

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5305

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As of January 23, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to establishing the office of career connect Washington.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the office of career connect Washington.

**Sponsors:** Senators Wellman, Hunt, Keiser, Lias, Nguyen, Nobles, Shewmake, Valdez and Wilson, C.; by request of Office of the Governor.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/23/23.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Office of Career Connect Washington within the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).
- Revises terms related to career launch, career-connected learning, and other related items.
- Modifies language relating to the Career Connected Learning Cross-Agency Work Group and related grant programs.
- Adds additional members to WSAC.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

**Background:** Career-Connected Learning. Career-connected learning (CCL) is defined in state law as a learning experience that is integrated with work-related content and skills in the categories of career awareness and exploration, career preparation, and career launch, each of which are defined in statute.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Career launch programs are defined as registered apprenticeships and programs that combine:

- supervised paid work experience;
- aligned classroom learning to academic and employer standards; and
- culmination in a credential beyond a high school diploma or 45 college credits towards a two-year or four-year postsecondary credential.

Career launch programs may be achieved through, but are not limited to, a state-approved career and technical education sequence of courses or a qualifying degree or credential earned through an institution of higher education.

Career Connected Learning Cross-Agency Work Group. The Career Connected Learning Cross-Agency Work Group (work group) was created by the Legislature in 2019 to scale up and expand high-quality CCL opportunities in communities across the state. The work group's membership includes a variety of agency representatives, as well as representatives of public and private institutions of higher education.

The work group's purpose is to coordinate agency functions and external partnerships to carry out a variety of CCL responsibilities, such as creating a statewide CCL system, expanding participation in CCL, making budget recommendations to the Office of Financial Management regarding CCL education programs, supporting the formation and operation of regional networks to guide CCL, and developing a data enclave for CCL.

The work group is required to meet at least six times during the calendar year and must report progress to the Governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature by September 1st annually.

Washington Student Achievement Council. The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) was created as a state agency in 2012. WSAC was charged to assume some of the remaining functions of its predecessor, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and to propose higher education goals and strategic action planning. The executive director of WSAC is appointed by the Governor, who chooses from a list of names provided by WSAC.

WSAC is comprised of the following ten voting members:

- six citizen members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, including one undergraduate student and one graduate student;
- a representative of the public baccalaureate institutions selected by the presidents of public baccalaureate institutions;
- a representative of the community and technical college system, selected by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;
- a representative of the K-12 system selected by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in consultation with the Department of Early Learning and the State Board of Education; and

- a representative of an independent, nonprofit higher education institution selected by an association of independent nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

Citizen members must represent the diversity of the state and the state's geography. Four citizen members serve four-year terms, and the students serve two-year staggered terms. The K-12 and higher education representatives must excuse themselves from matters pertaining primarily to institutions of higher education and public institutions of higher education, respectively.

**Summary of Bill:** Office of Career Connect Washington. The Office of Career Connect Washington (OCCW) is created within WSAC, with the following purposes:

- advance, promote, and oversee implementation of the Career Connect Washington vision to create and sustain a statewide system for CCL that is demand-driven and leads Washington's residents towards a career pathway, and ensures residents obtain a postsecondary credential, economic self-sufficiency, and fulfillment;
- lead and staff the work group; and
- measure performance of career connected activities and ensure funding dedicated to CCL is increasing student enrollment, retention, completion, successful postcompletion outcomes, and closing equity gaps.

Additional duties are given to OCCW, including the collection of student information collected under its programs and publication of progress towards program outcomes.

Various terms related to CCL are renamed or redefined, including terminology and criteria relating to the CCL Grant Program.

Career Connected Learning Cross-Agency Work Group. Various duties and responsibilities, including work group staffing, are transferred to OCCW.

The purpose of the work group is changed to:

- advance and promote the Career Connect Washington vision to create a statewide system for CCL; and
- coordinate agency roles, responsibilities, and participation in CCL activities; advise WSAC on strategies to scale up and expand high quality CCL opportunities in communities across the state; and implement strategies to ensure career connected pathways are accessible and equitable.

The Governor's Office responsibilities in the work group are modified, including the removal of the requirement that the Governor select the chair of the work group. Membership is expanded to include additional agency representatives and a representative from the Office of Native Education at OSPI.

The work group must also support and coordinate the work of CCL coordinators and prepare an annual work plan for each office or state agency in the work group. Each office

or state agency in the work group shall share relevant data and work plans, and report on progress to the OCCW and the work group.

The work group must meet at least four times during the calendar year, and report progress by November 1st annually.

Washington Student Achievement Council. Additional citizen members are added to WSAC, including:

- one member representative of worker representatives;
- one member representative of the business community; and
- a tribal representative.

At least one citizen member shall represent a local community or region dedicated to CCL pathways and at least two of the citizen members shall have direct experience with CCL programs or pathways, or both, including registered apprenticeship.

**Appropriation:** The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 13, 2023.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: WSAC is well-positioned to support career-connected learning through the Office of Career Connected Washington. This proposal houses the Career Connect Washington in a structured way that allows for growth at scale. Education partners are already at the table through WSAC to expand the work of Career Connect Washington. Career Connect provides paid work and provides great opportunities for students across the state. The new members of WSAC would provide greater community input into the work. Career Connect has allowed stakeholders and community partners to work together to meet local industry needs. Embedding Career Connect into WSAC would ensure that the program is not just an initiative, but part of what it means to receive a quality education. Career Connect has been a great initiative and deserves a permanent institutional home.

OTHER: WSAC has been successful in its current form; increasing the membership of WSAC could lead to confusion in implementation. Some technical programs may not fit well into this new structure, which may lead to less flexibility. Career Connect Washington might be better served working more with community and technical colleges.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Heather Hudson, Washington Student Achievement Council; Lorie Thompson, Capital STEM Alliance

(CCW Regional Network); Brian Moreno; Evan Woods, Executive Director - WeTrain Washington; Mandira Virmani, Computing For All; Maud Daudon, Career Connect Washington; John B. Bonner; Shereen J. Henry; Debra Bowen, Director: Career Connect Southeast; Jayme Shoun, Washington STEM; Carolyn Busch, OEDC - Department of Commerce; Kathryn Kurtz, Pacific Education Institute.

OTHER: John Bonner; Shereen Henry; Paul Francis, Executive Director, SBCTC; Dr. Amy Morrison, President, Lake Wa Institute of Technology; Dr. Jean Hernandez, President, South Seattle College.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.