

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A thriving business community requires a robust and well-equipped workforce. There are employment opportunities going unfilled in the Wenatchee Valley because too many job seekers lack the skills and qualifications necessary for employment. Large and small employers struggle to find qualified workers that possess the needed work ethic and soft skills. The need to provide learning opportunities which instills this work ethic and soft skills is growing and is essential for students, young adults and adult workers. The soft skills needed include communication and interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, leadership, team work, conflict resolution, time and stress management, business etiquette,

customer service, and negotiation skills. The development of these skills is critical to having a strong, vibrant workforce.

Washington will add 740K jobs over the next 5 years. High-growth jobs will be higher-skill and higher-paying. We need to ensure our children are prepared to compete for and secure the jobs of the future. We need a strong local education system responsive to needs of the current and emerging businesses, and we need a business community positioned to help connect students to career opportunities. We need to work with education partners to cultivate future leaders in our region's top and emerging industries: agriculture, medical, tourism/hospitality, construction/trades, and technology.

Guiding Principles

- » The Chamber supports legislation and programs that provide career awareness, exploration, and experiences for students through mechanisms that involve business, schools and community in partnerships.
- » The Chamber supports the availability of locally focused, post-secondary education, training for area residents and customized education services for area businesses.
- » The Chamber supports programs, processes, activities and facilities that promote a strong local education system which, together with business and community, prepares students for a productive role in the world.
- » The Chamber supports cost effective improvements and modernization of our school buildings, technology infrastructure, and grounds.
- » The Chamber supports creative solutions to improve operational efficiencies of educational organizations.