



Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GOVERNOR'S SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS PLANS TO HELP YOUTH CONNECT TO CAREERS

Governor Inslee announces new Career Connect Washington Task Force

REDMOND—The first ever Governor's Summit on Career Connected Learning drew over 1,200 participants Wednesday as business, industry, education, and community leaders came together to discuss next steps to help more Washington young people prepare for high-demand careers.

The Summit was the culmination of an 18-month National Governors Association Policy Academy on Work-Based Learning co-led by the Office of the Governor and the state's Workforce Board.

The Policy Academy, which encompassed 70 organizations, arrived at seven key policies to focus on, addressing the need for more business mentors; strengthened education and career planning that starts before high school; expanded access to apprenticeships; stronger connections between educators and industry; and a toolbox for educators to bring career-connected learning both inside and outside the classroom, along with improved access to rural and underserved communities.

Gov. Inslee announced these policy recommendations at the Summit and unveiled, as the centerpiece, a newly launched Career Connect Washington Task Force. This public-private partnership is expected to accelerate career-connected learning in Washington over the next six months, and beyond.

Inslee named Brad Smith, President of Microsoft, and Perry England, Chair of the Workforce Board and a vice president at MacDonald Miller Facility Solutions, as Task Force co-chairs.

"We are going to stop telling our kids that a four-year degree is the only path to success. Most of them will require education and training after high school, but that doesn't necessarily mean a four-year college degree," said Gov. Jay Inslee. "Through registered apprenticeships, technical training programs, and other career connected learning opportunities, we'll give students all kinds of ways to fulfill their dreams of helping build airplanes, cure diseases, or design innovative new software."

"As a business person and Chair of the Workforce Board, I'm committed to strengthening the connection between Washington employers and our young people," said Workforce Board Chair Perry England. "We need business and industry at the table to make this work. We need business to be engaged and truly excited about helping create these opportunities."

"The workplace is changing and jobs will require new skills," said Microsoft President Brad Smith. "Of the 740,000 job openings expected in Washington state in the next five years, the majority will require a postsecondary degree, certificate, or credential. Apprenticeships, mentorships, and career services can play an important role in helping today's young people prepare for the jobs of tomorrow."

In addition to policy recommendations to accelerate career connected learning and the Career Connect Washington Task Force, key initiatives announced at today's summit include:

- \$1 million investment in federal funds for career connected learning through the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- \$1 million investment from JP Morgan Chase & Co. to support career connected learning focused on STEM careers in three regions across the state.

"At JP Morgan Chase, we believe that a connection between education and the labor market is imperative to prepare a competitive 21st century workforce. Business partners must reimagine how we work with educational leaders so that our talent requirements articulate with the student experience and graduate profile," said Phyllis Campbell, Chairman, Pacific Northwest, JPMorgan Chase & Co. "We are excited about expanding career-focused educational programs that give Washington's young people opportunities to access career pathways in the State's expanding sectors. These programs can truly transform lives by showing students there are many pathways to success that lead to well-paying jobs and long-term careers."

The Governor hopes to pair these investments with a \$6 million public/\$6 million private investment in career connected learning, currently under consideration by the state Legislature.

In addition to 400 participants at the Microsoft campus, 800 participants connected to the Summit through a live stream from 26 separate locations. Washington State University-Extension led the effort to connect regional sites, including rural locations such as Lyle, Republic, Raymond and Cathlamet.

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