



8 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES

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1. The State's Largest System of Higher Education

Washingtonians — at all ages and stages — rely on our open-door colleges to gain the skills they need, when they need them, and at a more affordable cost. Nearly six out of every 10 full-time equivalent students in Washington public colleges and universities are enrolled in our 34 community and technical colleges. This makes our system the largest system of higher education in Washington.¹

2. A Vital Niche

Offering a mix of job training programs, degrees, and classes that transfer to four-year universities, community and technical colleges fill an important niche in higher education. We serve about 370,000 Washingtonians each year.²

3. A Less Expensive Option

Our colleges are a considerably less expensive option at \$4,027 per year for a full-time student.

4. A Pathway to Bachelor's Degrees

Nearly 40 percent of public baccalaureate graduates in Washington start at a community or technical college. Students who transfer from two-year colleges to four-year universities do just as well as those who started as freshmen, with similar GPAs and credits earned.

Transfer students make up 39 percent of business majors, 44 percent of health field majors, and 37 percent of majors in STEM fields.³

5. Training for In-Demand Jobs

Our colleges provide the job training students want and employers need. These “high demand” programs — in fields like dental hygiene, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing — move people into good jobs and help us compete in the global economy. Ten percent of students in our workforce programs already have bachelor's degrees.⁴

6. Value Added

Community and technical colleges and our current and former students add \$20.5 billion to Washington's economy each year.⁵

7. A Diverse Student Body

The median age of our students is 26. Forty-six percent work, 24 percent are parents, and 45 percent are students of color.⁶

8. A First Step

Our colleges provide adult basic education, high school completion programs, and precollege (or “remedial”) education, providing that first, most important stepping stone to job training, certificates, and degrees. (See sources next side.)

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Sources:

1. 58% per OFM 2016-2017 Budget Driver Report. Includes Running Start students.
2. 369,709 per 2017-18 enrollment dashboard.
3. SBCTC research report: The Role of Transfer in the Attainment of Baccalaureate Degrees at Washington's Public Bachelor's Degree Institutions, class of 2016, May 4, 2018. STEM refers to science, technology, engineering and math.
4. SBCTC 2017-18 enrollment dashboard. Data sorted for fall quarter with "other" prior education category excluded.
5. Economic contribution of Washington's Community and Technical Colleges: Analysis of Investment Effectiveness and Economic Growth, by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI) 2016
6. SBCTC 2017-18 enrollment dashboard.

