



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Maritime Academy Feasibility

2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2023 Legislative Session, funding was appropriated to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to execute a contract for the purposes of completing a feasibility study for the creation of a maritime academy on the Olympic Peninsula.

The feasibility study must include, but is not limited to, the selected location, design, scope, and budget for the construction of the maritime academy. Additionally, the study must include plans to address systems, policies, and practice that address disparities of historically marginalized communities in the maritime industry. If the proposal is intended to meet the requirements of a Skill Center feasibility study, the report will need to meet additional requirements.

A preliminary report is due to the Legislature by December 1, 2023, with a final report due by June 3, 2024. At the time of this report, OSPI is still awaiting contract approval for the proposed contractor to complete this work.

BACKGROUND

Multiple existing community-based and formal education programs identify multiple approaches to developing maritime focused instruction. [Northwest Maritime Center](#), located in Port Townsend, provides sector-based expertise and community based educational programs. The mission of the Northwest Maritime Center is to “engage and educate people of all generations in traditional and contemporary maritime life, in a spirit of adventure and discovery.” The Northwest Maritime Center provides youth classes in the summer and school and group-based programs that include on-the-water, classroom, and boat shop-based programming. Additionally, the center offers adult classes in the areas of navigation and seamanship, sailing classes, and boat building workshops, and provides access to a maritime simulator to support candidates preparation for west coast pilot association practical exams. The Peninsula is also home to the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary including the [Olympic Coast Discovery Center](#), located in Port Angeles.

The [Port Townsend Maritime Academy](#) is a satellite campus of West Sound Technical Skills Center. This satellite campus provides maritime operations learning experiences to students in Port Townsend, Chimacum, Quilcene, Coupeville, Sequim, North Kitsap, South Kitsap, Central Kitsap, Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, North Mason, and Peninsula School Districts. West Sound Technical Skill Center is a core campus operated by the Bremerton School District.

The [Maritime High School](#) opened with its first ninth grade class in September of 2021. Maritime High School is a collaborative between Highline Public Schools, Northwest Maritime Center, Port of Seattle, the Duwamish River Community Coalition, and many industry and community-based partners. Although 51% of the seats are reserved for students within the Highline Public Schools boundaries, any student in the region can apply to attend. The lottery process and priority group detail may be found [here](#).

Local high schools, Skill Centers, and middle schools continue to adopt and implement Core Plus programing. [Core Plus Maritime](#) is an industry-based curriculum that is provided for free to schools in Washington. Students have the opportunity to earn the Core Plus certificate, which employers have identified as resulting in preferential interview and employment opportunities for students who complete the program and earn the certificate. Through their instructional experience, students in Core Plus Maritime programs can earn English language arts, math, science, and Career & Technical Education (CTE) credit towards graduation by using a state approved CTE equivalent [framework](#).

Higher education programs focused on the maritime industry are available in the greater south sound region. Programs such as Seattle Central College’s [Seattle Maritime Academy](#) provide education and training opportunities for Marine Deck technology, Marine Engineering Technology, coursework for renewing licensing requirements, and continuing education opportunities for recreational boaters.

Dependent upon the intended audience for the instruction, many of these models may be useful in informing plans for a maritime academy based in the Olympic Peninsula.

INTRODUCTION

The Olympic Peninsula is a prime location to support expanded access to maritime based instructional programs, as there are many existing industry and community-based partners, and existing instructional based maritime programs.

The feasibility study will support clarity on the intended audience and purpose of the maritime academy. Clarifying if the academy is focused on serving high school students and the focus of the curriculum will result in clear recommendations to the legislature. Once the feasibility study has been submitted to OSPI, the agency will complete the final legislative report.

Feasibility Study Components

The proviso language did not clarify if the feasibility study should explore a maritime high school, a regionally serving educational center serving youth and adult learners, a CTE Skill Center, or other type of educational center. The stated requirements of the feasibility study included scope, location, design, budget, and plans to address systems, policies, and practices that address disparities of historically marginalized communities in the maritime industry. The feasibility study will need to explore the benefits of a center for each intended audience and provide recommendations for next steps.

OSPI will request a preliminary and final feasibility study to support this legislative directive. As part of the preliminary study, criteria for the appropriate location will be suggested, as well as at least three case options for locations. The scope of the academy will identify who will be served and what programs will be offered. In terms of design, the study will address the intended scope of the maritime academy and will identify at least three potential locations for the academy. Additionally, the exploration of design will include projected student load, needed facility size, equipment, and space to support learning outcomes, incorporated certifications, and a budget and construction timeline if applicable. Research, industry and community engagement, and data analysis may contribute to the completed works.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

After full execution of the contract intended to result in the required feasibility study, OSPI staff will review information and provide technical support as needed. OSPI looks forward to reviewing submitted information to inform the final legislative report by June 2024, and support any new K-12 educational programs that may result from the report's findings.

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