



## Career Connect Washington

### FACT SHEET

The Career Connect Washington (CCW) initiative began in January 2018, empowering communities to close skill gaps for employers and help young people succeed in school and life through rigorous, relevant and relationship-based learning.

### Closing skill gaps

Washington state employers commonly have about 260,000 job openings per year paying \$35,000 or more. But 73 percent require some post-secondary education, and businesses can't find enough qualified workers to fill the positions. Skill gaps persist at all levels, slowing employer growth and job creation.

At the same time, the unemployment rate for young adults ages 16-24 is 12.4 percent (unemployed and actively seeking work). And each year, 18,000 high school students finish their fifth year and still don't have a diploma.

To improve those numbers, Gov. Inslee directed 12 CCW teams — one from each of the state's workforce development areas — to expand youth Registered Apprenticeships, comprehensive internships, and career connected learning experiences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); and other high

demand fields. Outreach focuses on low-income, rural and youth of color.

Each team includes representatives from business, labor, schools, workforce councils, STEM networks, state agencies and service providers. A steering committee consisting of five state agencies, a statewide private sector nonprofit, and the Governor's Office assesses performance each quarter, provides unified leadership, and makes funding decisions.

**Twelve teams plan to move 15,000 youth into career connected learning opportunities before October 2019**

The Employment Security Department manages the local contracts on behalf of each team because the funding comes from the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act.





### Some short- and long-term goals

The 12 local CCW teams plan to move 15,000 youth into career connected learning opportunities — including 1,500 in comprehensive internships or youth Registered Apprenticeships — before October 2019. Overall, the state totals are on track to exceed these goals.

The teams also intend to reach 100,000 youth with career connected learning by 2023, and 60 percent of all high school students with intensive career launch activities — including youth Registered Apprenticeship — by 2028.

The intent is a full-scale career connected learning system that reaches all 1,117,000 Washington state students and out-of-school youth with career exploration, mentoring, Registered Apprenticeship, or comprehensive onsite employer internships. The teams will particularly focus on Washington’s 226,000 children living in poverty, 509,000 students of color, 18,000 youth who do not graduate each year, 249,000 middle school students, and 343,000 high school students.

The state will track long-term impacts on skill gaps, employer growth, job creation, graduation rate, and youth who enter careers.

