

THE STATE OF WORKPLACE EDUCATION IN THE STATES

WASHINGTON

Funding

- Washington supports its workplace education programs with 25% federal funding and 75% state and other funding.
- Additionally, employers contribute both through targeted and in-kind donations.
- Targeted funding, which is limited, supports instruction. In-kind funding is provided in the forms of matching and paid release time.

Current Initiatives

Workplace Basic Skills has been part of Washington's Welfare Reform program since its inception. The project is aimed at low-income, entry-level workers (those living at 175% of poverty level). Through partnerships with community based organizations (CBOs) and community colleges, Workplace Basic Skills focuses on employment retention and increased wages and hours.

Washington is also working on how to blend specific skills with ABE & ESL programs through pilot studies. In Washington, 90% of projects have an ESL focus, as is necessitated by the state's rapidly growing diversity.

Workplace education initiatives in Washington are based largely on the National Institute for Literacy's Equipped for the Future (EFF) effort. It provides a format from which customized programs are developed. For example, the EFF Worker Role Map has been translated into a Goal Map from which interviewing skills are taught.

Barriers to Workplace Education

- Funding is a primary barrier to workplace education. Off-site programs and partnerships are costly and take time to develop.
- Washington, Oregon, and Alaska are being especially hard-hit by the recession. Each month, the three vie for the highest unemployment rate in the nation. With the state of the economy being so dire in Washington, it is very difficult for employers to financially support work-based learning. Matching requirements in particular are being closely examined.

Location of programs

- 100% of workplace education programs are offered on-site.

Responsibility for implementation at the local level

- Community colleges
- CBOs
- Labor centers

Support Services

- Training
- Marketing
- Partnership Building
- Policies and support

One-Stop Connections

- Adult workplace education initiatives in Washington are connected to One-Stops but only loosely and on a local level. Initiatives are primarily connected with CBOs.

Workplace Education Program Qualities

State	State Partners	Enrollment	State Staff	State Led Effort
Washington	State Education Advisory Council, Department of Health and Human Services, Employment Security Department, Department of Community and Trade Development, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Worker Center	Less than 3%	Part-time (2FTE who devote part-time to work-based learning)	Yes

This information was compiled from conversations with staff of the Office of Adult Literacy of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.