



Weekly Legislative Update

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Legislative Session Begins Today

The 59th session of the Washington State Legislature convenes for its supplemental or short session on Monday, January 9. The session is scheduled to run for 60 consecutive days, ending on Thursday, March 9. Both Senate and House leaders have indicated the session will be fast paced and will finish on time.

Although repairs to the historic legislative building were completed more than a year ago, fences and portable buildings continue to dominate the capitol campus landscape. The John A. Cherberg Building (which houses offices and hearing rooms for Senate members and staff) is currently undergoing a major renovation. While the first floor hearing rooms will continue to be used for committee meetings, Senators and staff have been relocated to the two modular buildings in the parking lot behind the Cherberg building as well as the Pritchard Library.

Preview of Week One Activities

The focus on education begins right away on Monday, January 9 in the House Appropriations Committee at 3:30 p.m. when representatives of both K-12 and Higher Education will be asked to comment their reaction to the Governor's 2006 supplemental budget. Later during the same hearing, Bob Drewel from the Puget Sound Regional Council and Steve Mullin from the Washington Roundtable will make a presentation on the importance of state investment in higher education to the state economy.

On Tuesday, January 10, the House Higher Education Committee will hold its first meeting of the 2006 legislative session at 1:30 p.m. UW Provost Phyllis Wise has been invited to speak before the committee and will provide an overview of current University efforts to review the undergraduate experience. At the same hearing, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will present their recent assessment of Diversity in Higher Education.

Late that afternoon at 5:00 p.m., the Governor will deliver her "State of the State" address to a joint session of the legislature. The address will be televised live on TVW.

On Wednesday, January 11 at 8:00 a.m., the Senate Early Learning, K-12 and Higher Education Committee will receive an update on the implementation of the provisions of E2SHB 1994 which authorized the community and technical college baccalaureate pilot projects.

On Thursday, January 12, the House Higher Education Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. for a work session on an Economic Forecast for the State of Washington with a Focus on Higher Education. The committee will also conduct a public hearing on the Governor's 2006 Supplemental Budget on Higher Education with comments from institutional representatives.

Later that morning at 10:00 a.m., Provost Phyllis Wise, Dean Arthur Nowell, Professor Carolyn Friedman from the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences and Penelope Dalton, Director of the Washington Sea Grant Program will make a presentation to the Senate Water, Energy and Environment Committee on the University of Washington's Earth Initiative.

The Governor's Washington Learns Steering Committee meets in Olympia on Thursday, January 12 at 9:00 a.m. at the Olympia Red Lion Hotel. The Washington Learns Higher Education Advisory Committee will hold a special meeting and work session at the same location from 12:00 p.m. till 2:00 p.m.

In the afternoon, the House Commerce and Labor committee will hold a public hearing at 1:30 p.m. on HB 1724 which would subject state agencies to certain disclosure requirements related to outsourced contracts.

At the same time, the Senate Ways and Means Committee will hold a public hearing on the Governor's 2006 supplemental budget which will provide University representatives an opportunity to present their case for additional funding.

On Friday, January 13, the House Higher Education Committee will meet at 1:30 p.m. for a work session on the GET Program and a review of HECB Proposal for Data and Advising Systems.

Olympia Comings and Goings

Charlie Earl, the President of Everett Community College was selected to replace the retiring **Earl Hale** as Executive Director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges on December 22. Earl has led Everett Community College since 1998. Prior to that, he served as Deputy King County Executive under Gary Locke. He will begin his position with the State Board on February 1.

Bob Craves, the longtime chair of the Higher Education Coordinating Board stepped down effective January 9. At a special meeting held at 10:00 a.m., the board elected Gene Colin as its new chair. Colin is currently chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Ferguson Construction, Inc. of Seattle.