

Maritime Academy

Statutory and/or Budget Language

\$150,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 is provided solely for the office to contract for a feasibility study for the creation of a maritime academy on the Olympic peninsula. The study must include the scope, location, design, and budget for the construction of the maritime academy. The study must include plans to address systems, policies, and practices that address disparities of historically marginalized communities in the maritime industry. A preliminary report is due to the legislature by December 1, 2023, with the final feasibility study due to the legislature by June 3, 2024. Funding provided in this subsection may be matched by a nonprofit organization that provides high school students with accredited career and technical postsecondary education for maritime vessel operations and maritime curriculum to high schools in Jefferson, Clallam, Kitsap, King, Mason, Pierce, Island, and Snohomish counties.

Purpose

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.

Description of Services Provided

Funding was used to execute a contract with the Northwest Maritime Center to complete a project plan, draft report, and final feasibility study. The final feasibility study was submitted to OSPI by Northwest Maritime Center in July 2024, with the following four recommendations: increase interest in maritime careers, support incremental capital investments at existing institutions, support instructor recruitment and retention, and consider adding post-secondary capacity if student demand increases.

Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

The language required OSPI to determine an appropriate contractor to complete the identified scope of work.

Beneficiaries in the 2023-24 School Year

Number of School Districts	N/A
Number of Schools	N/A
Number of Students	N/A
Number of Educators	N/A
Other	1



Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$150,000	\$149,250

Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	1 (Contractor)

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

No programmatic changes have occurred at this time.

Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

A cost summary estimate was provided for a Maritime Education Institution focused on post-secondary learning that ranged from \$209–361 million (not including land purchase) with the range in price reflecting the cost of a 20,000 square foot or 40,000 square foot location. Total project duration was quoted at 4.5–6.5 years for a facility that would include instruction on vessel operations, marine construction, and marine resources. The three sites recommended by the study were Aberdeen, Port Angeles, and Port Townsend.

Overall, the study acknowledged the abundant industry opportunities but found faults with adding another maritime education institution to those already experiencing low enrollment: *"Both here in Washington and nationally there is excess training capacity in existing facilities, at both established 4-year federally-certified maritime academies, at two-year colleges. With the exception of one institution, all levels have reported enrollment challenges in recent years. Interviews revealed that some institutions estimate as much as 50–100% under-enrollment as compared to potential capacity. This is an existential problem for these institutions that would be exacerbated by adding more post-secondary capacity prior to increasing student demand for training"*. The study addresses recommendations for increasing diversity in the maritime sector by categorizing barriers into three categories: structural, familiarity, and perceived risk. The need for affordable student housing, the need for mentors and instructors from diverse populations, and the need to establish a partnership between industry and K–12 education that focuses on equity centered education and practices were all highlighted as ways to address current disparities.

Major Challenges Faced by the Program

The delivery of the final legislative report has been delayed due to complications experienced by the contractor and the subcontractors utilized. Although the final report was expected to be delivered to OSPI on June 30, 2024, the report was considered final upon submission in July 2024. OSPI worked with the contractor to support final completion.

Future Opportunities

Northwest Maritime Center included multiple questions and further considerations throughout their study that would be relevant in planning opportunities. These questions focus on areas such as collecting baseline data, evaluating what is currently working, and further research into the location and scale of the proposed project. Although the overall findings for the report did not advocate for the addition of a new maritime academy, the study encouraged deeper collaboration be done with those currently involved in maritime programming to clarify current offerings and how they relate to further education and workforce needs.

Other Relevant Information

N/A

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#)

Program Contact Information

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