

Washington State Snapshot

A globally competitive economy must have the necessary educational system in place to build a workforce pipeline filled with skilled and talented individuals and the necessary public services to sustain its facilities, provide housing and amenities for its workforce, and ensure the safety of all residents. Education and other kinds of public services are a critical part of Washington's infrastructure that sustains and supports economic growth and preserves a high quality of life.

Over 611,000 people work in Washington's education and public services cluster which includes all federal, state, and local government employees and employees in the education cluster who are not public employees. Washington's public services cluster has been a consistent national leader. [Washington earned a prestigious ranking¹](#) of A- by The Pew Center on the States for its performance in managing public resources. Washington is tied with two other states, Utah and Virginia, for first place and is one of only three states to earn grades above B+. Washington's public services cluster is commended for managing resources well during challenging economic times, delivering strong services to the public, effectively managing the state's dollars, and using data to drive decisions. The A- rating includes: an A- for state management of funding, an A- for recruitment and retention of high-qualified employees, an A for state management and provision of information to the public, and a B+ for the state's infrastructure planning and maintenance. No state in the nation is considered to be better at developing and sharing public information than Washington.

For a cluster to be successful and beneficial it needs to cultivate the unique resources of a region, have critical mass and talented people, and focus on building a leading industry that sets a region apart from other regions. With this in mind, it is clear the education and public services cluster is Washington is critical to economic growth.

Snohomish County Snapshot

The North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) is the current industry classification standard in the United States. The table below depicts [NAICS codes²](#) for the Snohomish County education and public services cluster. Military occupations are not included in this cluster.

NAICS Code	Industry Title
6111	Elementary and secondary schools
6112	Junior colleges
6113	Community colleges, colleges, universities, and professional schools
6114	Business schools and computer and management training

6115	Technical and trade schools
6116	Other schools and instruction
6117	Education support services
9100	Federal government
9200	State government
9300	Local government

Employment

The Snohomish County education and public services cluster employs over 42,000 workers. Employment within the cluster increased 20% since 2001 and 2% since 2011. Data forecasts a 6% increase in education and public services employment through 2015. The table below shows industry makeup and average earnings per worker in each industry within the education and public services cluster.

NAICS Code	Industry Title	2012 Jobs	2015 Jobs	% Change	Earnings Per Worker
6111	Elementary and secondary schools	612	623	2%	\$23,567
6112	Junior colleges	52	53	2%	\$33,714
6113	Community colleges, colleges, universities, and professional schools	169	168	(-1%)	\$24,649
6114	Business schools and computer and management training	391	433	11%	\$40,306
6115	Technical and trade schools	436	470	8%	\$24,604
6116	Other schools and instruction	1,879	2,150	14%	\$9,548
6117	Education support services	283	329	16%	\$39,432
9100	Federal government	1,380	1,405	2%	\$90,740
9200	State government	5,626	5,956	6%	\$65,178
9300	Local government	31,418	33,038	5%	\$65,178
		42,246	44,624	6%	\$60,721

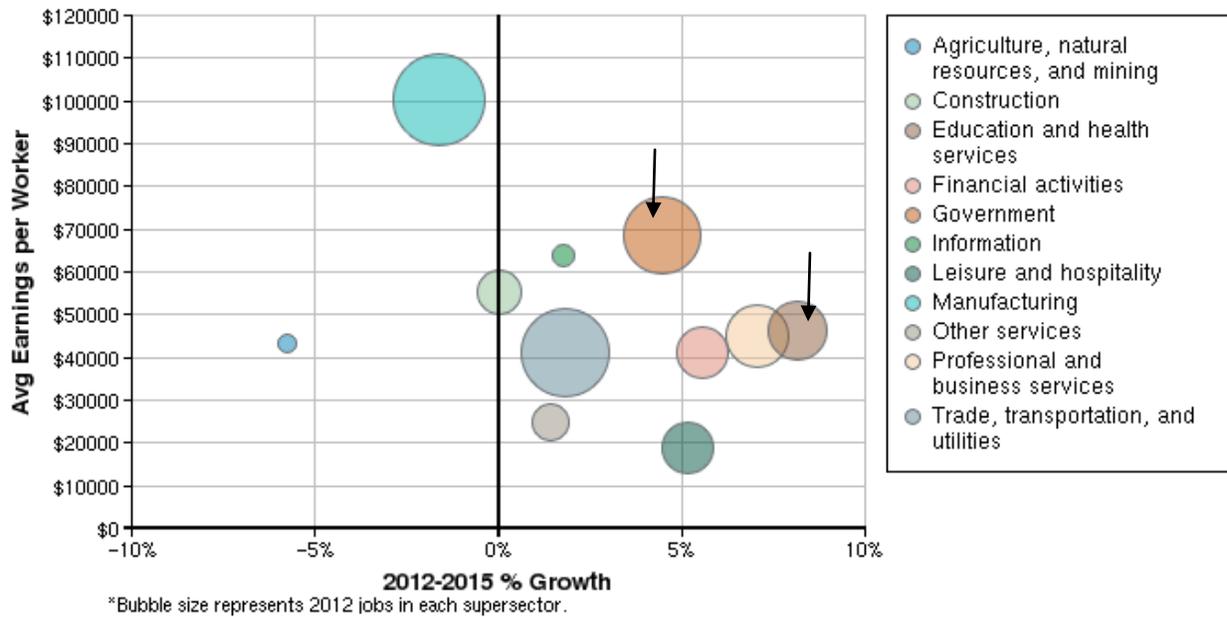
The table below shows the job forecast among the Snohomish County education and public services cluster's top ten occupations.

SOC Code	Occupation Title	2012 Jobs	2015 Jobs	% Change	% of Industry
25-2021	Elementary school teachers, except special education	2,233	2,385	7%	5%
25-9041	Teacher assistants	1,935	2,031	5%	5%
25-3099	Teachers and instructors, all other	1,850	1,996	8%	4%
25-1099	Postsecondary teachers	1,580	1,692	7%	4%
25-2031	Secondary education teachers, except special and	1,305	1,369	5%	3%

	vocational education				
29-1111	Registered nurses	1,107	1,169	6%	3%
43-9061	Office clerks, general	1,103	1,161	5%	2%
33-2011	Fire fighters	1,036	1,120	8%	2%
25-2022	Middle school teachers, except special and vocational education	988	1,054	7%	2%
33-3051	Police and sheriff's patrol officers	855	899	5%	2%

The figure below shows that education and public services (indicated with arrows) is forecasting high growth and moderate average earnings per worker compared to other clusters.

2012 - 2015 Size and Growth



According to Mukilteo School District administrators, the demand for educators is balanced with current supply. This marks a shift from previous years when the demand for teachers far outweighed the available supply of talent. It used to be that personal shortages resulted in industry competition, with schools luring teachers from other states. Specialized career and technical education programs were especially affected by the workforce shortage. Many Snohomish County school districts undertook nationwide searches only to lose applicants to other states providing incentives or higher pay. As a result of increased education and training programs for teachers, stronger recruitment efforts, and competitive wages, Snohomish County now has enough talented educators to fill vacant positions. Further, as a result of the current recession, turnover is rarer, employees are retiring later than they originally planned, and

highly talented individuals from other sectors of the economy are moving into education positions due to their stability and excellent wages and benefits.

Though the education cluster is often viewed as one lacking competitive wages, data shows otherwise. Prior to the new millennium, it was true that wage growth in education was not as robust as the all-industries average. Since 2002, wage growth has caught up to and often exceeds other clusters. The base average wage for K-12 teachers across Washington is more than \$53,000 per year. However, this is just the required base average wage, not the actual average salaries of teacher across the state. Many school districts are able to offer higher wages than what is required due to local levies and funding decisions plus additional funds teachers for coaching, professional development, experience, etc. Some of the highest paying school districts are in Snohomish County.

A concern across [local public services departments](#)³ is the aging of the internal workforce. The average age of the County workforce is 46 years and many employees have been with the County for fifteen or more years. These long-term, older workers possess a great deal of experience and knowledge as well as an excellent work ethic. The County wishes to retain older workers to prevent the loss of institutional knowledge and both postpone and amortize the cost of training new workers. To accomplish this, the County is considering various retention methods such as retraining older workers for non-physically demanding jobs, offering a wellness program, building in flexibility for all ages and stages of work life, developing career ladder training, and putting successor management in place.

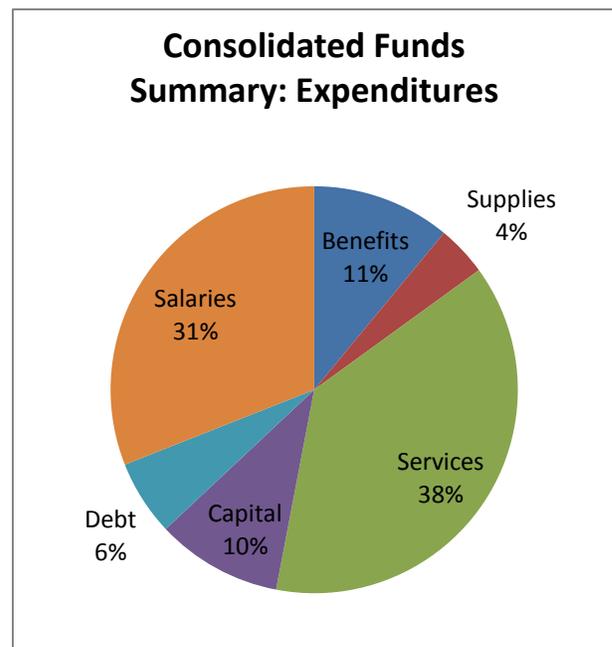
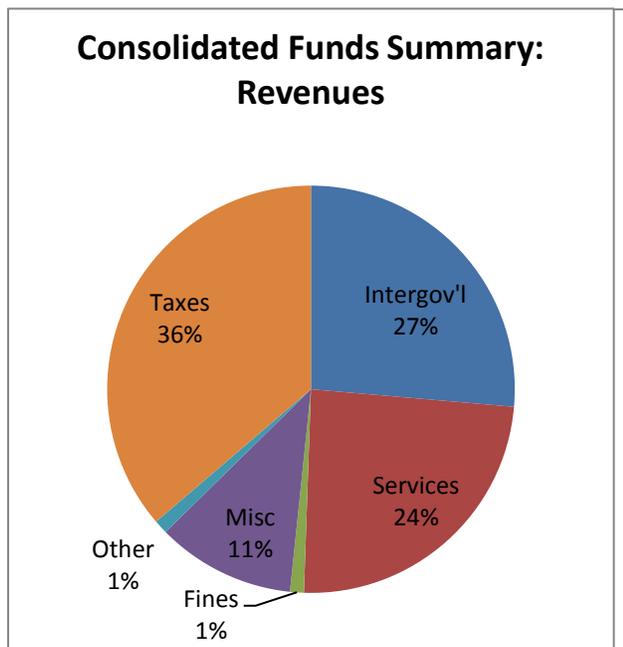
Another employment theme is the need to respond to the increase in diversity within Snohomish County. County personnel must seek to include all communities in public hearings, community building efforts, and planning. There is an increase in the need for multi-lingual resources for an evolving customer base as well as knowledge of diverse cultural issues. County staff need easy access to translation services and cultural competency training, access that can be aided by recruiting diverse populations into the workforce. Actions identified across County public services departments to address this issue are: train managers to use diversity-friendly hiring practices, advertise in ethnic communities, use innovative recruitment techniques, target hiring fairs to specialized populations, assess mentoring opportunities as a staff retention tool, provide pay differential for staff with second language capability, broaden staff communication skills by offering diversity training and language courses, and train staff to provide programs for more diverse populations.

Spending and Activity

[Snohomish County is home to 137 public elementary schools, 57 public middle schools, and 62 public high schools](#)⁴. Over 58,500 students are enrolled in public elementary schools, over 27,000 students are enrolled in public middle schools, and over 39,500 students are enrolled in public high schools. An

additional 5,200+ students are enrolled in private schools. Student enrollment is expected to increase in coming years while spending is expected to decrease as a result of budget shortfalls as the state level.

Fortunately, the Snohomish County economy in general fares well with the help of proactive public services that contribute to the high quality of life in the region. The [Snohomish County 2011-2012 consolidated revenue budget and consolidated expenditure budget](#)⁵ is \$559.3 million and \$602.7 million, respectively. The bulk of revenue comes from taxes, intergovernmental sources, and services. The majority of expenditures are on services, salaries, capital, and benefits. The figures below show revenue and expenditures in greater detail.



Community safety is among Snohomish County government's first priorities, with nearly 74% of the [general fund budget](#)⁶ dedicated to the public safety, law, and justice system in 2011. The County's detention and incarceration facilities provide services to the community, law enforcement, inmates, and courts. [Demographic changes](#)⁷ in the jail population and the cost of operations is a growing concern. Similarly, the need for collaboration with human services agencies to address a population presenting with serious chronic disease, psychiatric illness, and other needs is a situation that confronts corrections. Current workforce related activity in correctional facilities centers on recruiting and hiring a more diverse workforce, expanding ability to communicate with non-English speaking prisoners, pursuing opportunities to partner in regional facilities and non-capital custodial options, and achieving a higher degree of collaboration between human service agencies and corrections.

In a [survey](#)⁸ of the County's departmental challenges and needs through 2020, all departments echoed the workforce related sentiments of Corrections and Airport. Across the County, public services decisions are taking into consideration an aging population, increased ethnic diversity, and a changing workforce. For example:

- Facilities is establishing multi-lingual signage, upgrading facilities to meet changing ADA requirements, and developing methods of mentoring younger staff.
- Human Resources is facilitating movement between jobs for older employees and encouraging staff to be more proactive in workplace design and problem solving.
- Human Services is providing mentors for new hires, translating materials into additional languages spoken by county residents, and providing diversity training.
- Information Services is enhancing the County's website to meet the needs of people with severe disabilities and determining the needs of non-English speakers using the county website.
- The Medical Examiner is improving knowledge of ethnic practices as they relate to death and translating materials into the language of the family of the deceased.
- Parks and Recreation is working on a plan to create more youth sports facilities, offer more programs for youth and families, and provide more accessible amenities.
- Planning and Development Services is providing materials in larger print and multiple languages and assuring all system design requirements for all web applications are ADA compliant.
- Public Works is providing training to staff on the needs of older populations and identifying local job fairs where opportunities exist for recruiting people from diverse backgrounds.

Education and Training

[O*NET Online](#)⁹ offers a profile of each occupation in the [education](#)¹⁰ and [public services](#)¹¹ cluster including: common tasks and activities performed by workers, tools and technology used in the workplace, KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) required to be successful, levels of education and training required to be competitive, work styles and values most commonly found among top workers, national and state wage and employment trends, and related occupations for individuals looking to enter education and public services from another cluster or looking to exit education and public services and move into another cluster. These occupation profiles provide rich information and are a valuable first step to exploring a career in education and public services.

Training and education needs for jobs in education and public services vary widely since virtually every occupation can be found within this [career tree](#)¹². Given the vast spread of careers in this cluster, the most efficient way to browse certificate and degree options is by visiting the [Cascadia Community College](#)¹³, [Edmonds Community College](#)¹⁴, and [Everett Community College](#)¹⁵ list of majors and

programs. Regional institutions of higher education also provide excellent options for a career in this cluster.

The education and public services cluster is the most active of all clusters in offering employee development programs. Nearly all organizations offer informal on-the-job training, in-house classroom training, formal on-the-job training, employer-paid outside training, career development programs, career ladders, and tuition assistance at a college or university. This professional development is one of the major reasons education and public services has one of the highest employee retention rates of all clusters. Additionally, education and public services workers looking to move into higher level positions would benefit from participating in various forms of continuing education to develop the KSAs needed to become a supervisor or manager.

Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability

More so than ever before, innovations in the education cluster include integrating new technologies into instruction. Classroom teachers must know how to integrate technology into teaching and learning. K-12 students are now constructing websites and blogs, publishing newsletters using desktop publishing software, and composing music for multiple instruments using music composition software. Distance learning is being used in higher education and offers opportunities for students to earn accredited online diplomas, certifications, and degrees. The benefits of distance learning are numerous, allowing students to: take classes at any time and from any location, choose from a wide variety of institutions, do interactive teamwork, correspond with people from around the world, gain access to experts and online databases, easily contact teachers, and save money since they can learn from home and maintain a full or part time job.

[Innovation is also important outside of the classroom](#)¹⁶. The world is changing rapidly and elected officials and workers realize that new ideas and practices are essential to building governments that can adapt to ever-changing needs and circumstances. The performance of education and public services is shaped by how it uses innovation to address the most challenging issues. Government, like the private sector, is beginning to tap into and deploy the resources of organizations and individuals from other clusters to develop and create new ways to deliver public services. Whereas in the past, government organizations faced challenges on their own, they are now realizing they need not operate in isolation. In this new network-based approach to innovation, this cluster can excel in the roles of: innovation integrator, in which government leads a well defined innovative process; innovation seeker, in which government actively seeks out innovative ideas; innovation champion, in which government does not take the lead but steers partners toward the common good; and innovation catalyst, in which government helps to spark an innovative community effort.

Education and public services is paving the way toward a sustainable Snohomish County. The [Sustainable Cathcart Project](#)¹⁷ is aimed at developing the vision of a sustainable, full-service community on 600-acres of publicly-owned property near the intersection of SR 9 and Cathcart Way. As proposed, 80 percent of the Cathcart property will consist of public spaces, parks, and infrastructure with 20% reserved for housing, businesses, and commercial services. Highlights of the Cathcart property include: LEED certified construction, cycling and walking paths, a former landfill transformed for lightweight use such as agricultural pilot programs and parks activities, a park-and-ride featuring green design, recruitment of new business to bring jobs closer to home for Cathcart residents, and preservation of local wetlands.

Additional [Snohomish County-led sustainability projects](#)¹⁸ include: using biodiesel in all county vehicles, purchasing hybrid and biodiesel compatible vehicles, converting 100% of traffic signals to LED lights, making public transit a more attractive transportation choice, increasing composting at solid waste transfer stations, increasing recycling of electronic equipment and industrial items such as paint and carpet, online permitting and other paperwork reduction measures, and increasing planting of native vegetation. The latest Snohomish County sustainability news and highlights can be found [here](#)¹⁹.

Conclusion

Workers in education and public services have the opportunity to but establish visions for Snohomish County and make a positive lasting impact on the community. Through their daily work activities, employees in this cluster have the unique opportunity to empower the residents of Snohomish County to raise their standards of living and qualities of life. In a growing cluster in which innovation is valued and encouraged, education and public services is a sound option for individuals who want to make a difference in the world, positively impact local problems, and contribute to the community's infrastructure while building a solid career. Given the steady employment and wage growth, large variety of occupations from which to choose, and geographic diversity of locations, the education and public services cluster is considered to be an excellent option for job candidates.

¹ The Pew Center on the States, <http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/Washington%20-%20Governing%20article%202008.pdf>

² U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?chart=2007>

³ Snohomish County, http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/documents/Departments/Human_Services/Project2020.pdf

⁴ Public Schools Review, http://www.publicschoolreview.com/public_schools/stateid/WA

⁵ Snohomish County, http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/documents/Departments/Finance/Budget/2011BudgetBook_Adowcover.pdf

⁶ Snohomish County, http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/documents/Departments/Finance/Budget/2011BudgetBook_Adowcover.pdf

⁷ Snohomish County, http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/documents/Departments/Human_Services/Project2020.pdf

⁸ Snohomish County, http://www.co.snohomish.wa.us/documents/Departments/Human_Services/Project2020.pdf

⁹ O*NET Online, <http://www.onetonline.org/>

¹⁰ O*NET Online, <http://www.onetonline.org/find/industry?i=61&g=Go>

¹¹ O*NET Online, <http://www.onetonline.org/find/industry?i=93&g=Go>

¹² Workforce Development Council Snohomish County, <http://careertrees.org/documents/PublicServicesCareerTree.pdf>

¹³ Cascadia Community College, http://www.cascadia.edu/programs/career_paths.aspx

¹⁴ Edmonds Community College, <http://www.edcc.edu/programs/divlist.php>

¹⁵ Everett Community College, <http://www.everettcc.edu/programs/>

¹⁶ IBM Center for The Business of Government, http://www.community-wealth.org/_pdfs/articles-publications/state-local-new/paper-nambisan.pdf

¹⁷ Snohomish County, http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County_Services/Climate_Energy/cathcart.htm

¹⁸ Snohomish County, http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County_Services/Climate_Energy/

¹⁹ Snohomish County, http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County_Services/Climate_Energy/