

Strategic Master Plan Update 2012

Raising educational attainment during challenging economic times

Washington's commitment to educate many more of its citizens to higher levels has taken on added importance in the four years since the state approved its first 10-year Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education.

Students are seeking access in record numbers... and far too many are being turned away. There continues to be a shortage of graduates in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. College costs — and college debt — are rising rapidly.

Maintaining progress toward the goals established in the 2008 plan is essential to our current and future success as a state. But will we have the resolve to find a way forward in these difficult times?

In 2011, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, working with institutions and education stakeholders throughout the state, assessed the progress being made toward achieving the central goals of the 2008 plan.

The 2012 Update to the Strategic Master Plan outlined here suggests we can and must continue on the path to improvement.

Those who participated agreed the state needs to fund additional system-wide capacity to produce more degrees, as well as increase access and success among under-represented students.

Like the original plan, the 2012 Update also recognizes the need to improve our entire education system — early learning through graduate school — so that a much

greater percentage of K-12 students earn diplomas and continue to further education.

A high school diploma simply will not prepare one to earn a living wage in today's knowledge-based economy. A postsecondary certificate, apprenticeship or degree is essential, as well as improved access to lifelong learning opportunities.

Our higher education institutions, public and private, make a tremendous collective contribution to our economic progress and to our society.

Failing to support increased access and affordability is short-sighted public policy that will produce serious negative longer-term consequences.

Charts on pages two and three demonstrate the depth of the cuts to higher education over the last two biennia. They make it clear that continuing to rely on tuition to replace state investment is a short-range strategy at best.

Two things are readily apparent.

1. Unless the state stabilizes higher education funding and begins to reinvest in students, degree goals that can be realized in 15 years will take decades longer to achieve.
2. Without additional state investment, our institutions soon will not be able to enroll enough students to keep up proportionally with population growth — let alone educate a greater percentage of those who are from under-represented groups.

Seven steps to more successful higher education outcomes in Washington State

I. Increase capacity of higher education to serve more students.

Expand institutional enrollment capacity in existing institutions, branches, centers, and through online options. Grow capacity in high employer demand areas of study, recognizing they carry higher costs.

II. Maintain commitment to access for low-income students.

Renew commitment to and the value of the State Need Grant program.

III. Build on efforts to increase transitions and completion.

Fulfill the state's promise to College Bound Scholars by providing the financial assistance and mentoring services these students need to succeed.

IV. Provide a simple funding initiative to increase the number of graduates; quality of education.

- Align incentives with statewide goals for educational attainment.
- Recognize institutional and sector missions.
- Reward improvements rather than goals or targets.
- Align higher education with state needs by providing accountability with other partners, including the Legislature.

V. Define and develop K-12 to postsecondary program pathways.

- Focus on high employer demand majors and careers, including the STEM fields.
- Provide incentives in STEM and other areas of critical state need.

- Leverage the state's investment through the Opportunity Scholarship Fund.
- Encourage business and industry leaders to assist in innovation.

VI. Promote accelerated learning programs for high school students and adult learners.

Strengthen Launch Year efforts, Prior Learning Assessment, CTC Alternate Math Pathways, I-BEST, and pre-college reform programs.

VII. Maintain commitment to the original 2008 degree goals.

Clearly track progress on the degree goals, showing the gap between the master plan goals, progress to date, and the future trajectory. Continue to track Washington's progress compared to the Global Challenge States.



The Evergreen State College

2008 Master Plan: Raise educational attainment

Increase degree production, improve student preparation, support economic innovation

The 2008 Strategic Master Plan, the state's first 10-year comprehensive plan for higher education, focused on the need to raise educational attainment significantly.

To measure progress, the plan proposed ambitious degree goals based on an analysis of future workforce needs, and it recommended additional state investment to accomplish these goals.

Degree Goals

The plan estimated that by 2018, the state's higher education institutions would need to increase degree production as follows.

Mid-Level Degrees

26,800 to 36,200 annually

Bachelor's Degrees

28,600 to 39,000 annually

Graduate, Professional Degrees

11,200 to 19,800 annually

To achieve the appropriation levels necessary to realize these goals, the plan recommended funding benchmarks based on Global Challenge State comparisons.

It also proposed:

- Expanding facilities, distance learning, and technology.

- Increasing State Need Grant and State Work Study appropriations to maintain affordability.
- Providing incentive funding for achieving key master plan objectives such as increased STEM degree production.

Student Preparation, Success

The 2008 plan also proposed:

- Strategies to improve early outreach, preparation, and support for under-represented students.
- More programs enabling students to earn early college credit.

- Improved support for student transitions to and among post-secondary programs.

Economic Growth, Innovation

To strengthen economic vitality, the plan proposed new strategies to interest students in entering high-demand fields such as technology, engineering, science, mathematics, and health care.

And it focused on the need to expand basic and applied research efforts, focus on research commercialization, and adopt a more coherent approach to workforce education.

Washington's strategic plans have addressed common objectives over time

Since the late 1980s, strategic planning for the state's higher education institutions has served a set of common objectives.

- Expanding system capacity to educate growing numbers of students and increase statewide educational attainment.
- Maintaining and expanding affordable access to public higher education.
- Holding institutions accountable for high levels of student retention, on-time graduation, and transfer completion, among other measures of success.
- Developing new, innovative modes of course delivery for higher education.
- Producing more graduates in high-employment fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- Emphasizing basic and applied research and research commercialization.

10-year plan needed to increase educational attainment

Washington is a leading Global Challenge State — one of a handful of U.S. states with extra potential to succeed in the global economy.

Despite this potential, Washington has fallen behind its peers — and behind many developed nations — in educating its younger citizens.

In establishing a 10-year master plan framework, the Governor and Legislature recognized that raising statewide educational attainment would take many years of sustained funding increases.

The longer planning cycle also was approved to allow for greater latitude to test new initiatives and respond to changing conditions.

Many other states and nations have continued to support postsecondary education during the current economic downturn. They know demand for educated workers will soar once a full economic recovery is under way.

Meanwhile, Washington has cut higher education funding deeply, transferring the cost to students and families.

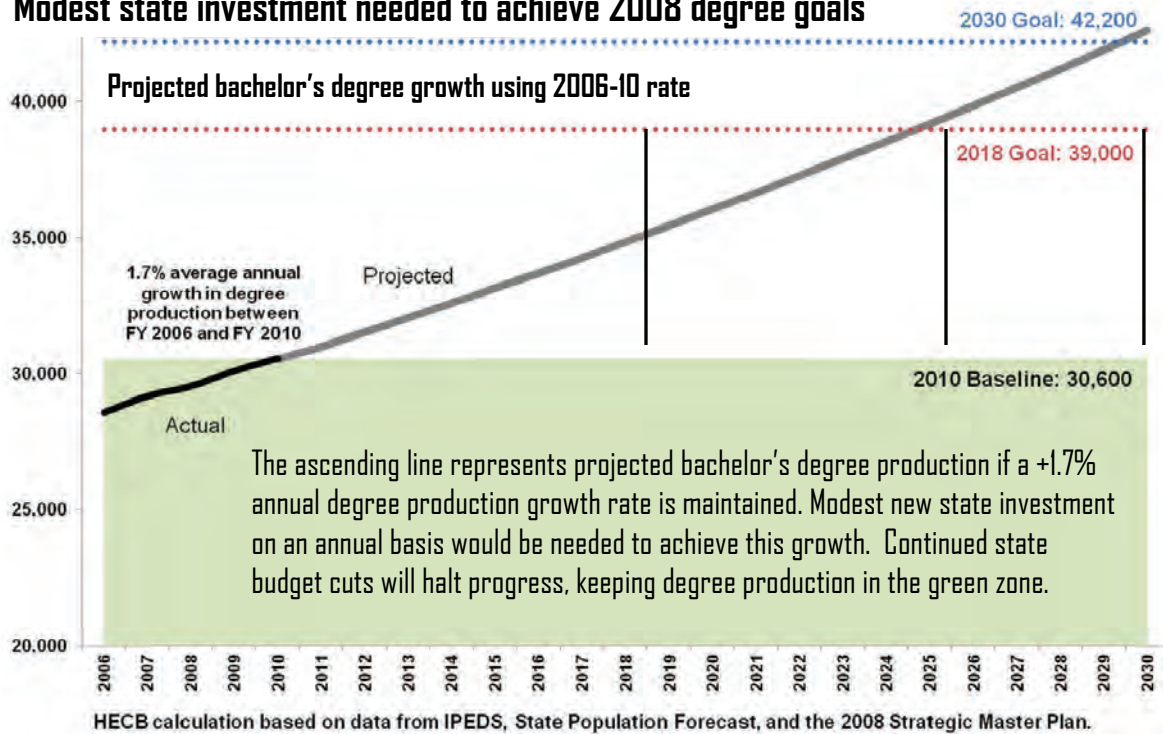
2012 Master Plan Update Advisory Committee

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Modest state investment needed to achieve 2008 degree goals



Tuition alone will not enable our colleges and universities to raise degree production over the longer-term.

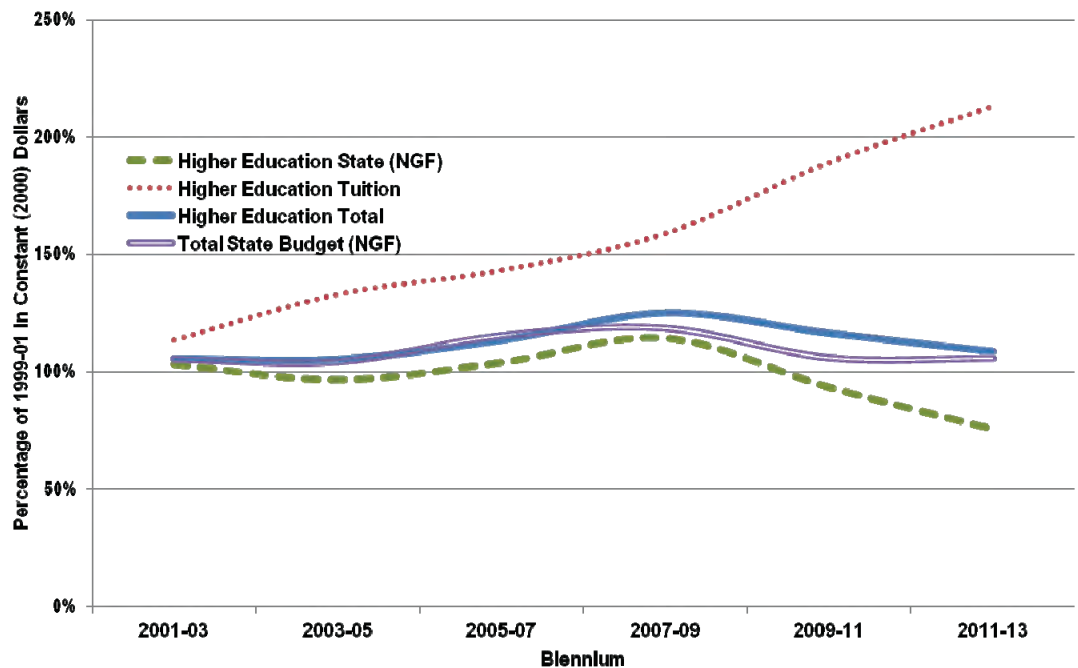
The chart at left shows how, with a modest investment, the state can meet its original bachelor's degree production goal by 2025.

State budget cuts transfer costs to students, families

The chart at the right shows how tuition has been used to replace declining state funding.

Washington is not unique in this respect. Tuition hikes are being imposed across the nation. But they have been particularly acute here, ranging from 14 to 20 percent a year since FY 2009.

Sustained tuition increases of this magnitude coupled with cuts in financial aid will be felt most by those at the lowest income levels.



2012 Master Plan Update Advisory Committee (cont.)

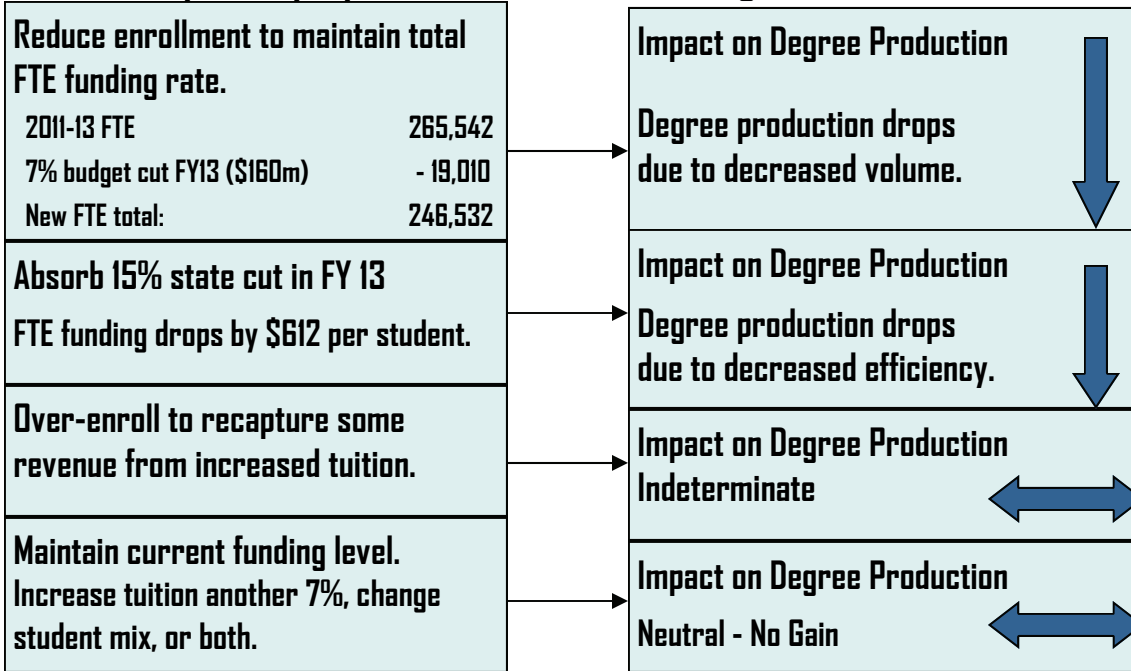
- Steven Olswang, Provost, City University
- Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board
- Mike Reilly, Executive Director, Council of Presidents
- Rep. Larry Seaquist, Chair, House Higher Education Committee
- Sam Shaddox, HECB Student Member
- Kathe Taylor, Policy Director, State Board of Education

- Doug Wadden, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Washington
- Jill Wakefield, Chancellor, Seattle Community Colleges
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Leadership Group

- Jan Ignash, HECB Deputy Director for Policy, Planning & Research
- Jan Yoshiwara, SBCTC Deputy Executive Director of Education
- Vi Boyer, Eleni Papadakis, Mike Reilly, Kathe Taylor

Potential impact of proposed \$160 million cut to higher education in 2012-13



The tables at left show how future state funding levels might impact the number of degrees being produced. For example, a 15% across-the-board budget reduction for higher education in the second half of the 2011-13 biennium would equate to about \$160 million. A cut of this magnitude could produce the types of results shown.

The consequences of continued budget cutting

HECB members register deep concerns about the impact of recent funding decisions

In approving the 2012 strategic plan update at their November 2011 meeting, HECB members registered deep concerns about the impact of recent policy decisions on students, families and the future of public higher education.

One member noted that Mississippi, for decades one of the country's lowest-performing states educationally, is now referring to Washington as an example of what **not** to do in the current economy.

An additional proposed across-the-board cut of 15 percent — or \$160 million — in FY 2013, and further cuts to financial aid programs also are possible.

These cuts, if enacted, will make it far more difficult for students to complete degree programs and may force many low-income students to withdraw.

The Board Resolution approving the plan updated stated:

"Failure to make progress on all seven recommendations, including a commitment to improve levels of state support for enrollment and student financial aid, will result in significant losses for Washington, not only in talented workers for business and industry, but also in lower median annual household income, a greater percentage of the population unemployed fewer tax revenues for state and local public services, and greater reliance on human and social services."

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