

# WASHINGTON STEM 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



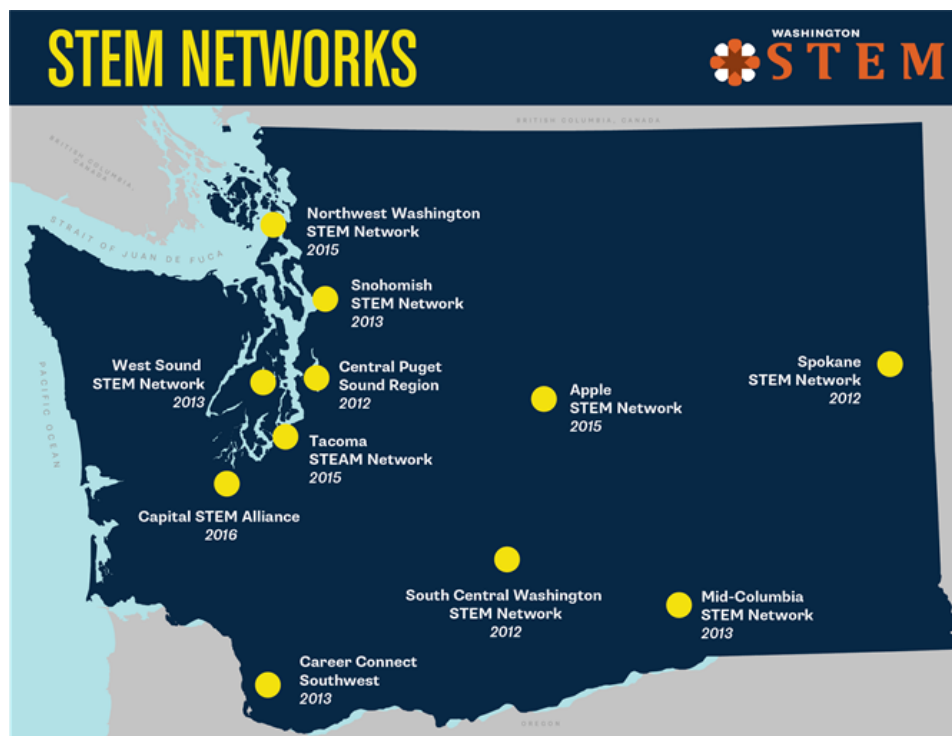
Washington STEM is a statewide education nonprofit leveraging STEM for social change, removing barriers to credential attainment, and creating pathways to long-term economic security for historically excluded students. We envision a state where skin color, zip code, income and gender do not predict educational and career outcomes.

## Legislative Priorities

**Early Learning System Improvements:** Support the equitable implementation of the Fair Start for Kids Act through improvements to agency measurement and transparency. Support community efforts for increased investments to develop the early child care workforce.

**Applying Dual Credit:** Increase equitable completion and application of dual credit by bridging the gaps between K-12 and higher education systems.

**High School to Postsecondary:** Improve the utility of postsecondary- and career-readiness strategies and tools through evidence and community voice.



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## **ABOUT US:**

At Washington STEM, our work revolves around three main strategies:

- **PARTNERSHIP:** We collaborate with 10 Regional STEM Networks across the state and the Central Puget Sound STEAM Collective to identify, scale, and spread effective local solutions and convene cross sector partners in business, education, and the community to solve big problems.
- **DIRECT SUPPORT:** We provide direct support through targeted community investments, open-source access to data and measurement tools, and technical assistance.
- **ADVOCACY:** We champion transformative solutions through educating decision makers, storytelling, and collaboration to create the foundation for lasting, equitable change in Washington.

## **OUR FOCUS:**

**Early Learning:** Early Learning sparks curiosity and provides foundational math and science literacy before Kindergarten to give students the best start possible in school and life. Our vision is that every young child develops a positive math identity, participates in high-quality early STEM learning, and has access to the best early learning environments possible

**K-12:** A strong K-12 STEM experience is a critical component to ensuring young Washingtonians are informed and thriving global citizens equipped for multiple viable career pathways of their choosing. Our K-12 work extends beyond STEM education to include systemic issues that often hinder access. These include dual credit access, enrollment and completion, financial aid awareness and completion, and the teaching workforce

**Career Pathways:** A robust cross-sector career pathways system is key to preparing students for the most in-demand, high-paying careers in our state. We work in partnership with Career Connect Washington and business, education, and community partners to expose and prepare students for exciting careers in high-demand industries in which STEM fuels innovation, economic mobility, and job growth.

**Commitment to Equity:** Washington ranks among the top states in the nation in the concentration of STEM jobs, but our systems have not equitably or adequately prepared students to take advantage of these opportunities. Furthermore, students of color, rural students, students living in poverty, and girls still lack access or face barriers to these pathways. Washington STEM is working to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to benefit from the transformational possibilities that STEM has to offer.

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