

2013 Policy Priorities

The **Excellent Schools Now** coalition’s policy priorities for 2013 reflect the need for our state to provide all students with a college-and career-ready education. ESN also believes state leaders and lawmakers should fully fund basic education as directed by the state Supreme Court’s *McCleary* decision and continue to adopt and endorse the strategies in *A+ Washington*.

The realities of Washington’s economy compared to our education system show why our state must better prepare all students for life after high school:

| Economy: Today & the Future | Education: Reality of Student Preparation |
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| 1st Washington leads the nation in the concentration of STEM jobs and the creation of software companies. ¹ | vs. 48% Nearly half of students entering two-year colleges in Washington will require remedial courses. ² |
| 24% By 2018, the number of STEM jobs in Washington will increase by one-fourth. ³ | vs. 38th Washington ranks near the bottom in bachelor’s degrees awarded per capita. ⁴ |
| 70% By 2020, nearly three-quarters of all jobs in Washington will require education or training beyond high school. ⁵ | vs. 27% More than one-fourth of students in Washington will not earn a high school diploma in four years. ⁶ |

To fulfill the goal of a college- and career-ready education system, Washington must:

- Phase-in basic education and fully fund recent reform bills (House Bills 2261 and 2776, and Senate Bills 6696 and SB 5895).
- Enroll and support all students in career- and college-prep programs of study.
- Invest in policies and programs that advance student learning and hold districts accountable for student outcomes.

Excellent Schools Now recommends prioritizing the following investments in 2013:

- Full-day kindergarten
- 24-credit high school diploma, “Washington State Graduation Requirements: Career and College Ready”
- Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)
- Implementation of the Common Core State Standards and assessments
- Adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards
- Implementation and training for all educators on the four-tiered evaluation system
- Robust mentoring programs for teachers and principals

¹ U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Chamber Foundation. (June 2011). *Enterprising States: Recovery and Renewal for the 21st Century*. <<http://ncf.uschamber.com/library/enterprising-states/>>.
² Key Facts About Higher Education in Washington. (2011). Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board.
³ Carnevale, Anthony, Nicole Smith, and Michelle Milton. (October 2011) *STEM State-Level Analysis*. <<http://cew.georgetown.edu/stem/states/>>.
⁴ National Center for Education Statistics.
⁵ Carnevale, Anthony, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl. (June 2010). *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*. <http://cew.georgetown.edu/jobs2018/>.
⁶ National Center for Education Statistics.