



Executive Summary Seattle Public Schools Skills Center Feasibility Study

Plan it, fund it, create it...it is time to have a Skills Center in Seattle!

The Seattle Public Schools (SPS) commissioned and funded a skills center feasibility study during the 2007–08 school–year to investigate the possibility of a single–district Career and Technical Education (CTE) skills center. Seattle Public Schools determined further research was required in order to *‘create a profile of CTE in Seattle Public Schools’* and to *‘craft the concept elements for a potential SPS skills center.’* The full study is now complete.

The 2008 skills center feasibility study generated considerable interest and support from a diverse group of stakeholders in the community who in turn provided valuable input to the study. All stakeholder groups were, and continue to be, very supportive of the concept presented in the reports and encourage Seattle Public Schools to move forward aggressively to establish a distributed skills center. Groups supporting the skills center include local business and industry; the City of Seattle /Mayor Greg Nickels; the Workforce Development Council (WDC) of Seattle–King County/CEO Marlena Sessions; Seattle Public Schools CTE/Tech Prep General Advisory Committee; the Manufacturing Industry Council; and the Seattle Community College District/Chancellor Jill Wakefield.

The full study concluded that there is sufficient need to warrant the creation of the Seattle Public Schools Skills Center. The necessary legislative and economic components have aligned to make creation of a single–district, innovative, distributed–location model for a skills center feasible. The addendum further explored the specifics of initial course offerings and outlined the scope of the pre–design work that begins now.

Seattle Public Schools is fully committed to a 21st century distributed skills center commencing fall of 2010. Seattle’s unique geography and demographics require an innovative model that serves its cultural diversity and large geographic area. It will deliver technical and rigorous programs designed to serve our students in a complex and dynamic economy. A key element to skills center success is having foundational exploratory CTE courses offered at the middle and high school level. It is also the intent of Seattle Public Schools to expand and improve existing CTE programs in both middle and high school. As prerequisites to the capstone skills center programs, Programs of Study will align complementary and sequenced middle, high school, and college courses. Career guidance prior to entrance into the skills center will bring students who have thus aligned their

coursework to achieve the high levels of technical and academic rigor required in these capstone programs.

The Workforce Development Council has been a long-time supporter for establishment of a skills center within Seattle Public Schools. The WDC and its partners continuously review the key industry sectors in King County to determine which should become the focus of their workforce development efforts and strategy. They have identified five key industries which are the focus of their current and long-term workforce development efforts, and are the fastest King County growth industries (also as identified by the Washington State Employment Security Department). These are *Information Technology; Health Care; Manufacturing; Construction; and Biotechnology/Life Sciences*. Each sector is projected through 2014 to have a high demand for skilled workers.

Existing CTE programs and courses, economic projections, and available instructor talent converge to from the directed intent of Seattle Public Schools to begin offering skills center programs beginning in fall 2010 in three initial program areas: Green Technology (Construction, Manufacturing, Engineering, and Energy), Health Sciences (Allied Health) and Information Technology. All three of the initial skills center programs are built on strong STEM-based principles. Three additional program (Hospitality & Tourism; Life Science/Biotechnology; and Transportation/Logistics) areas will be phased in from 2011 to 2014.

These advanced CTE skills center programs will provide students with industry-approved certificates that also articulate with colleges, and further enhance and extend opportunities to attend university, college and community & technical colleges in the region. Seattle Public Schools' skills center offerings will raise the bar for participating students, sending more advanced and higher-skilled college freshmen to our receiving institutions.

In developing a distributed model for the Seattle Skills Center, several challenges have been identified in determining sites for each of the three program areas. Multiple factors will be reviewed and balanced in the pre-design that identifies appropriate locations. Initial thoughts are that each program area could have two to four locations appropriately placed across the district, thus the term 'distributed model'. During this next phase, SPS will look at a distribution of sites and facilities throughout the district where these programs can be housed. Community college and community-based sites will also be considered.

Fiscal Resources

Establishing Seattle Public Schools' Skills Center will require extensive staff time and resources. Some of this can be done in-house and the CTE staff and other Seattle Public Schools departments will continue this work with existing time and resources. District resources will be dedicated to these activities knowing that state funding from OSPI for a Phase II 'Planning/Pre-Design Grant' may not be available until January 2010. The total

fiscal needs for Phase II Planning/Pre-Design Grant are estimated to be \$621,000. No large new buildings will need to be built; SPS has adequate existing square footage. Construction will be along the lines of remodeling and renovation.

The pre-design phase will also include explorations and research on curriculum; staffing; geography; transportation; and equipment/supplies.

Summary of Fiscal Request

Facilities	\$400,000
Curriculum Development	85,000
Staffing / Planning Coordinator	110,000
Geography / Location	7,500
Transportation Plan	3,500
<u>Equipment / Supplies Planning</u>	<u>15,000</u>
Total	621,000