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**Recommendations:
Higher Education Needs of
Snohomish, Island, and Skagit
Counties (SIS)**

November 30, 2006

**Senate Early Learning, K-12
and Higher Education Committee**

The Charge

- Assess higher education needs in Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties
- Recommend type of institution(s) to be created or expanded to address needs
- Assess potential sites (locales)
- Identify costs and a master plan process for higher education expansion

The Participants

- HECB project team
- Consultants
- Local advisory committee
- Project coordination team
- Public
 - Surveys, interviews, focus groups
 - Town hall meetings

County Demographics

	SNOHOMISH	ISLAND	SKAGIT
POPULATION TRENDS			
- Projected Population (2025)	929,300	101,100	264,800
- Percent of Increase	39%	35%	46%
RACE/ETHNICITY			
- Caucasian/White	85.6%	91.5%	86.5%
- Black	1.7%	2.6%	0.4%
- Asian/Pacific Islander	5.8%	4.0%	1.7%
- American Indian/Aleut/Alaskan	1.4%	0.9%	1.9%
- Hispanic	4.7%	3.1%	11.2%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.6%	6.1%	5.6%

Source: Assessment of the Higher Education Needs of Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties Area (SIS), NBBJ and MGT of America, Inc., November 2006.

Participation Rates

Participation Rates for Study Area Four-Year Public Institutions

County	Fall 1994		Fall 2004	
	Participation Rate	State Ranking	Participation Rate	State Ranking
Skagit	1.41	19	1.47	18
Snohomish	1.32	20	1.41	22
Island	1.17	27	1.18	32
State Average	1.76		1.69	

Source: Assessment of the Higher Education Needs of Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties Area (SIS), NBBJ and MGT of America, Inc., November 2006.

Skagit County Program Needs

- Four-year nursing and whole allied health field
- K-12 bilingual teachers
- Four-year TEASL degree
- Special education
- Programs that can transfer for military
- Graduate programs
- Business/Management - service industry growth

Snohomish County Program Needs

- ✓ Four-year and graduate programs
- ✓ Allied health
- ✓ Special Education
- ✓ Graduate programs for working students
 - Math and science teachers (all levels)
 - Small and specialized programs operating periodically
 - Poly-tech and high tech
 - Certification programs, specifically to meet federal requirements
 - Advanced engineering
- ✓ Vocational training
 - Programs that complement SIS region economic “goals and agenda”

Island County Special Needs

- Wide geographic dispersion and isolation from the rest of the SIS study area
- Three separate regions
- Limited travel routes leads to traffic and congestion issues
- Military families and transfer needs
- Skagit Valley College in Oak Harbor may have untapped potential which has been constrained by funding priorities
- San Juan County is also part of the service area

Findings

- SIS population is projected to increase nearly 40% by 2025
- Largest demand for higher education will be among traditional undergraduate students (74%)
- Study area has diverse needs; a single solution is impractical

Findings

- Four-year participation rates for the study area are **below** the current statewide average
- Higher education participation rates for the state are **below** the national average at four-year public institutions
- Community and technical college participation rates are among the highest in the country
- Additional access to higher education in the region will be needed in the future



Statewide Context

In addition to specific study findings, the recommendations are shaped by additional sources of information, as well as the board's mission:

- Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education
- State and Regional Needs Assessment

Enrollment Benchmarks

Statewide Enrollment Benchmarks and Capacity Limit – Public Four-Year

Benchmark	2015-16 FTE Enrollment Level
OFM Estimate (Current Participation)	100,966
HECB Estimate (Demand for Degrees)	115,973
HECB Estimate based on Global Challenge State Median Degree Production	123,657
Capacity Limit of Existing Public Baccalaureate Institutions	117,249

Principal Recommendations

- 1. Improve core funding and provide for growth at the state's existing public institutions.**
 - Implement a ten-year strategy to fund colleges and universities at the 60th percentile of peer institutions.

Principal Recommendations

2. **Future decisions concerning the creation of a new four-year campus in the SIS region should be considered when the existing colleges and universities have reached their maximum programmatic and physical capacity.**
 - Existing institutions should respond to enrollment demand from the region and other areas of the state.

Principal Recommendations

- 3. Planning for a new four-year campus in the SIS region should continue.**
 - Operational level planning on requirements, costs, and system impacts.

Supporting Recommendations

4. Examine and research best practices at institutions with advanced use of technology and at selected polytechnic universities.
5. Form a liaison committee to collaborate on enrollment studies, identification of strategic strengths in which to invest to achieve academic goals, and identification of innovative educational delivery systems.

Supporting Recommendations

6. Develop a policy on enrollment management, service areas, and strategic curriculum planning to improve access and maximize certificate and degree production.
7. Review the organizational systems and the assignment of major lines and types of degrees, in light of projected statewide needs, to improve access and maximize certificate and degree production.

Supporting Recommendations

8. Support growth in the SIS area community colleges to accommodate additional students and investigate the feasibility of a future university center to serve Skagit and Island Counties.
9. Investigate the feasibility of coordinated pre-admission procedures, including a common application process, as a possible strategy to reduce front-end barriers to access.

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