



Every Child. One Community. Cradle to Career.

# 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 [Tacoma STEAM Network](#) have received cradle-to-career STEM education opportunities thanks to our partnership with the Washington State Legislature.

## SUPPORTING FAFSA AND WASFA

The Tacoma College Support Network (TCSN) in alignment with the Tacoma STEAM Network was able to engage Tacoma Public School students and families in financial aid orientation and completion efforts. A calendar of financial aid events, supported by community-based organizations (CBOs) and schools, was organized. Language accommodations and WASFA content experts were identified and participated in some of the events. These accommodations greatly support first-generation college bound students as well as helps orient parents to the process their children will be going through every year they're enrolled in college. There were four programmed events and weekly drop-in support hours offered by CBOs with nearly **100 students or parents** from the region receiving assistance on completing the FAFSA or WASFA. Financial Aid drop-in support will continue to take place through April with programmed events in February in order to focus on STEM career exploration by connecting students to the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship and other funding options. This concentration serves as another engagement to support students with their FAFSA/WASFA and help boost district completion numbers. Networks continue to look at data to guide efforts and remain flexible as they respond to the needs of students and families amid the pandemic.

## INCREASING ACCESS TO STUDENTS OF COLOR & GIRLS THROUGH CAREER CONNECTED LEARNING

In its fourth year, the Tacoma STEAM Network has continued to partner with the Tacoma Public School CTE Department and Local 26 Union to provide hands-on experiences for students to explore pipefitting and plumbing careers. This past summer, we were able to offer a completion stipend for the summer experience in addition to high school credit. This allowed students, especially those who are historically minoritized, to participate in the summer opportunity who normally may not have been able to participate due to other commitments and responsibilities. **75% of students identified as BIPOC** and we had representation from three of our comprehensive high schools: **Stadium, Lincoln, and Mt. Tahoma.**

## BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT WITH STATE OF THE CHILDREN REPORT

In efforts to re-engage business partners in the Tacoma-Pierce County region, the STEAM Network co-hosted a Lunch and Learn for the regions [State of the Children Report](#). The event offered the opportunity for

## 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.



participants to learn about regional childcare issues that their employees are potentially facing and to have meaningful conversations around work culture and how this information could be used to create family-friendly work environments and policies. In attendance were representatives from the education sector, union, construction, and technology design.

### EARLY LEARNING

The Tacoma STEAM Network continues to partner with our Early Learning & Reading Network and Zeno Math to provide resources for caregiving adults who serve our youngest citizens. With the support of Washington STEM's Catalyst Investments, the network provided professional development and hands-on math kits to over **500 families** in partnership with many local organizations and Tacoma Public Schools.

### THANK YOU

We thank the Washington State Legislature for their engagement with STEM education issues and the Tacoma STEAM 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, are prepared to thrive in Washington's innovation economy. Our collaboration with the Legislature is essential as we work to strengthen our education systems so students in our region can thrive and contribute to the vitality of their communities.

**If you have any questions, please contact Tacoma STEAM Network Director, Chanel R. Hall, at [steam@graduatetacoma.org](mailto:steam@graduatetacoma.org)**

