**Financial Aid equity audits: Background, Issues, and Recommendations**

**Area of examination #1:**

Data collection and dissemination

Background:

The workgroup conducted a brief overview analysis of the amounts and types of Fin Aid received by students in WA state per the unit records, disaggregated by racial and socioeconomic status demographics and considered effects on the enrollment and retention of BIPOC students.

Issue(s):

Colleges annually report information on all need based financial aid recipients to the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) through the Unit Record Reporting (URR) process. WSAC returns a “profile” report that provides summary data for each college, with comparisons to other community colleges and all colleges participating in state financial aid.  However, that profile report does not currently provide information on race/ethnicity even though the URR contains that information. Although they are lagging indicators, they can lead to constructive campus conversations. It is thought that the profile report should be shared broadly within a college providing an overview of students being served by financial aid and a comparison to previous years, using an equity lens.

Recommendation(s):

Three to five community colleges to be selected to work on a pilot with WSAC (and SBCTC). Campuses to have cross-divisional representatives, and should consider members from equity/diversity teams, student life and financial aid. These members would identify data elements to be added to the profile for all colleges. Further, members to assist WSAC in the development of a guide, also for use by all colleges, that provides recommendations on how to share the report across campus and recommendations on how to facilitate constructive campus conversations.