



# COUNCIL CONVERSATIONS

WASHINGTON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2018 EDITION

## Statewide Workshops for High School Counselors Coming in September

Each fall, the [Washington Council for High School-College Relations \(WCHSCR\)](#) hosts a series of workshops for high school counselors. The [Washington Student Achievement Council \(WSAC\)](#) is a partner in that work, providing updates on college access programs, financial aid, and related resources available to students and counselors. Attendees also hear from the [Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction \(OSPI\)](#) and from public and private colleges throughout Washington.

Visit the [WCHSCR website](#) to register for any of the workshops:

- Sept. 10: Spokane Community College – Spokane
- Sept. 11: WSU Tri-Cities – Richland
- Sept. 12: UW Bothell – Bothell
- Sept. 13: Seattle Pacific University – Seattle
- Sept. 14: Wenatchee Valley College – Wenatchee
- Sept. 17: The Evergreen State College – Olympia
- Sept. 18: Western Washington University – Bellingham
- Sept. 19: Pacific Lutheran University – Tacoma
- Sept. 20: WSU Vancouver – Vancouver

## Pave the Way Registration Open

[Registration is now open](#) for Pave the Way 2018. The conference will take place November 29 at the University of Washington in Seattle. Attendees are also invited to a preconference workshop on November 28 focused on strategies to reengage adult learners.

The annual [Pave the Way conference](#) focuses on strategies to advance equity, increase college readiness, and broaden access to higher education in Washington State. Pave the Way aims to ensure students receive the support they need to succeed, despite potential barriers related to income, race, and more.

Pave the Way brings together educators, policymakers, and community partners from across the education system, from preschool through college. It features interactive group sessions and offers workshops focused on policy, practice, and partnerships designed to address the opportunity gap and promote educational attainment for underrepresented students. Key focus areas this year include affordability, readiness and transitions, student supports, and regional approaches.

## College Investment Plan Offers New Savings Options, With Incentives for GET Customers

Enrollment is now open for Washington's new [DreamAhead College Investment Plan](#). The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) launched DreamAhead this spring to provide additional college savings options for students and families.

Current customers of the state's [GET prepaid tuition program](#) have the option to roll their GET accounts over to DreamAhead. Those who do so before September 12, 2018, will receive an incentive. Alternatively, customers can choose to keep their funds in GET and potentially receive adjustments that would add units to their accounts.

These options are available for a limited time, so WSAC is encouraging all GET customers to review their account details and visit the GET website to [learn more about their college savings options](#). GET will reopen for new enrollments on November 1, 2018.

## Great Schools Require Great Principals, Consistent Leadership

By Scott Seaman, Executive Director of the Association of Washington School Principals

School leadership matters. That's not a terribly controversial statement, but you don't have to take our word for it. Here's the [Wallace Foundation](#) on the importance of school leadership and just how much it matters:

"School leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning, according to research. Moreover, principals strongly shape the conditions for high-quality teaching and are the prime factor in determining whether teachers stay in high-needs schools. High-quality principals, therefore, are vital to the effectiveness of our nation's public schools, especially those serving the children with the fewest advantages in life."

It's clear from the research—if you want a school full of great teachers, you need a great principal. Great principals are the multipliers of effective instruction.

At the [Association of Washington School Principals \(AWSP\)](#), we are focused on breaking down inequitable systems in our state. However, principals need to build trust and culture before they tackle systems change. It's the premise behind how "culture eats strategy for breakfast." It takes five to seven years to turn around a large high school, according to research. So what's the answer? More patience?

Unfortunately, there's another gloomy statistic complicating all of this turnaround. Only one in four principals are in the same building after five years. Every time leadership changes, with few exceptions, principals need to establish culture and relationships before real change occurs. Principal churn hurts districts, it hurts schools, and it hurts students.

What can we do about it? At AWSP, we are hard at work to increase student outcomes and break down opportunity and achievement gaps, reduce and eventually eliminate inequitable systems, make the principalship more sustainable, and keep principals in their buildings for longer periods of time. Principal churn is an uphill battle, and awareness is the first step. We have our own thoughts about how we go about changing things, and we'd love to hear yours. Send your feedback to [scott@awsp.org](mailto:scott@awsp.org).

## Financial Aid Reminders for the New School Year

- [FAFSA](#) and [WASFA](#) financial aid applications for 2019-20 open October 1.
- 7th and 8th graders from low-income families may be eligible for the [College Bound Scholarship](#). Students can [sign up online](#) or talk to their school counselor for more information.
- [12th Year Campaign](#) events statewide help high school seniors and their families with applications for college admissions and financial aid. Schools wishing to participate as 12th Year Campaign sites can [sign up online](#).