



2023-2024

**PUGET SOUND TAXPAYERS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ACCOUNT
ANNUAL REPORT**

Institute of Higher Education	Washington State University Everett
Interlocal Agreement	EL-21-80-08-390
Allocation 2023-2024	\$ 191,730.00
Reallocated Unspent Funds from 2022-2023	\$ 4,848.45
Total 2023-2024 Allocation	\$ 196,578.45
Admin Designation (maximum 10%)	\$ 0
Direct Service Designation (maximum 90% after admin)	\$ 179,322.75
Early Learning Designation (minimum 10% after admin)	\$ 17,255.70
Spent through August 2024	\$ 182,666.27

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Proposed Use of Funds (Brief Summary).

WSU Everett proposes to utilize allocations from the Funds for Service in direct support of campus initiatives such as Student Influencers, the Cougar Food Pantry, the Cougar Closet, and Childcare Services to enhance campus culture focused on student success, retention, equity, and inclusion.

Focus: Access: Barrier-free access to higher education

Washington State University Everett is using PSTAA funds to eliminate barriers for local students through a series of new scholarships for new and enrolled students residing within the RTA and waive college application fees which increases college matriculation (particularly for students at under-resourced high schools and community colleges receiving college counseling) and induces high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds to apply and be admitted to more selective institutions. The barrier-free application program will save students about \$42,200.00, eliminating a major barrier and providing a platform from which to launch their futures in Snohomish County.

A confirmation fee scholarship (\$200 per confirmed student).

Another component to barrier-free access to education is housing. WSU Everett also aims to serve students facing food and housing insecurities and/or unhoused. Funds will be used to rent out space either at Everett Community College or local dwellings to provide a transitional opportunity for unhoused or housing insecure students until more stable housing can be secured. Supplying these new housing services will significantly



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improve student retention for students facing housing challenges allowing them to focus on their classes and studies.

Scholarships

College tuition rates rose 37% at public four-year colleges. That rate jumps to 213% when comparing current tuition with that of just 30 years ago, accounting for inflation. With no end in sight to the continual increase in the cost of an education, low- and middle-income students are facing more difficult choices than ever.

We have a unique opportunity to support Snohomish County students within the Sound Transit Regional Taxing Authority, particularly, families with young children.

Based on financial need and/or academic achievement and community involvement through work and volunteerism, WSU Everett will offer current-use scholarships during the 2023-2024 program year.

Focus: Retention, Success, and Completion

Proactive advising has shown to lead to gains in retention and completion. Participants in our new barrier-free access to higher education program will be required to complete specific learning during their studies, including mandatory advising and new University 101 seminars that will provide students with the tools they need to succeed, stay in school, and complete a degree.

Internally at WSU Everett, we are experiencing more engagement for retention and completion through student-on-student interactions. WSU Everett proposes to use allocations from the PSTAA Funds to supply direct service in support of campus initiatives such as Student Influencers, the Cougar Food Pantry, the Cougar Closet, and Childcare Services to enhance campus culture focused on student success, retention, equity, and inclusion.

Identify any modifications that occurred during implementation.

This year, an amendment was approved, enabling WSU Everett to offer financial support for students experiencing housing insecurity and/or unhoused.

Share your progress including outcomes achievement to date.

WSU Everett awarded over \$160,000 in scholarship funds and over sixty students were given the opportunity to receive help from this fund and continue their educational journey, including several students identifying with marginalized groups.

What challenges have you encountered?



The FAFSA delays this year had negative impacts on student award packages across the United States and caused delays in typical award scheduling. WSU Everett and WSU award system were also delayed in rolling out award packages which included PSTAA funding. Overall, the largest barrier was the delayed FAFSA rollout.

FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR EARLY LEARNING PROVIDERS

Early Learning Provider: ChildStrive

Proposed Use of Funds (Brief Summary)

- Everett Community College and the co-op program are in alignment in support of adult education classes provided by Everett Community College and Goodwill through Connect Casino Road at the Village on Casino Road.
- Family engagement through monthly parent meetings.
- Classroom coaching for parents.
- Early childhood development screening tools in parents' primary language.

Share their progress including outcomes achievement to date.

During the 2023-2024 PSTAA year, Childstrive lost funding for the child care through Connect Casino Road due to discontinued funding from other sources. Childstrive was only able to commit to provide childcare through December of 2023. Childstrive also had to cut back to one teacher, which limited the number of children they could serve in each 90-minute session. Other funding could not be secured to continue these programs past December. PSTAA allocations were focused on the small session that Childstrive was able to run through December.

Share successes and challenges designating funding to community-based early learning providers.

Funding was the largest barrier and because of this, other opportunities are being explored to better leverage the PSTAA fund allocation from WSU Everett and Snohomish County. A new project is being considered for PSTAA funding through ChildStrive supporting early childhood individual and family counseling on Casino Road. The project being considered is ChildStrive's Parents as Teachers program, where WSU Everett would designate community-based early learning funds.