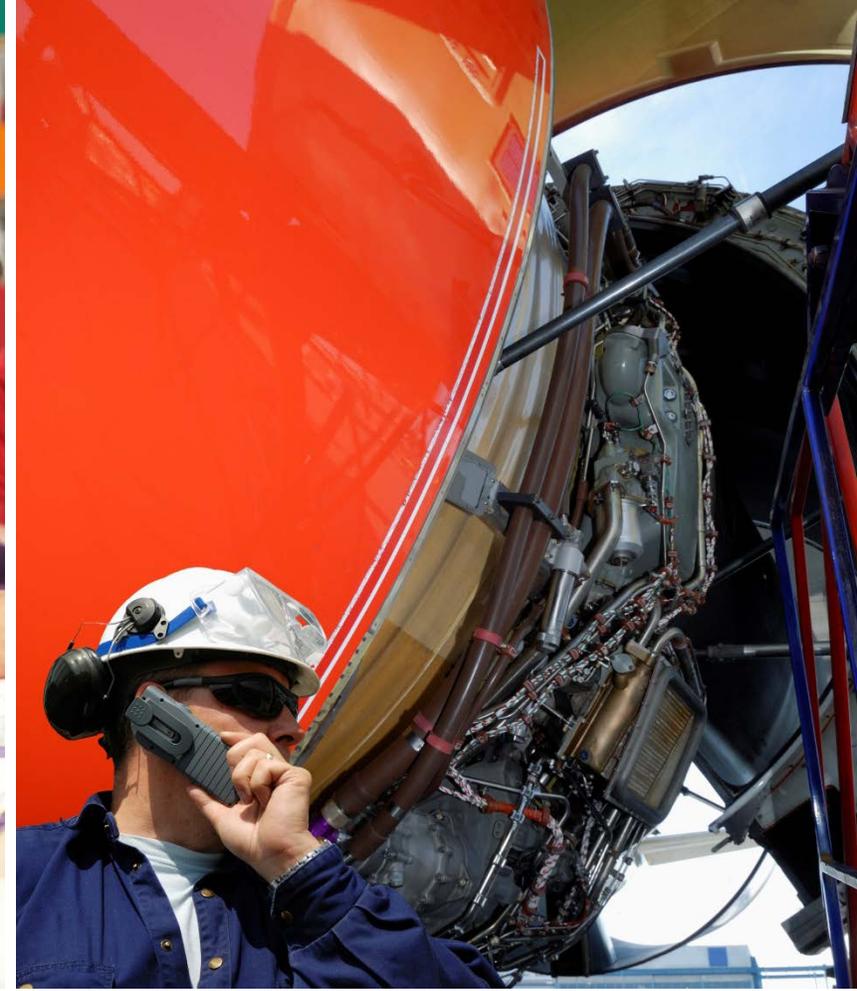


Title	Strategic Action Plan – Communications Plan and Media Outreach
Staff lead:	Aaron Wyatt
Position	Communications Director
Email:	aaronw@wsac.wa.gov
Phone:	360.753.7800
Synopsis:	The Council members will likely adopt the 2014 Strategic Action Plan at the November meeting. The report highlights recommendations to meet Washington State’s educational attainment goals. The Communications Director will share the communications plan in support of that work, highlighting strategies for 2014-15 editorial board outreach.
Guiding questions:	Does the editorial board outreach plan provide a sound strategy for media engagement?
Possible council action:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Adopt <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Documents and attachments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Brief/Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint <input type="checkbox"/> Third-party materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other



SAP Communications Plan

AARON WYATT, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

SAP COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- Supports agency's mission
- Two objectives
- Four big-bucket strategies and multiple tactics

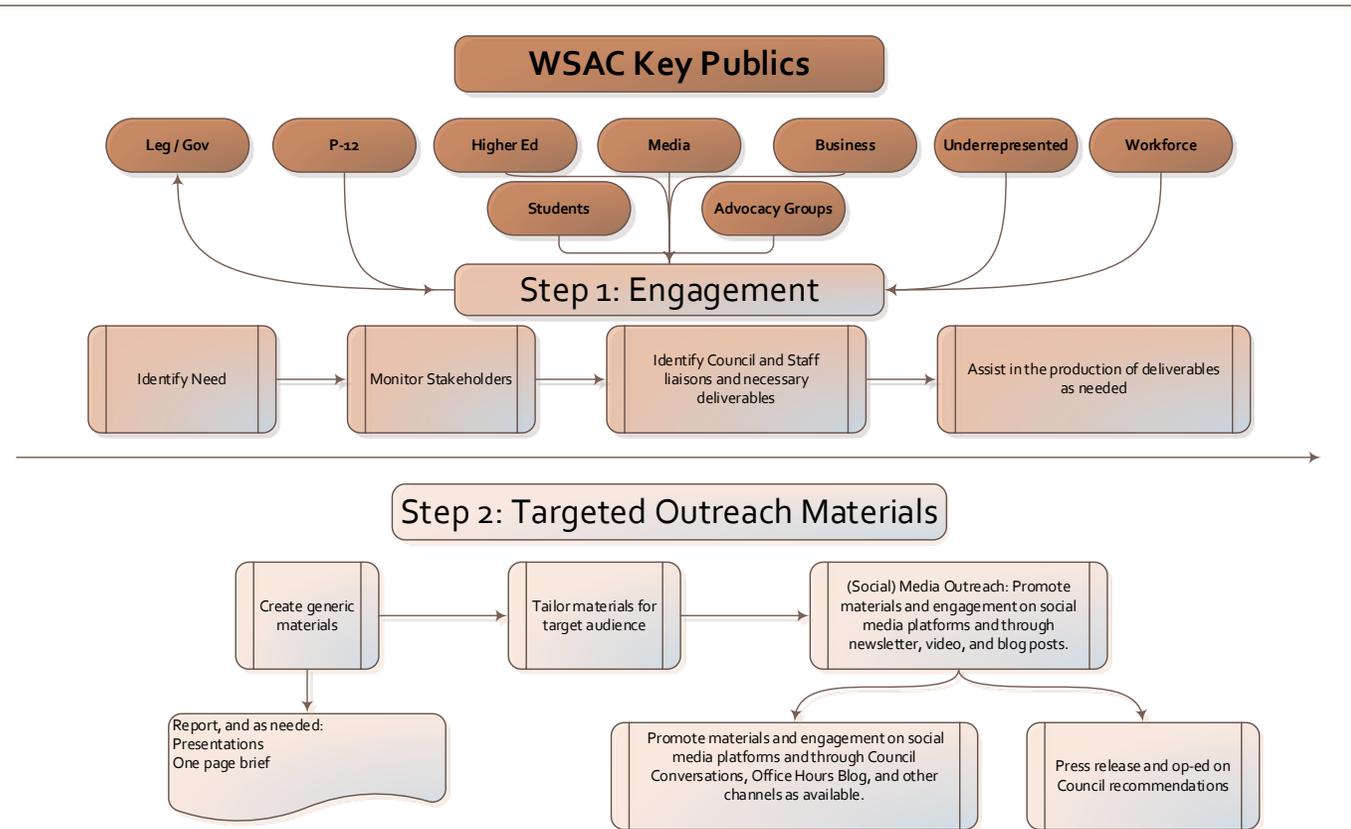
Roadmap & Strategic Action Plan

- Communications Plan -

Aaron Wyatt
Communications Director

Page 1

IDENTIFICATION & ENGAGEMENT



STRATEGIES, TACTICS, AND TIMELINE

Strategies	2014						2015					
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Develop a Strategic Action Plan production process and produce report	Develop outline for production process	Develop outline of report			Confirm printing options Develop branding theme Finalize report							
Identify, monitor, and engage key publics	Develop and maintain stakeholder database	Develop and maintain media database (Bismolt)	Monitor stakeholder communications channels	Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Alerts to key communications items of interest and engagement opportunities	Produce media advisory announcing release of report Social media related to the report Editorial boards Report Video	Social media related to report	Social media related to report Report article published in partner newsletter Produce oped	Create a clearinghouse of third-party materials pertinent to the work of the Roadmap, via Bismolt	Report article published in partner newsletter		
Ensure access to accurate and timely information	Ensure materials are posted on website	Utilize recurring social media messaging consistent with Council branding	Respond to stakeholder inquiries promptly	Review website materials for accuracy								

2014 MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Title	Outlet	Date
Colleges need support building vital workforce	Spokesman Review	April 20
Educational attainment gap must be bridged	Everett Herald	March 30
State student achievement council forms	Columbia Basin Herald	March 27
A tool works in improving access to higher ed	Yakima Herald	March 19
Statewide educational goals only a good start	The Olympian	March 5
Adopt ten-year roadmap for education	Seattle Times	February 28
In our view: easing access to college	The Columbian	February 14
Focus on education	The Daily News	February 6
Higher ed remains urgent need	The News Tribune	January 23
It's time to start reinvesting in higher education	Wenatchee World	January 18
Legislature must follow WSAC "Roadmap"	The Olympian	January 16

2015 MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- Editorial appointments
- Op-ed options
- Advocacy through CHA radio and promotion to over 400 media contacts/outlets
- Development of advocacy graphics and supporting materials
- Amplification through Council communications channels

Strategic Action Plan Communications – Media Outreach

Policy Consideration

None

Summary

As identified in the Strategic Action Plan communications plan, the Council's communications team will spearhead two media outreach campaigns related to the 2013 Roadmap.

1. *Op-eds* – We will produce two opinion pieces related to the 2014 Strategic Action Plan recommendations. The distribution of the pieces will coordinate with the 2015 session and complement the work of our editorial board outreach. Op-eds will be provided as possible drafts to Council authors, who may choose to use the language or work that they develop.
2. *Editorial Boards* – Communications staff will solicit editorial board appointments beginning in December and continuing through the legislative session.

In addition to our releases and advisories to our Internet, radio, TV, and print contacts, we will be reaching out to the following news media outlets to solicit editorial board appointments.

1. Seattle Times
2. Spokesman Review
3. Columbian
4. Yakima Herald
5. Olympian
6. Tri-City Herald
7. Walla Walla Union Bulletin

We will may reach out to other papers as appropriate.

Successful execution of our editorial board appointments will require participation from the following:

1. *Communications*: Responsible for contacting papers and securing a general commitment to hosting an editorial board meeting. Responsible for developing and securing communications products to support editorial appointments.
2. *Communications and Government Relations*: Responsible for updating talking points for the meeting. Directors may attend meetings as needed.
3. *Executive Assistant's Team*: Responsible for coordinating schedules with the newspaper, the ED, and attending Council members to find dates/times that will work.
4. *Gene and Council members*: Responsible for attending meetings when schedules allow. Council members may also need to capitalize on existing relationships with media to secure editorial board appointments.

QUESTIONS?

AARON WYATT

AARONW@WSAC.WA.GOV

Roadmap & Strategic Action Plan

- Communications Plan -

Aaron Wyatt
Communications Director

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I. Challenges

- With a recurring publication requirement, staff must also develop a comprehensive system of review and revision to ensure that future reports are delivered by deadlines.
- Delivery of the plan is but the first step. To affect change, successive work, outreach, and collaboration will be required.

II. Goals and Objectives

Agency Goal: The Council will produce both a Strategic Action Plan and Roadmap report. Both products align with the agency's mission:

We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. In pursuit of our mission, the Washington Student Achievement Council:

- *Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.*
- *Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.*
- *Advocates for the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education*

In support of that goal, communications has identified two primary objectives:

1. The reports will be submitted by deadline.
2. The Council will develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships to support the implementation of recommendations within the Strategic Action Plan.

III. Internal Audit

The Council

Established as a cabinet-level state agency in July 2012, the Washington Student Achievement Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington. The Council proposes improvements and innovations needed to adapt the State's educational institutions to evolving needs and advocates for increased financial support and civic commitment for public education in recognition of the economic, social, and civic benefits it provides.

The nine-member Council includes five citizens, a current student, and one representative from each of the state's four major educational sectors. Agency staff supports the work of the Council, performing assigned functions and managing the student financial aid programs previously administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy responsibilities:

- Propose goals and recommend resources to increase educational attainment by means of a ten-year Roadmap and a short-term Strategic Action Plan.
- Propose improvements and innovations needed to address the state's evolving educational needs.

- Advocate for higher education and educate the public on the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education.
- Connect and align work of educational programs, schools, and institutions to support student transitions from secondary and postsecondary education to the workforce.
- Facilitate analysis and research to increase educational attainment and system development.
- Assess the need for additional degrees and programs throughout the state.
- Improve student success by setting minimum college admission standards and by supporting students' transitions through all phases of education.
- Protect education consumers by authorizing out-of-state institutions to operate in Washington and by monitoring program quality and finances.
- Represent the broad public interest above the interests of the individual institutions of higher education.

Program administration responsibilities:

- Ensure the quality of state financial aid programs and services that support educational access and affordability.
- Provide college savings opportunities through the Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) program.
- Prepare underrepresented middle and high school students for postsecondary education through early outreach and success programs such as College Bound and GEAR UP.

Partnerships: Per RCW 28b.77, the Student Achievement Council closely collaborates with the following agencies and organizations:

- Four-year Institutions (The Council of Presidents)
- The Independent Colleges of Washington
- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges
- The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- The Washington State Board of Education
- Washington Stem

Council - Mission

We advance educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. In pursuit of our mission, the Washington Student Achievement Council:

- Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.
- Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.
- Advocates for the economic, social, and civic benefits of postsecondary education.

Key communications staff pertinent to the work

Communications Director: The director of communications, a member of the agency's executive leadership team, is charged with developing and implementing a comprehensive and strategic communication program to support agency and Council goals and objectives. The director helps the Council and senior managers, including the executive and deputy directors, in the identification of communications objectives and strategies in support of the agency's mission, vision, and strategic plan goals. The director also oversees execution of communications tactics and identifies evaluation measures.

The director is responsible for the coordination of communications products for the agency's executive office, and the divisions of government affairs, policy and academic affairs, research and planning, access and support, and student financial assistance. The director also works closely with the marketing team for GET.

Management of staff is a crucial component of this position. The director must be able to employ staff resources with maximum effectiveness. To this end, the director must be committed to staff development and the use of effective leadership practices.

Communications Program Manager: The Council Communications Program Manager serves as the lead media point of contact for the agency. She is also responsible for stakeholder management, project management, and the drafting and publication of media and web content.

Communications Program Manager (2): The Council Communications Manager also assists the Communications Director in the development and implementation of communications plans. The Communications manager oversees communications deliverables related to the Access and Support Division and serves the primary web content manager for ReadySet.Grad.org.

Senior Communications Consultant: The Council's Senior Communications consultant plays an integral role in the implementation of communications deliverables, from reports to publications to web and graphic content. The Communications Consultant also serves as a communications liaison to the Legislative Director.

Communications Associate (Part-Time): The communications associate is responsible for photography and database management for the communications division. The communications associates also assist the team with graphic design, writing, and other deliverables as needed.

Policy statements, protocols, statutes, and rules related to the work

Among its many duties, the Council has the primary assignment to prepare a Ten-Year Roadmap to increase Washington's educational attainment level (RCW 28B.77.020). In support of this plan, the Council will also provide a short-term strategic action plan every two years. The strategic action plan should be delivered to the Governor and Legislature by December 1 in odd numbered years.

IV. Situational Analysis

Key Publics - Annotated

Key publics represent target audiences who need to know, need to support, or need to take action in the successful implementation of a communications plan.

Public	Annotation
Council Members	Council members are the lead agents in the development of the Roadmap and the Strategic Action Plan. Council members will actively promote the reports' priorities beyond regularly scheduled Council meetings.
Committee Members	Three committees will work to identify policies and programs in support of the Roadmap. The committees will also be instrumental in informing the Strategic Action Plan. The Council must be deliberate in maintaining and strengthening communications with committee members.
Council Staff	Council staff will take the lead on the development of the Roadmap and Strategic Action Plan content. In addition to drafting the reports, staff will also take a lead role in disseminating the report to various key publics. The Communications team will take a direct role in facilitating staff's role in this process.
Governor's Office	The Governor is a crucial partner, one necessary for the successful implementation of the reports' recommendations. The Governor's office should be made aware of the recommendations early enough for possible inclusion in the Governor's proposed budget.
Legislators	Legislators, including representatives of all education committees, the Joint select committee, and fiscal leadership, will have the power to advance the reports' recommendations. Their willingness to support the proposals will hinge on clear and compelling communications.
Media	Media will need easy access to information related to and in support of the reports' recommendations. In addition to active media outreach strategies via advisories and web and social media content, Council staff will also ensure that the information hosted on the website is accurate and timely. Effective answers to media enquiries should also follow suit.
Two- and Four-Year Public Colleges, Private Colleges, and Universities and Agencies	Postsecondary institutions and agencies could be key supporters of Roadmap and Strategic Action Plan. Prioritized actions, outlined in the report, might also be called out in separate and independent media designed for postsecondary

Public	Annotation
Postsecondary Institutions (Private, Workforce Training, etc.) and agencies	audiences.
P-12 Educators Administrators	The Roadmap and Strategic Action plan may include priorities pertinent to the P-12 community. Using Council Conversations, web media, social media, and direct outreach, we will ensure that these stakeholders have access to accurate and timely information.
P-12 schools, agencies, and organizations	Agencies such as the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the Washington State School Directors Association, the Association of Washington School Principals, the Washington Education Association, the Washington Parent Teacher Association, the Washington Association of School Administrators, the Association of Educational Service Districts, and others, will be valued stakeholders to the work of improving education for Washington’s students. Positive relationships with and effective communications to these stakeholders will create potential for greater support.
Students (multi-level)	As students will be affected by the recommendations of both reports, Council staff will work with the student representative to solicit student feedback.
Underserved Communities	Many different groups fall within this ‘hard-to-reach’ constituency. Though we will continue to maintain deliberate electronic outreach, our most effective connections with underserved communities will likely manifest in face-to-face outreach.
Education Advocacy Groups	Education advocacy groups, such as the Excellent Schools Now Coalition, build and allocate political capital in support of projects that they feel will benefit schools in Washington. While most priorities are directed at P-12, the Council should still look for opportunities for mutual engagement. Council staff should therefore ensure that regular and accurate communications related to Roadmap work is available.
Business Communities	Increased educational attainment for Washington students is a direct benefit for Washington businesses. Staff will facilitate engagement opportunities so that representatives from the business communities have the opportunity to provide input on the reports’ priorities.

Media Analysis – Editorials / News Analysis

Title	Outlet	Date
Colleges need support building vital workforce	Spokesman Review	April 20
Educational attainment gap must be bridged	Everett Herald	March 30
State student achievement council forms	Columbia Basin Herald	March 27
A tool works in improving access to higher ed	Yakima Herald	March 19
Statewide educational goals only a good start	The Olympian	March 5
Adopt ten-year roadmap for education	Seattle Times	February 28
In our view: easing access to college	The Columbian	February 14
Focus on education	The Daily News	February 6
Higher ed remains urgent need	The News Tribune	January 23
It's time to start reinvesting in higher education	Wenatchee World	January 18
Legislature must follow WSAC "Roadmap"	The Olympian	January 16

V. Communication Targets

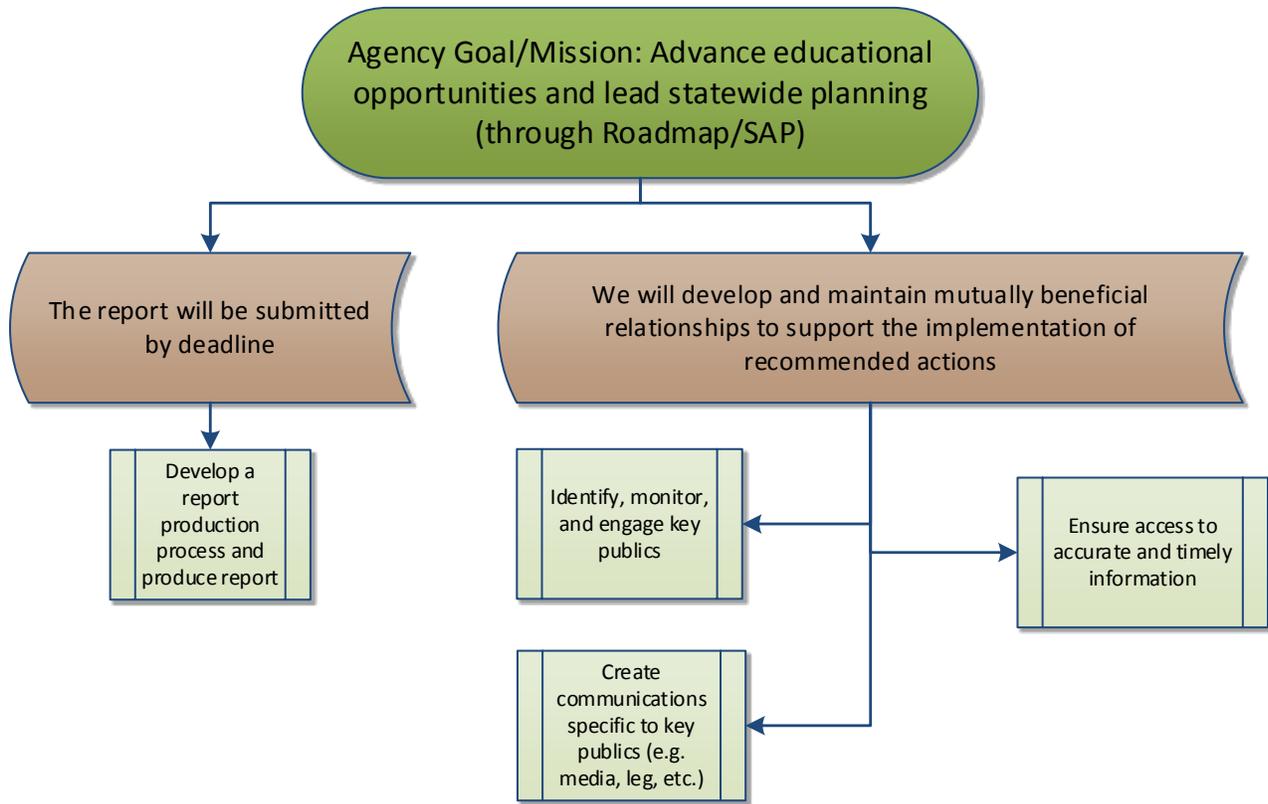
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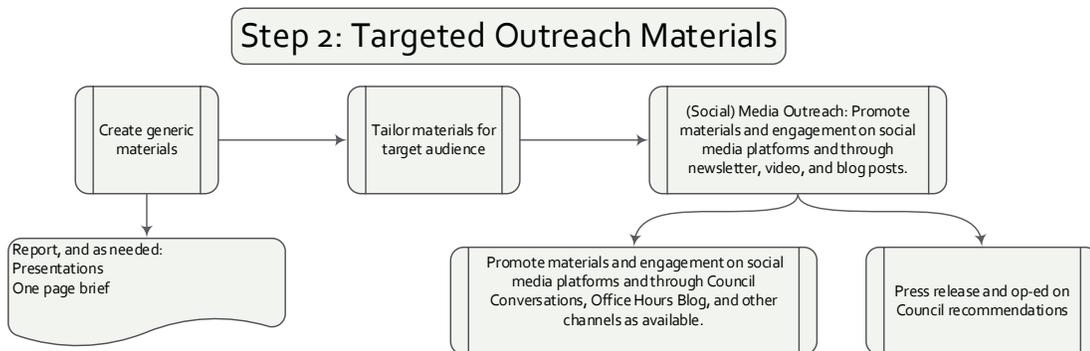
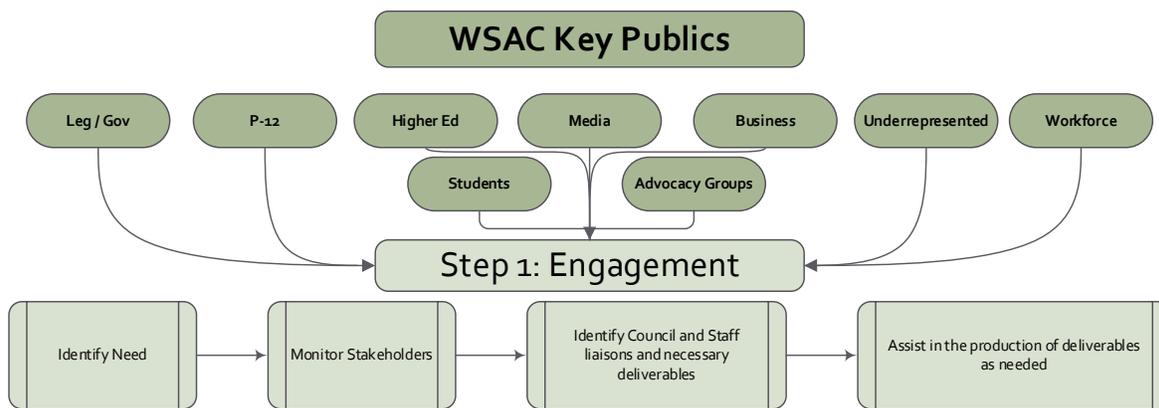
- *Leads statewide strategic planning to improve educational coordination and transitions.*
- *Supports Washingtonians through the administration of financial aid, a college savings plan, and support services.*
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In support of that goal, communications has identified two primary objectives:

1. The reports will be submitted by deadline.
2. The Council will develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships to support the implementation of recommendations within the Strategic Action Plan.



VI. Communications Tactics - Diagram



VII. Communications Strategies and Tactics - Table

Objective: Action – The Strategic Action Plan will be submitted by deadline		
Strategies	Tactics	Evaluation
Develop a Strategic Action Plan production process and produce report	Develop and monitor timeline for the production process, including key dates for the development and Council Approval	March
	Confirm printing options and anticipated delivery windows	November
	Develop an outline, identifying key components of writing sections	August
	Develop a branding theme board for the final report (colors, typography, sections)	June
	Transfer all charts from the word version into InDesign	November
	Finalize report	November
Objective: Action: Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships		
Strategies	Tactics	Evaluation
Identify, monitor, and engage key publics	Develop and maintain a stakeholder database	Ongoing
	Develop and maintain a media database	Ongoing
	Monitor key publics communications channels	Daily
	Alert staff to communications items of interest or opportunities for engagement	Weekly
	Coordinate communications support for staff outreach related to the report	As needed
	Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Ongoing
	Create a clearinghouse of third-party materials pertinent to the work of the Roadmap	Ongoing
	Implement social media campaign related to the reports	Includes 4 posts weekly with 20 retweets (by others). 5 tweets reaching over 5000.
	Publish two report- related pieces in partner newsletters	February / March
	Publish media advisory announcing release of report plan	December
	Produce an op-ed related to the report recommendations	February
	Engage editorial Boards	December
Produce video of report presentation	December	
Ensure access to accurate and timely information	Ensure all materials are placed appropriate on the website in a timely manner	Ongoing
	Utilize recurring social media messaging (consistent with branding)	Ongoing

	Respond to stakeholder requests to information promptly, same day turnaround	Ongoing
	Review website materials for accuracy	By schedule
Create communications specific to the Legislature	Update distribution lists for the Legislature	December
	Send the report electronically with a cover sheet to Legislature and Governor	December 1
	Provide support for materials (presentations, handouts) for assembly days)	November
	Develop a PowerPoint in support of the report	November
	Produce two report-related entries for the Council blog – send link to key legislators	January / March
	Include at least one report--related piece in Council Conversations – send to Leg	December, February, April
	Provide support for legislative testimony, correspondence, and materials.	Ongoing
	Create a Legislative Leave Behind document, that provides both an overview of the Council and a closer look at the Strategic Action Plan	December

IX. Tasks Timeline

	2014						2015					
Strategies	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Develop a Strategic Action Plan production process and produce report	Develop timeline for production process	Develop outline of report			Confirm printing options Develop branding theme Finalize report							
Identify, monitor, and engage key publics	Develop and maintain stakeholder database	Develop and maintain media database (Evernote)	Monitor stakeholder communications channels	Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders	Alert staff to communications items of interest and engagement opportunities	Produce media advisory announcing release of report Social media related to the report Editorial boards Report Video	Social media related to report	Social media related to report Report article published in partner newsletter Produce op-ed	Create a clearinghouse of third-party materials pertinent to the work of the Roadmap, via Evernote	Report article published in partner newsletter		
Ensure access to accurate and timely information	Ensure materials are posted on website	Utilize recurring social media messaging consistent with Council branding	Respond to stakeholder inquiries promptly	Review website materials for accuracy								

Strategies	2014						2015					
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Create communications specific to the Legislature												
		Provide support for legislative testimony, correspondence, and materials										
					Communications support for assembly days							
					Develop a presentation in support of the Report							
						Update distribution lists for Legislature						
						Report sent to the Legislature / Governor						
						Produce handout on Report						
						Report piece published in Council conversations						
							Report piece published in Inspire blog – shared with legislators					
								Report piece published in Council conversations				
									Report piece published in Inspire blog – shared with legislators			
										Roadmap piece in partner newsletter Report piece published in Council conversations		
											Roadmap piece in newsletter	

Strategic Action Plan Communications – Media Outreach

Policy Consideration

None

Summary

As identified in the Strategic Action Plan communications plan, the Council’s communications team will spearhead two media outreach campaigns related to the 2013 Roadmap.

1. Op-eds – We will produce two opinion pieces related to the 2014 Strategic Action Plan recommendations. The distribution of the pieces will coordinate with the 2015 session and complement the work of our editorial board outreach. Op-eds will be provided as possible drafts to Council authors, who may choose to use the language or work that they develop.
2. Editorial Boards – Communications staff will solicit editorial board appointments beginning in December and continuing through the legislative session.

In addition to our releases and advisories to our Internet, radio, TV, and print contacts, will be reaching out to the following news media outlets to solicit editorial board appointments.

1. The Columbia Basin Herald
2. The Columbian
3. The Daily News
4. The Everett Herald
5. The News Tribune
6. The Olympian
7. The Seattle Times
8. The Spokesman Review
9. The Wenatchee World
10. The Yakima Herald

We may reach out to other papers as appropriate

Successful execution of our editorial board appointments will require participation from the following:

1. *Communications*: Responsible for contacting papers and securing a general commitment to hosting an editorial board meeting. Responsible for developing and securing communications products to support editorial appointments.
2. *Communications and Government Relations*: Responsible for updating talking points for the meeting. Directors may attend meetings as needed.
3. *Executive Assistant’s Team*: Responsible for coordinating schedules with the newspaper, the ED, and attending Council members to find dates/times that will work.
4. *Gene and /Council members*: Responsible for attending meetings when schedules allow. Council members may also need to capitalize on existing relationships with media to secure editorial board appointments.

Evaluation

Our objective is two opinion pieces and three editorial board visits. The obstacles to success include the following:

1. Limited resources. Budget, personnel, and printing constraints at our regional papers.
2. Legislative Session: High volume of competing demands.
3. Topic: Education is priority number one, but the topic already gets top bill in many outlets.

Background

The media outreach plan is one part of the comprehensive Strategic Action Plan communications plan.

The Council previously engaged in editorial board outreach in 2014. As part of the tour, Council members had the opportunity to visit with regional editorial boards including, but not limited to, the following:

Title	Outlet	Date
Colleges need support building vital workforce	Spokesman Review	April 20
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State student achievement council forms	Columbia Basin Herald	March 27
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It's time to start reinvesting in higher education	Wenatchee World	January 18
Legislature must follow WSAC "Roadmap"	The Olympian	January 16

Action

None