



Skagit STEM Network

Helping our Skagit Valley students **DREAM BIG!**

Setting Students up for Success Beyond High School

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In 2017, the High School and Beyond Plan became a state wide high school graduation requirement. Each student is required to have a plan that guides their high school experience and prepares them for their post-secondary education that can include a range of options across 2- and 4- year colleges, apprenticeships and certificate programs. Students start their High School and Beyond plan in middle school and revise it throughout high school as their interests, education and career goals change. It is forecast that Washington State will create 740,000 job openings over the next five years, almost three quarters of which require a credential beyond high school. School Districts are expanding initiatives that support students and their families to understand and secure the financial resources needed to fund the post- secondary education required for these jobs.

This starts in Middle School with the College Bound Scholarship, a program created to provide state financial aid to low-income students who may not consider college. *“College Bound is an early commitment of state financial aid to eligible students who sign up in middle school and fulfill the College Bound pledge. The College Bound Scholarship covers average tuition, fees, and a book allowance at over 60 colleges, universities, and technical schools in Washington”* Eligibility for the scholarship is a two-part process. Students whose family meets the income requirements must submit and complete an application by June 30 of the student’s 8th grade year. Then students must meet the College Bound Pledge requirements and income-eligibility as determined by the student’s financial aid application (FAFSA or WASFA) in their senior year of high school.

Support is available to families on how to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA). These applications are the foundation that give students access public and private scholarships, grants, low-interest loans and eligibility for work study.

An example of a scholarship is the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship that reduces barriers to education and training and facilitating entry into high-demand careers for Washington students. WSOS offers two scholarship programs for Washington state residents pursuing a credential towards a high-demand career in Washington state. The Baccalaureate Scholarship is for Scholars pursuing a bachelor’s degree in a STEM or health care field. The Career and Technical Scholarship (CTS) is for Scholars pursuing a certificate, apprenticeship or associate degree in a high-demand trade, STEM or health care field such as welding, manufacturing or information technology.

The Skagit STEM Network has partnered with Skagit County School Districts to raise awareness of these scholarships. In 2019 more than \$1.2 million in scholarship dollars were awarded to 56 students in the Skagit Valley.

Resources:

High School and Beyond Plan: <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work/high-school-and-beyond-plan>

College Bound Scholarship: <https://readyssetgrad.wa.gov/college/college-bound-scholarship-program>

Washington State Opportunity Scholarship: <https://www.waopportunitiescholarship.org/>

For more information please contact your school counselor.