



REGIONAL IMPACT REPORT

Washington students need strong science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills to pursue Washington's highest demand career pathways that lead to family-wage jobs – from advanced agriculture, ground-breaking biotechnology, to 21st-century manufacturing. Over the past few years, students in the [Mid-Columbia STEM Network](#) have received cradle-to-career STEM education opportunities thanks to our partnership with the Washington State Legislature.

CAREER CONNECT WASHINGTON

This year growth in the Career Connect Washington Mid-Columbia Region reached 5 total intermediary grantees and 11 Career Launch Endorsed programs. Industries supported include Agriculture, IT, Fire Science, Automotive, and Energy Production.

FAFSA/WASFA COMPLETION INITIATIVE

Using available data from the STEM By the Numbers report for Southeast Washington, the Mid-Columbia STEM Network has focused FAFSA completion efforts primarily on LatinX students and families. A Financial Aid Application Completion Contest helped to increase engagement and participation in financial aid awareness events hosted at [Chiawana](#), [Kiona-Benton City](#), [Burbank](#) and [Walla Walla High schools](#). The second initiative was a partnership to create the Hispanic Outreach Media Messaging Campaign through local Spanish radio, which provided important information about WASFA completion and was delivered in Spanish by a trusted messenger from the Hispanic community.

SOUTHEASTERN WORKFORCE SUMMIT

Nearly **100 leaders and practitioners** from business, labor, education, government, and community-based organizations met virtually on November 16th to discuss how to help students better prepare for and take advantage of future career opportunities. Attendees at the region's annual Southeastern Washington Workforce Summit had the opportunity to listen to 19 panelists throughout the day and engage in 5 sessions, including hearing from top executives from the major employment sectors in our region, including healthcare, energy, agriculture and regional economic development, and a spotlight on four unique initiatives designed to help reach students farthest from opportunity. We received positive responses from attendees in all areas of business and education and we are hopeful the annual Future Workforce Summit will be in person in 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS TO INSPIRE ACTION & ENGAGEMENT

Our Network serves as the region's leading voice in driving community awareness, interest and desire to support and engage in advancing STEM education and career connected learning activities. Network board and staff participate in editorial board meetings and write guest editorials, produce videos, develop press releases that result in TV, radio, and print coverage, and present at numerous events throughout the year.

STEM NETWORKS SPARK CHANGE

STEM Networks are deeply rooted in their communities and provide local expertise to ensure that local needs are met. Each area of our state is unique and STEM Networks know how to drive maximum impact in STEM for every student in their region.



EARLY LEARNING

Leadership and funding provided by Washington STEM facilitated the launch of a partnership with [The Rural Alliance](#) to create a pilot early learning project with a focus in Math for rural, remote and small school districts in ESD123.

The Rural Alliance entered into a partnership with the [Children's Reading Foundation](#) in support of creating and implementing a project on "parental" engagement in early math STEM, to be presented in English and Spanish. The program introduces foundational skills that every child needs to start kindergarten prepared for Math: rote counting, identifying numerals, subitizing, ordering, measuring and spatial sense.

This project also includes a new partnership with [ELLO](#) – Everyday Language and Learning Opportunities, a research based public engagement campaign (<https://www.helloello.org>). ELLO connects with home and community spaces routinely accessed by families such as the grocery store, laundry mats, public transit, libraries and outdoor spaces. Language-rich math learning conversation cards in English and Spanish will be used in the project to encourage caregivers and parents to talk with their children throughout everyday routines.

THANK YOU

We thank the Washington State Legislature for their engagement with STEM education issues and the Mid-Columbia STEM Network. Our collective and ongoing impact on Washington students means that every student, from our earliest learners to those on their way to a STEM career, will be prepared to thrive in Washington's innovation economy. Our collaboration with the Legislature is essential as we work to strengthen our education systems so that students in our region can thrive and contribute to the vitality of their communities.

If you have any questions, please contact Mid-Columbia STEM Network Director Debra Bowen at deb@stemlearning.org.

1,000,000 students across the state are supported through STEM Network activities and programs.

