011)⁶, RCW 28A.230.130) encourages all public high schools to maximize a student’s 12th grade by earning at least one year of post-secondary credit towards a degree or certificate, but was an “unfunded suggestion”.
- **ESB 2242** (2017),⁷ the K-12 funding bill, expanded CTE programs with funding, lowered class-sizes, and competitive grants.
 - Missing is elementary CCL programs to inspire and engage students into STEM and other careers.
 - The expanded “High School and Beyond Plan” is a good start, but school districts need to implement, innovate, and support CCL and CTE opportunities and increase the number of career counselors.

Proposed Solutions

Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that **support Career Connected Learning K-12 programs that inspire, provide training, expanded CTE options, and weave real-life career options in STEM, manufacturing, construction, etc. into K-12 classrooms. The new 2017-19 budget expanded CTE and we need to build on that to implement new programs at the state and local levels.**

For More Information

Nancy Chamberlain, WSPTA Legislative Director
ptalegdir@wastatepta.org

Marie Sullivan, WSPTA Legislative Consultant
legconsultant@wastatepta.org



Citations

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2. Washington Roundtable and the Boston Consulting Group (2016) Pathways to Great Jobs in Washington State. http://www.waroundtable.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/WKWJ_FINAL_Report.pdf
3. Washington Student Achievement Council (2017). 2017 STEM Education Report Card. <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2017.STEM.Report.Card.pdf>
4. Association for Career & Technical Education. <https://www.acteonline.org/aboutcte/#.Wi9Hx1WnGCh>
5. Plan Washington, Education. <http://planwashington.org/plan/education/>
6. Launch Year Act, HB 1808 (2011). <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1808&Year=2011>
7. EHB 2242 (2017). <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=2242&Year=2017>

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