Background

**CTC role in WSAC Roadmap GOALS**

In 2013, the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) set a 10 year roadmap for improving the educational attainment of Washington residents.[[1]](#endnote-1) The roadmap included two educational attainment goals for 2023:

* At least 70 percent of Washington adults, ages 25-44, will have a postsecondary credential.
* All adults in Washington, ages 25-44, will have a high school diploma or equivalent.

The state Legislature passed a bill acknowledging these goals during the 2014 session.[[2]](#endnote-2) This brief estimates what it will take for the state to reach the postsecondary attainment goal for 2023 and what share of the additional credential holders needed to reach this goal would be expected to come from community and technical colleges.

Key findings

* To reach the 70 percent postsecondary credential goal, Washington must produce an additional 380,000 new credential holders. The community and technical college system’s share is 60 percent, or 228,000.
* To reach the 100 percent high school diploma/equivalent goal, Washington must produce an additional 180,000 new credential holders. The community and technical college system’s share is 55 percent, or 99,000.

What will it take to reach the postsecondary attainment goal? [[3]](#endnote-3)

**4.** Therefore, reaching the 70 percent attainment goal will require an additional 380,000 new credential holders by 2023

70%

**1.** The 1.9 million 15-34-year-olds in Washington in 2013 is our base population for reaching the postsecondary attainment goal for 25-44-year-olds in 2023

**2.** Of that base, 610,000 15-34-year-olds had a postsecondary credential in 2013

**3.** Based on 25-44-year-olds’ current attainment rate of 50 percent, we expect 340,000 more credential holders by 2023

50%

A shift in student demographics [[4]](#endnote-4)

It is estimated that less than 10 percent of the 340,000 expected new credential holders will be nontraditional students (people who complete their first postsecondary credential after age 25). In contrast, it is estimated that over 50 percent of the additional 380,000 new credential holders will be nontraditional students. Reaching 70 percent will require more than just an improvement in graduation rates – it will require helping a large number of people who are not attending college and/or completing credentials in the current system. This expected shift in age groups for the additional new credential holders is just one example of the expected shift in student demographics.

Community and technical colleges’ share of postsecondary attainment goal [[5]](#endnote-5)

The community and technical colleges are currently responsible for just over 50 percent of the undergraduate credentials awarded by all sectors of higher education in Washington. These raw undergraduate award counts include a large number of awards that are being earned by people who already have a postsecondary credential. When restricting the award counts to first-time postsecondary awards and take into account the expected shift in student demographics for the additional new credential holders, the estimated community and technical college share of the 380,000 additional new credential holders is closer to 60 percent.

Populations to consider for the postsecondary attainment goal [[6]](#endnote-6)

Reaching the postsecondary attainment goal will require efforts that target people who are not earning a postsecondary credential by age 25-44 in the current system. The following chart shows the number out of ten Washington 25-44-year-olds who would be expected to have completed a college degree, some college, or no college for the listed demographic groups.

 = 93,000 people

 = 96,000 people

 = 189,000 people

 = 2,300 people

 = 17,000 people

 = 7,600 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 1,400 people

 = 200 people

 = 6,900 people

 = 128,000 people

 = 144,000 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 20,000 people

 = 45,000 people

 = 14,000 people

 = 85,000 people

 = 45,000 people

 = 143,000 people

 = 12,000 people

 = 34,000 people

 = 93,000 people

 = 50,000 people

 = 24,000people

 = 12,000 people

 = 11,000 people

 = 39,000 people

 = 65,000 people

 = 33,000 people

 = 17,000 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 13,000 people

Notice that the demographic groups who have already met the attainment goal of 70 percent have between 80 and 90 percent of the group completing some college. This suggests that other demographic groups would also need at least 80 percent of the population to complete some college in order for 70 percent of that group to obtain a college degree.

What will it take to reach the high school attainment goal? [[7]](#endnote-7)

**1.** The 1.9 million 15-34-year-olds in Washington in 2013 is our base population for reaching the high school attainment goal for 25-44-year-olds in 2023

**4.** Therefore, reaching the 100 percent attainment goal will require an additional 180,000 new credential holders by 2023

100%

**3.** Based on 25-44-year-olds’ current attainment rate of 90 percent, we expect 280,000 more credential holders by 2023

90%

**2.** Of that base, 1.44 million 15-34-year-olds had a high school credential in 2013

A shift in student demographics [[8]](#endnote-8)

It is estimated that less than 5 percent of the 280,000 expected new credential holders will be nontraditional students (people who complete their high school credential after age 19). In contrast, it is estimated that over 75 percent of the additional 180,000 new credential holders will be nontraditional students. Reaching 100 percent will require more than just an improvement in graduation rates – it will require helping a large number of people who have not completed or never attended high school. This expected shift in age groups for the additional new credential holders is just one example of the expected shift in student demographics.

Community and technical colleges’ share of high school attainment goal [[9]](#endnote-9)

The community and technical colleges are currently responsible for less than 5 percent of the high school credentials earned by traditional students (people who complete their high school credential by age 19), and are responsible for close to 70 percent of the high school credentials earned by nontraditional students. Considering these shares of high school credentials earned by the two age groups in relation to the current age of the target population puts the estimated community and technical college share of the 180,000 additional new credential holders at close to 55 percent.

Populations to consider for the high school attainment goal [[10]](#endnote-10)

Reaching the high school attainment goal will require efforts that target people who are not earning a high school credential by age 25-44 in the current system. The following chart shows the number out of ten Washington 25-44-year-olds who would be expected to have completed a high school credential, some high school, or no high school for the listed demographic groups.

 = 143,000 people

 = 12,000 people

 = 34,000 people

 = 45,000 people

 = 93,000 people

 = 96,000 people

 = 189,000 people

 = 2,300 people

 = 17,000 people

 = 7,600 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 1,400 people

 = 200 people

 = 6,900 people

 = 128,000 people

 = 144,000 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 20,000 people

 = 14,000 people

 = 85,000 people

 = 45,000 people

 = 93,000 people

 = 50,000 people

 = 24,000people

 = 12,000 people

 = 11,000 people

 = 39,000 people

 = 65,000 people

 = 33,000 people

 = 17,000 people

 = 25,000 people

 = 13,000 people

Most demographic groups follow a pattern similar to the total population of Washington 25-44-year-olds with close to 100 percent having completed some high school and close to 90 percent having completed a high school credential. This suggests that the majority of work towards the high school attainment goal will involve helping people who have completed some high school to complete a high school credential. People with a personal income of over $50,000 a year have already come close to the 100 attainment goal. Some demographic groups with lower rates of high school enrollment and completion include people who identify as Hispanic/Latino, people who speak English less than “very well,” people who are not in the labor force, people with a personal income less than $25,000 a year, and people who live in Central and Eastern Washington.

\*\*for more information see the full report, *Community & Technical College Share of Washington’s Educational Attainment Goals for 2023*, on the SBCTC website under research reports (http://sbctc.edu/college/d\_research-reports.aspx).

1. Washington Student Achievement Council. (2013). The roadmap: A plan to increase educational attainment in Washington. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. House Bill 2626, signed by the Governor April 3, 2014, effective June 12, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. SBCTC analysis of American Community Survey (ACS) 2011-2013 population estimates. The current attainment rate of 50 percent cited in this report was calculated by WSAC researchers and represents an estimated range of 48 to 54 percent. The effect of in-migration was not included in estimates to focus on the target population of current Washington residents, and considering that many in-migrants in this age group have a postsecondary credential when they move into the state. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. SBCTC analysis of ACS 2011-2013 population estimates [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. SBCTC analysis of IPEDS 2012-13 award counts for all reporting institutions of higher education in Washington. Adjustments made to estimate the number of first-time postsecondary awards based on the results of: SBCTC. (2013). The role of transfer in attainment of baccalaureate degrees at Washington public bachelor’s degree institutions: Class of 2011. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. SBCTC analysis of ACS 2011-2013 population estimates [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. ibid [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. SBCTC analysis of high school credential numbers reported by OSPI, SBCTC, and GED Testing Service ®. High school equivalency exams completed after self-study were excluded from expected share calculations, because the rate of self-study credential earners is not expected to drastically change of its own accord [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. SBCTC analysis of ACS 2011-2013 population estimates [↑](#endnote-ref-10)