



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Skilled Workforce Pilot Program

2016

Authorizing legislation: 2ESHB 2376, Sec. 501 (47)

<http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2015-16/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/2376-S.SL.pdf>

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Executive Summary

Local employers want local workers. But the jobs of tomorrow require specific skills. To help develop students into skilled workers, the Legislature in its 2016 supplemental operating budget bill allocated money for a summer internship pilot project.

The project tasked OSPI with selecting two schools from Seattle Public Schools. (OSPI chose Rainier Beach High School and Cleveland High School as the participating schools.) The schools, in turn, selected 10 students each to participate in a 5½-week summer internship. The schools partnered with the Port of Seattle and manufacturing and maritime employers to provide the internships.

The first year of pilot implementation included a number of highlights:

- 23 students received ‘real-time’ workforce experience.
- students felt that the work was relevant to what they were learning in class
- Participants saw increased collaboration between school districts, and Business-Industry Partners.

Perhaps most important, all employers agreed to accept interns the following year.

Challenges included:

- Limitations of meaningful occupational opportunities due to age restrictions,
- Limited wraparound services for the students, and
- Gaps in communication between pilot participants.

The following report summarizes the successes and opportunities for improvement of the pilot project and provides recommendations for future actions.

Introduction

In 2016 the legislature allocated \$50,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2016 and \$50,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2017 for a skilled workforce development high school summer internship pilot project.

OSPI selected two schools from Seattle Public Schools to participate in the 2-year Skilled Workforce Summer Pilot Initiative: Rainier Beach High School and Cleveland High School. Cleveland High School had 11 students join the internship program, while Rainier Beach High School had 12 students.

After notifying the schools of their participation, meetings were held with stakeholders from April – June, 2016 to implement the program. The 5½-week summer internship dates ranged from July, 5 2016 – August 26, 2016. The salary of the interns – which, in addition to staff support, served as the required private match – was \$12 to \$15 per hour. In July, the pilot program began with the students and employers who agreed to be a part of the program. The summer interns were employed with: Center for Wooden Boats, Filson, Port of Seattle, Status Ceramics, Vigor Industrial, and Virginia V.

Expenditure of the amounts in this section is contingent on receipt by the school district of a fifty percent match in funding from non-state sources.

The internships consisted of the following types of employment:

- Administrative
- Customer Service
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Maritime
- Transportation

Pilot Program

The purpose of the program is to develop a skilled workforce to meet the needs of local employers in the high-demand, high-skilled sector of the community. The selected high schools partnered with the Port of Seattle and manufacturing and maritime employers, who are committed to fostering the development of local youth into a skilled workforce by providing internships for selected students.

Successes and Challenges

Some of the successes of the pilot shared by the participants were:

- Students selected were elated with the internship opportunity;
- Students have a ‘real-time’ understanding of what the workforce is looking for;

- Students found relevance to what they learned in class;
- Business-Industry Partners stepped up and agree to provide internship opportunities;
- Stakeholders/partners were excited about the potential opportunities to develop a pipeline of highly-skilled workforce; and
- All employers agreed to accept interns the following year.

Some challenges of the pilot shared by the participants were:

- Late conclusion of legislature left a small window of time to plan the pilot program;
- Limitation to meaningful skilled opportunities due to the age of the interns (16-17 years old) for example, student interns were not allowed to operate certain machinery;
- Limited wraparound services available to students in the summer, such as career guidance and counseling;
- Negotiating private partner commitments and contracts;
- Gaps in communication between student interns, school districts/skill centers, and employers;
- Skill Center job vacancy during planning and beginning of pilot project (Director position); and
- Student intern termination after failing to meet basic job attendance agreements.

Recommendations

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) makes the following recommendations for future actions:

- Expand the number of skilled workforce development high school summer internship programs around the state;
- Increase the number of students to participate;
- Provide academic credit for students participating in skilled workforce internships; and
- Increase wraparound career counseling services to students, especially through the summer months, through partnerships with other providers and school district staff.

Conclusion and Next Steps

After one year of this two-year pilot project, stakeholders and partners are excited about the opportunity to develop a pipeline of a highly-skilled workforce. OSPI is looking into how to include more wraparound career counseling services to students, through partnerships with other providers and school district staff.

The second year of the pilot project is scheduled to continue through August 2017. In year two of the pilot, OSPI would like to explore a structure where students receive academic credit for their internships.

No final report is required per 2ESHB 2376 Sec. 501 (47). For information about year two of the pilot project, please contact OSPI.

Acknowledgments

The Career and Technical Education Department of OSPI extends its sincere appreciation to the industry members listed below who offered interns employment within their companies during the pilot program. Their efforts have served to enrich the quality of the interns who participated in the program.

[Center for Wooden Boats](#)

Cleveland High School

[Filson](#)

[Port of Seattle](#)

Rainier Beach High School

[Status Ceramics](#)

[Vigor Industrial](#)

[Virginia V Steamer](#)

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