



**STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY  
AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES  
FEBRUARY 2023  
STATEMENT OF NEED  
BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
*SKAGIT VALLEY COLLEGE***

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Page — Statement of Need .....	2
Program Information .....	2
Mode of Delivery.....	2
Statement of Need .....	2
Contact Information (Academic Department Representative) .....	3
Chief Academic Officer signature .....	3
Introduction .....	4
Criteria 1 .....	5
Relationship to institutional role, mission, and program priorities. ....	5
Criteria 2 .....	6
Support of the statewide strategic plans. ....	6
Criteria 3 .....	7
Employer/community demand for graduates with baccalaureate level of education proposed in the program.....	7
Demand .....	8
Supply.....	9
Gap .....	10
Criteria 4 .....	10
Baccalaureate program builds from existing professional and technical degree program offered by the institution.....	10
Criteria 5 .....	11
Student demand for program within the region. ....	11
Criteria 6 .....	11
Efforts to maximize state resources to serve place-bound students.....	11
Criteria 7 .....	13
Promoting equitable opportunities for students, including historically marginalized students. ...	13
Conclusion .....	15
References .....	16
Attachment 1- Supply/Demand Gap Rubric.....	18
Attachment 2- Surveys.....	20

# Cover Page — Statement of Need

## Program Information

Institution Name: Skagit Valley College

Degree Name: Early Childhood Education

CIP Code: 13.1201

Name(s) of existing technical associate degree(s) that will serve as the foundation for this program:

Degree: Early Childhood Education AAS

CIP Code: 13.1210

Year Began: 1991

Degree: Early Childhood Education Associate in Education (AA)

CIP Code: 13.1210

Year Began: 2016

Degree: Education Paraprofessional Associate in Education (AA)

CIP Code: 13.1210

Year Began: 2020

**Proposed Start Implementation Date (i.e. Fall 2014): Fall 2023**

Projected Enrollment (FTE) in Year One: 20

Projected Enrollment (FTE) by Year: 40

Funding Source: State FTE

## Mode of Delivery

Single Campus Delivery: Skagit Valley College, Mount Vernon Campus & Whidbey Island Campus

Off-site: Practicums at P-3 schools

Distance Learning: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

## Statement of Need

*Please see criteria and standard sheet. **Page Limit: 20 pages***

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## Chief Academic Officer signature

The Statement of Need must be signed. To sign, double click on the signature line below.

X 

Chief Academic Officer

10/28/2022

# Introduction

Skagit Valley College (SVC) intends to develop a Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education. This proposed program will include a Residency Teachers Certificate with endorsements in early childhood education (preschool-3rd grade), bilingual education, and English language learner. Parallel to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges application process, Skagit Valley College will also be fulfilling all Washington State Professional Educator Standards Board requirements for certification approval.

Currently, primary education is struggling to find qualified teachers. According to the PESB website, the Skagit Valley College service region currently has a shortage in elementary education teachers, including early childhood education. Currently, elementary education is the highest teacher need in Washington State. The proposed degree would provide a viable pathway to a bachelor's degree leading to a living wage and high demand career in the Skagit Valley College service district, which includes Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties.

Presently, 37 percent of the population in Washington State has a bachelor's degree or higher, however the numbers are less for the population in the Skagit Valley College service district. Only 27 percent of residents in Skagit County and 34 percent of those in Island County hold a bachelor's degree or higher (ESD, 2022). For those students that are place bound, there are few options, and SVC would like to expand equitable access to higher education in order to improve living family wages. There are currently no universities in the college's service region and the nearest one is 45 minutes – and up to two hours away – depending on the county the student resides in. This proposed program would offer local access to a bachelor's degree and teacher certification.

The proposed Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education will be a continuation of Skagit Valley College's well-established Early Childhood Education and Paraeducation programs. The proposed bachelor's degree will provide a seamless pathway for regional associate degree holders to continue their education locally and receive a valuable teaching credential.

# Criteria 1

## Relationship to institutional role, mission, and program priorities.

Skagit Valley College's mission is to cultivate student learning and achievement; contribute to the educational, personal, and economic success of students; and promote equitable and thriving communities. Consistent with this mission, one of Skagit Valley College's key strategic enrollment priorities is to increase equitable pathways to high wage, high demand offerings by increasing applied baccalaureate offerings in the region. Skagit Valley College's Core Themes of Equity in Access, Equity in Achievement, and Equity in Community are assessed annually and reported to the Board of Trustees. The Core Theme of Equity in Access centers on providing educational programs and services to meet the needs of the local community. The Equity in Achievement Core Theme involves developing pathways for students to achieve their educational and career goals, including offering students the ability to transition from an associate degree to a bachelor's degree and beyond. The addition of relevant educational programming in response to community- and industry-identified needs is in direct support of the Core Themes.

Skagit Valley College serves Skagit County, Island County, and San Juan County, as well as the northern portion of Snohomish County and southern portion of Whatcom County. Skagit Valley College's service district covers a large geographical area, more than 2,000 square miles that is primarily rural and agricultural. In addition to remote islands, the district includes semi-urban populations in Mount Vernon and Oak Harbor. There are large numbers of place-bound students living in this region. A local Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education fills a gap in the educational needs of the community and meets the affordability requirement for those seeking to attain a bachelor's degree. Skagit Valley College aims to have a bachelor's degree that is affordable, accredited, and easily available to the populations served. Currently, there are several public universities and community colleges in the Seattle-region and eastern Washington that offer Early Childhood Education degrees, however none are in the Skagit Valley College three county service region, and many are not affordable to Skagit, Island, and San Juan County students. The nearest program is at Western Washington University which is at least forty five minutes and up to two hours away for prospective students in the service region. Additionally, the programs and Western Washington University do not articulate with Skagit students that have an applied associate degree, meaning students have to take an additional one to two years of classes before entering junior level coursework. The addition of this proposed program increases access to place-bound working adults with applied associate's degrees.

The bachelor's in early childhood education would be non-duplicative and would not require students to take an additional 1-2 years of transfer coursework, or transition to another institution outside the area, thus meeting the needs of Skagit Valley College's associate in applied science degree holders who want to obtain a teaching credential. With the teacher shortage in Washington, Skagit Valley College has an opportunity to develop this program to increase bachelors prepared, certified teachers, in high demand endorsement areas.

## Criteria 2

### Support of the statewide strategic plans.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' (SBCTC) 2010 Mission Study includes long-term needs analyses for priority areas: economic demand, student success, and innovation. Skagit Valley College's proposed Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education will support each of the priority areas in the following ways:

**Economic Demand:** The Early Childhood Education program will support state and local economies by closing the supply/demand gap with a well-educated and skilled K-12 workforce.

**Student Success:** The Early Childhood Education program will increase educational attainment across Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties; and the Early Childhood Education program will attract students from feeder program across the region, contributing to increased educational attainment at the state level. The program will improve student success as it offers new opportunities for current and prospective students and incumbent workers in high-demand education occupations.

**Innovation:** The new Early Childhood Education program will use inclusive pedagogy and emerging best practices in teacher education in collaboration with regional employers and professional organizations to develop curriculum and program outcomes.

Two of the focus areas identified in the Mission Study are the need to increase the education level of more people and to serve place-bound working adults. The Mission Study states that, "Washington also needs more people with baccalaureate and graduate degrees. Community and technical colleges must expand their contribution to help meet this need" (pg. 4). Recognizing that many community college students are place-bound and balancing school, jobs, and families, SBCTC plans to address this through the production of more baccalaureate degrees. In the Skagit Valley College three-county service area, there are no other colleges or universities offering an Early Childhood Education degree. Offering an Early Childhood Education bachelor's degree at Skagit Valley College will open opportunities for place-bound students and will help increase the continuation of degree attainment for many of the residents in the northwest region. The Action Plan of the Mission Study also identifies a goal to close the gap for high need industries including education. The Early Childhood Education degree will contribute toward meeting these SBCTC goals.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) Strategic Action Plan 2021 states that education is facing serious recruitment and retention challenges. There is a pressing need to address the teacher shortage by building a strong pipeline of teachers and noted that each segment of the educational system can address this need (WSAC, 2021). Skagit Valley College's proposed program can help to diversify the teacher workforce and expand teacher-training institutions (WSAC, 2021).

Skagit Valley College's proposed degree program will also support WSAC's policies and goals for higher education. Specifically, the proposed Early Childhood Education program will address the following specific points from the WSAC Action Plan:

**Close Opportunity Gaps:** Skagit Valley College's core themes include Equity in Access, Equity in Achievement, and Equity in Community. Annually, the college studies the themes and

results from these studies are analyzed and reported to the college community. That data is disaggregated by race, and plans are developed to address any equity gaps that are identified. Skagit Valley College data has shown that the gap between Latinx students and white students is narrowing. The increasing Latinx population in Skagit County has created a need for more variety of college degree levels for first generation college students that are unable to geographically attend other institutions. Additionally, the college's current education associate programs have a higher percentage of students of color than the overall college population. As more local baccalaureate-level programs are available to these students, it is more likely they will continue their education to the baccalaureate level. Skagit Valley College continues to be committed to closing the gap in educational outcomes for historically underrepresented populations, and the proposed Early Childhood Education program is another key component of that commitment. Along with the traditional development of the Early Childhood Education curriculum, Skagit Valley College will leverage its existing work around inclusive pedagogy to inform program outcomes and curricular design to model instructional strategies intended to serve a diverse student population.

**Create Affordable, High-Quality Pathways:** The Early Childhood Education program will be very affordable to students. Leveraging current faculty expertise with excellent student teaching site partners, the program will be high quality. The total cost of the program to the student will be 37% lower than a four-year university in the region, and significantly lower than at private institutions, additionally the streamlined pathway will also save students time and money.

**Engaging Adult-Learners:** Program delivery will accommodate working adults through hybrid, evening, and potentially weekend course options. Students will enter the program and work through all classes and projects with a dedicated cohort. The cohort model is a proven retention strategy as students create natural support networks. Support will be available through faculty advisors and through peer-to-peer cohort-based networking.

## Criteria 3

### **Employer/community demand for graduates with baccalaureate level of education proposed in the program.**

Both employer and community demand for qualified workers with bachelor's degrees exceed the current supply of graduates with relevant degrees in the region. Nearly three-quarters of residents in the Skagit Valley College district lack a bachelor's degree. The educational attainment level in the Skagit Valley College service district is lower than the State. The current lack of higher education attainment in Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties affects employers and the quality of life for community residents. It is projected that from 2022-2027 in Washington State, over 30% of jobs in the education sector will require a bachelor's degree or higher, and projections show that the demand outpaces the supply. (A Skilled and Educated Workforce: 2020).

According to Washington's A Skilled and Educated Workforce: 2019-20 report there is a demand for skilled and certified teachers at the baccalaureate level, particularly at the elementary and middle school level. Additionally, demand is higher in low income and rural school districts such as Skagit Valley College's rural three-county service area. (A Skilled and Educated Workforce: 2020). This program will provide training for local students to access a high-demand career in the service district, which includes Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties. Currently, 37 percent of the population in



Washington State has a bachelor's degree or higher, however the numbers are less for the population in the service district, only 27 percent of residents in Skagit County and 34 percent of those in Island County hold a bachelor's degree or higher (ESD, 2022). For those students that are place-bound, there are few options, and Skagit Valley College would like to expand equitable access to higher education in order to improve living family wages. There are currently no Universities in the service region and the nearest one is 45 minutes to two hours away depending on where the student resides within the region. This program would offer local access to a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education.

*Table 1: Population with a Bachelor's Degree in Skagit Valley College District Compared to State*

	Island	San Juan	Skagit	District Total	WA State
Total Population	85,530	17,340	130,450	233,320	7,656,200
Percent of Population- Bachelor's degree or higher	34%	48%	26.6%	30.5%	37%
<i>Source: Employment Security Department 2020-21 Data</i>					

## Demand

According to the Professional Educator Standards Board 2021 Educator Shortage Report, the largest teacher shortage in Washington State continues to be in elementary education including early childhood education (PESB, 2021). Additionally, rural districts, such as the Skagit Valley College service area, are less likely to have teacher preparation programs to meet the market demand (PESB, 2021).

Nationally employment of kindergarten and elementary school teachers is projected to grow 4% and preschool and childcare directors is projected to grow 8% from 2021 to 2031 (BLS, 2022). A 2022 EMSI report shows 9,533 unique job postings for elementary and early childhood educators in Washington State. Teachers are considered in demand and having a bachelor's degree increases students' earning potential by 56% over an associate degree (A Skilled and Educated Workforce: 2020). According to Washington Employment Security, elementary teachers earn an average annual wage of \$84,380 in the Mount Vernon area (ESD, 2022).

In the five counties in the Northwest Washington region, preschool, kindergarten, and elementary teachers are in demand (ESD, 2022). Education is the top employer in Island County, number three in Skagit County, and number five in San Juan County (ESD, 2022). A 2022 regional employer survey conducted by Skagit Valley College showed that 85% of local childcare facilities, preschools, and elementary schools have demand for certified teachers. They estimated there are currently over 100 unfilled positions and anticipated three times as many to be needed over the next five years. Of those employers, 92% said a regional teacher certification such as the one proposed would directly benefit them in finding qualified teachers.

A local Early Childhood Education degree fills a gap in the educational needs of the community, meets the affordability requirement for those seeking to attain a bachelor's degree, and develops a local trained workforce for elementary education.

Table 2: Washington State Demand for Relevant Occupations

Occupation	SOC Code	Demand	Required Education	Est. employment 2019	Avg. annual openings	Annual Wage
Elementary School Teachers	25-2021	In demand	Bachelors	36,623	7,573	\$75,910
Kindergarten Teachers	25-2012	In demand	Bachelors	6,244	1,287	\$70,543
Preschool & Childcare Administrators	11-9031	In demand	Bachelors	1,871	673	\$56,756
Data Source: Employment Security Department 2022						

## Supply

There are 12 baccalaureate-level Early Childhood Education programs that graduated a total of 402 students, leaving significant room for growth of new programs (EMSI, 2022). Most programs are in the King County region or in eastern Washington, and the closest program is Western Washington University (30-60 minutes away). Even when expanding the supply to include Elementary Education degrees, the state only produced 602 graduates in 2020, bringing the total supply to 1,004 annually (EMSI, 2022).

Table 3: Washington State Supply for Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education Bachelor Degree Programs	2021 Completions
North Seattle College	65
Pierce College District	33
Yakima Valley College	33
Eastern Washington University	23
Centralia College	22
Highline College	22
Central Washington University	17
Western Washington University	17
Grays Harbor College	15
Green River College	13
Lower Columbia College	13
Lake Washington Institute of Technology	11
Heritage University	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>402</b>
Data Source: Lightcast Program Development Report 2022	

## Gap

The number of graduates and residents with the requisite education level is insufficient to meet the current and projected demand. Annual openings for in-demand occupations requiring a bachelor's degree far exceed the number of projected program graduates (refer to Table 3).

*Table 4: Washington State Demand/Supply/Gap*

State Demand: Average annual total openings	9,533
State Supply: Annual total Early Childhood Ed degree completions	402
State Supply: Annual total Elementary Ed degree completions	602
<b>Gap</b>	<b>8,529</b>
<i>See Appendix A for SBCTC Applied Baccalaureate Degree Supply/Demand Gap Rubric for Colleges</i>	

## Criteria 4

### Baccalaureate program builds from existing professional and technical degree program offered by the institution.

All degree and certificate programs at Skagit Valley College are clustered into nine Areas of Study (meta majors): Basic Education for Adults, Arts & Communication, Business, Education, Food & Beverage Management, Health Sciences, Industrial Technology & Transportation, Public Service & Social Science, and Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM). The new Early Childhood Education degree will be housed in the Education Area of Study. Skagit Valley College also has comprehensive Planning Guides that include career and transfer information for each Area of Study and for each degree. The Early Childhood Education degree will be in those Planning Guides and as part of the degree and career pathways presented in the required First Quarter Experience course.

The proposed bachelor's degree provides a seamless pathway for Skagit Valley College's Early Childhood Education, and Paraeducation programs which include stackable state certificates. The bachelor's degree will build on the strong foundation of child development, family systems, and equity and inclusion knowledge developed through the existing associate degrees. Using the same model as the associate degrees, field work experiences will be embedded into baccalaureate-level coursework so that students can apply what they are learning. During year three of the program, students will learn instructional methods appropriate for preschool-3rd grade classrooms. Year four will include a student teaching experience where students can practice those instructional methods under the guidance of a certificated teacher. The following table shows the long-established education programs as well as the average annual headcount and gross AFTE from 2015-2020.

*Table 5: 5-Year Enrollment History*

Skagit Valley College Program	Plan Code	Years Running	Ave Annual Headcount (past 5 years)	Ave Annual Gross FTE (past 5 years)
Early Childhood Education AAS	ECEECAPT	31	53	64
Early Childhood A.Ed.	ECEEHAPT	6	74	127
Education Paraprofessional A.Ed.	ECEEPAPT	2	10	13
<i>Education Paraprofessional AAS (inactive)</i>	<i>EPC: 839</i>	<i>2003-19</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Early Childhood Education AAS-T (inactive)</i>	<i>EPC: 402T</i>	<i>2006-19</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>18</i>

From an administrative perspective, Skagit Valley College's success developing and offering applied baccalaureate degrees in Environmental Conservation and in Applied Management as well as a successful Associates in Early Childhood Education will create a framework that can be adapted to the needs of the proposed bachelors program. Changes have taken place college-wide to advance efforts to become a baccalaureate degree granting institution. These changes include additional program management, library, financial aid, enrollment, and advising services. Skagit Valley College has also created a common framework for all bachelor's degrees to include standard practices and structures. As mentioned above, Skagit Valley College will lean on the existing curricular infrastructure to inform the development of the Early Childhood Education program and utilize the robust advisory committees that have contributed to the success of the Associates in Early Childhood Education program.

## Criteria 5

### Student demand for program within the region.

Nearly all students, 99 percent, remain in state immediately after leaving Skagit Valley College, and most stay within the five-county region (EMSI Washington College Survey, 2016). According to the 2022 Field Guide, 65 percent of students provide care for dependents. In a Skagit Valley College Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE, 2017) nearly 70 percent of students live near campus. Additionally, 54 percent work at least 10 hours or more while attending college. Skagit Valley College students are place-bound, working adults who need local and flexible program to accommodate the demands of their time while achieving their educational goals. In general, 67 percent of Skagit Valley College students indicate a bachelor's degree as their primary goal. Students are also interested in a baccalaureate level program at Skagit Valley College.

With an annual average of over 170 students in Skagit Valley College's in education degrees, there is a healthy pipeline to an Early Childhood Education bachelor's degree. In a 2022 survey given to current students and recent graduates of the education associates Degree at Skagit Valley College, 96% of students intend to obtain a bachelor's degree, 81 percent intend to obtain a teaching certificate, and 96% of students reported that they would be interested in a bachelor's level teacher certification program if Skagit Valley College offered one. Additionally, Skagit Valley College will reach out to other Washington community and technical colleges for potential direct-articulation opportunities from their early childhood education programs.

Table 6: Annual Enrollment Projections

Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Headcount	15	32	40	44	48

## Criteria 6

### Efforts to maximize state resources to serve place-bound students.

#### Serving Local Students

Skagit Valley College intends to build a Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education program that is accessible to students in the region, and beyond. This means offering a high-quality

program to place-bound students, ensuring that curriculum is inclusive of the diverse population and meeting diverse certified teaching demands of the many educational employers in the district and in neighboring counties. All of this would be part of a seamless educational pathway for Skagit Valley College's and other professional-technical associate degree completers.

Many prospective students in the region that are interested in advancing beyond an associate in education are working in the field in preschools or as paraeducators during the day and are bound to the local area. The proposed program will be taught with a flexible and innovative approach to accommodate working educators, including hybrid classes and evening classes. Students working in preschool through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade settings may use their workplace as a field work placement site, making our program accessible to the current early childhood education field.

Offering the proposed Early Childhood Education program in this manner is a natural extension of the college's mission to serve students throughout the large and geographically diverse district. The flexibility of the instructional model will also provide access to a baccalaureate education to potential students currently in the workforce or those with family obligations that make enrollment in programs that require full-time residency difficult, if not impossible.

## Regional Collaboration

Regionally, Skagit Valley College has communicated with local school districts and Western Washington University regarding an intent to begin the bachelor's level Early Childhood Education with teacher certification. Skagit Valley College's education program currently participates in a consortium with Western Washington University and local high school partners on the Maestros Para el Pueblo program. Maestros Para el Pueblo supports Latinx students become certified teachers and role models in the community. This program increases bilingual and bicultural certified teacher candidates for the Mount Vernon and Burlington-Edison school district. The proposed applied baccalaureate will complement this program and leverage relationships rather than compete for students.

Skagit Valley College will reach out to community and technical colleges in Washington that do not have bachelor's pathways with the intention to develop articulation agreements to support student transitions to Skagit's proposed bachelor's degree. Potential colleges include Whatcom Community College, Everett Community College, Edmonds College, Bellevue College, Clover Park Technical College, and Renton Technical College,

## Unique Program Aspects

As stated above, Skagit Valley College's student population reflects the community served. Skagit Valley College's Latinx population, particularly in the education program, is significant, and serving this community is a top strategic priority of the College. This engagement with the Latinx community has prompted institution-wide changes that promote inclusivity. Specifically, faculty have engaged in a curricular and instructional practice review through an inclusive pedagogy learning community. Faculty leaders from Skagit Valley College have presented this work throughout the state and nation, and it is reshaping the culture and practices of Skagit Valley College. This includes reflection and discussion on bias, inclusion, supportive expectations, scaffolding content, backwards design, and outcomes assessment. Faculty leaders from Skagit Valley College have presented this work throughout the state and nation, and it is reshaping the culture and practices of Skagit Valley College. Practices of inclusivity will purposefully inform each step of Early Childhood Education program development. In this fundamental sense, the Early Childhood Education program will not

only differ from existing programs in the region, but from those across the state because of the instructional design and prioritization of inclusive approaches to teaching. Skagit Valley College looks forward to the challenging work of critically assessing traditional instructional strategies to attain equitable outcomes. Training students within this framework not only creates a learning environment that promotes a diverse student body, it builds an infrastructure for traditionally marginalized students to succeed and contribute to the education of others.

## Criteria 7

### Promoting equitable opportunities for students, including historically marginalized students.

Skagit Valley College is committed to being an antiracist institution and closing equity gaps in all measures of access, achievement, and community. This is demonstrated through the extensive Guided Pathways work beginning in 2014, the hiring of a Cabinet-level diversity, equity, and inclusion officer, and through the development of the Center for Inclusive Excellence. These investments, among many other institutional conversations, training, and policy changes show the intention to promote equitable opportunities for all student, especially students of color and low-income students. The proposed Early Childhood Education program will build on a strong foundation of student support services available at Skagit Valley College.

### College Demographics

The College district serves a growing population, including a young Latinx population experiencing significant growth. Recognizing the increasing diversity in the student body, and even more so the growing Latinx population in the feeder schools, Latinx community engagement continues to be a top strategic priority. Additionally, there are three tribal governments in the district: Swinomish, Samish, and Upper Skagit. In 2020-21, the College served over 7,000 students who generated 3,518 full-time equivalent students (FTES). Forty-one percent (41%) were enrolled in university transfer programs of study, 47% reported working toward Professional/Technical degrees or certificates, and 8% were taking basic skills courses. The remaining students (4%) were enrolled at the College in a non-degree seeking capacity. Part-time students (enrolled in less than 12 credits) were 48% of the students enrolled in Fall 2020, and 56% of the student body was female. The average age of students was 23. Of the students enrolled in 2020-21, 57 were international students and 778 were enrolled as Running Start students. The majority of the students, 73%, were white, 25% were Hispanic, and 8% identify themselves as Asian/Pacific Islander. Black/African American students accounted for 3% of enrollments and 3% of the students were Native American.

Table 7: SVC Student Demographics

Skagit Valley College Program	Students of Color	Low- Income Students
Skagit Valley College	43.4%	51.8%
Education Program Cluster	57.9%	57.5%

### Student Barriers

Students of color and low-income students are underrepresented in baccalaureate level programs. Challenges and barriers to success for Skagit Valley College students, particularly students of color and low-income students, are similar to other open-access institutions across the state. There is



often a gap between previous educational experiences of community college students and the expectations that they find in college. For instance, high school was free and mandatory while college requires ongoing financial commitments and voluntary attendance. College requires new skills, including study skills, technology skills, financial management skills, and navigating a new educational environment. Students are constantly faced with choices and may be asked to make personal, family, or work sacrifices in order to attend college. Ongoing personal and financial issues often distract from learning. Unclear or nonexistent academic and career plans undermine students' confidence to persist in and complete college. Students lack support networks, and students and their families may not share the values associated with higher education making it difficult to trust that the investment of time and money is worthwhile and that they are capable of completing college. Students who begin in pre-college or developmental courses are discouraged because it will take longer to complete a two-year degree, let alone a bachelor's degree, due to additional required courses.

As stated above, there is a teacher shortage, however this is particularly true for educators of color to reflect our diverse students in K-12. Currently in Washington State, 49% are people of color, while only 13% of teachers identify as people of color (PESB, 2021). The current demographics of students in SVC's Education program is much more diverse than the typical student population with 57.9 percent students of color, and 57.5 percent low income. Increasing access for the current SVC pipeline of students to a local and affordable bachelors' program will support the increase of qualified certified teachers in the region.

## Recruitment Plan

Skagit Valley College currently has a standard and comprehensive recruitment plan for all bachelors-level programs. This includes information sessions, social media presence, collaborations with marketing and outreach, and bilingual program cards and staff. Given the diverse pipeline of students in existing SVC associate's programs, significant recruiting will occur within the 100 and 200 level courses. The proposed Early Childhood Education degree shows a strong demand for teachers from both regional employers and students. The college also will leverage relationships with K-12, workforce funding programs, and local employers to continue to recruit traditionally underrepresented students into the pathway. The cohort, hybrid model will be a key component in recruiting traditionally underrepresented students. The location and cost will also be marketing tools, as Skagit will have a local, high quality baccalaureate program whose cost will be significantly less than four-year universities in the state. While the program will be selective entry, the admissions committee will be required to complete implicit bias training, and the application itself will consider multiple measures beyond GPA including work experience, multilingualism, and potentially Veteran's status.

## Student Support & Resources

The program design will use a cohort model to support working adults, which is a research-based best practice for completion. Students will also receive wrap around support services include new student orientation, new student advising, ongoing advising sessions (group and individual), faculty and staff referrals to campus resources, career planning resources, community referrals, training and support for use of technology, and academic tutoring. The program is affordable and financial aid resources are available. The total cost of the program to the student will be over 30% lower than four-year universities in the region, and significantly lower than at private institutions. Additionally, there is a Retention specialist that tracks student progress and responds to Early Alert

Recommendations. Specialized wraparound support for traditionally marginalized students:

- Financial Support- Beyond a strong Financial Aid department, SVC also has a robust workforce grants program which includes access to TANF, Worker Retraining, Workfirst, and other funds like BFET for tuition, training assistance, and resources.
- English Language learners- Bilingual/ Spanish speaking enrollment services, navigators, financial aid staff, and faculty are available to work with students.
- Accessibility Resources- a dedicated counselor and a support staff work to provide accommodations so students can participate fully.

Support for students specific to the Early Childhood Education program include:

- Dedicated cohorts to improve peer networking and support
- Utilizing a faculty-advising model to develop appropriate academic and career plans
- Select courses taught in both English and Spanish

Skagit Valley College has also implemented structural changes such as a focus on data and faculty professional development. Program-level and course-level completion data, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, is reviewed annually and compared to the system average to make decisions and develop new initiatives. Additionally, all new faculty go through a year-long Inclusive pedagogy faculty learning community to learn about implicit bias, privilege, antiracism, backwards planning and design, among other topics that have been shown to improve equity and inclusion in and out of the classroom.

## Conclusion

The proposed Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education closely aligns with Washington State industry needs, SBCTC's goals, and the Skagit Valley College mission. It also meets strategic planning goals, student interests and industry demand. This applied bachelor's degree will build off of a solid foundation of early childhood education principles, inclusive teaching practices, and leadership skills. The program will promote excellence in early childhood education, increase the number of certificated teachers in the region, share and promote best practices in teaching, and develop successful graduates who are practice ready and are engaged in lifelong learning to transform early childhood education. This program will provide access to training for regional place-bound students to engage in a high-demand career in the service district as well as neighboring urban centers. A local Early Childhood Education program at a regional community college would provide more equitable access and a more cost-efficient option for students seeking a career in teaching.



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## Attachment 1- Supply/Demand Gap Rubric

<b>College Name:</b> Skagit Valley College		
<b>Program Name:</b> Teaching Certification		
<b>Select one:</b> Existing Occupation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or Emerging Occupation <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>If local demand/supply information is available for the specified degree program and target occupation(s),**</b>		
<b>For demand:</b> Provide local/regional demand data for the targeted occupation job title(s) from traditional labor market data, industry data, trade association data, or other transactional data. <i>(Provide absolute numbers, not just percentages)</i>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Avg. annual openings</b>
	Elementary School Teachers	7,573
	Kindergarten Teachers	1,287
	Preschool & Childcare Administrators	673
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9,533</b>
<b>For supply gap:</b> Provide data on the number of programs and the number of annual program graduates for all four-year colleges that supply your region. Is the number of current annual graduates insufficient to meet current and projected demand? (The result of demand minus supply).	<b>Early Childhood Education Bachelor Degree Programs</b>	<b>2021 Completions</b>
	North Seattle College	65
	Pierce College District	33
	Yakima Valley College	33
	Eastern Washington University	23
	Centralia College	22
	Highline College	22
	Central Washington University	17
	Western Washington University	17
	Grays Harbor College	15
	Green River College	13
	Lower Columbia College	13
	Lake Washington Institute of Technology	11
	Heritage University	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>402</b>

\* Demand is defined by state law as “*an occupation with a substantial number of current or projected employment opportunities.*”

\*\*Applications may include information related to more than one option (i.e., labor market data to support the local demand for the occupation and a local employer survey to support that there is a gap in the number of qualified applicants available to fill jobs).

# Attachment 2- Surveys

## Employer Survey

33 Responses

- What is your position?
  - 21% Preschool Representative
  - 6% Childcare Representative
  - 33% District-level representative
  - 6% Human Resources
  - 30% Elementary Principal
  - Other (please specify)
- Do you have anticipated demand for certified teachers in early childhood and/or elementary education?
  - 85% Yes
  - 15% No
- How many certified teachers in early childhood and/or elementary education positions do you currently have open?
  - Total 110
- How many certified teachers in early childhood and/or elementary education positions do you anticipate having open in the next 5 years?
  - Total 302
- Is a bachelor's degree a requirement or preference for this position?
  - 70% Requirement
  - 30% Preference
- Will the proposed bachelor's degree with teacher certification assist you in finding qualified applicants?
  - 92% Yes
  - 8% No
- Which endorsement is most desirable when considering candidates?
  - 44% Early Childhood Education (Preschool-3rd)
  - 56% Elementary Education (K-8)
- If we looked at additional endorsements, which do you need the most?
  - 52% Early Childhood Special Education
  - 28% Bilingual Education
  - 20% English language learner

## Student Survey

70 Responses

- Which SVC program did you enroll in?
  - 73% Early Childhood Education
  - 13% Paraeducator

- 5% Associate in Education
  - 5% Certificate Program
- Do you intend to pursue a Bachelor's degree?
  - 96% Yes
  - 4% No
- Do you intend to pursue a teacher certification?
  - 81% Yes
  - 19% No
- Which statement best describes you?
  - 9% I plan to get my associates degree in Early Childhood Education and work (no plans for a teacher certification in the near future)
  - 60% I plan to get my associates degree in Early Childhood Education then enroll in a bachelors program
  - 31% I plan to complete a transfer degree and enter straight into a university program
- If Skagit Valley College offered an applied bachelor's degree with a teacher certification and endorsement in Early Childhood Education, would you consider applying?
  - 96% Yes
  - 4% No