

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Puyallup School District and University of Washington Tacoma partner to expand  
post-secondary educational opportunities**

The Puyallup School District and the University of Washington Tacoma have agreed to a new “Pathway to Promise” partnership that will expand post-secondary educational opportunities for all Puyallup School District graduates.

The partnership will enable Puyallup School District graduates to automatically be accepted as freshmen at the UW Tacoma campus if they meet agreed upon admission requirements.

Pathway to Promise is the first program of its kind in Washington state and the second in the nation that formalizes a partnership between a four-year institution and a public school district, said Cedric Howard, vice chancellor for student and enrollment services at UW Tacoma.

Howard attended the October 7 Puyallup School Board meeting to formalize the partnership with the school district. He also introduced Curtis Black, UW Tacoma admissions advisor and recruiter who is assigned as the UW Tacoma representative to the Puyallup School District.

“This is a great day in Puyallup and a great day for UW Tacoma in a mighty way,” Howard said.

The Pathway to Promise partnership includes active participation from the University of Washington Tacoma, the Puyallup School District Board of Directors, school district leadership including high school and junior high school principals, students, parents, and the community.

To be considered for automatic admission to UW Tacoma, students need to meet the following four criteria:

- 2.7 or higher grade point average
- 480 SAT scores (each section) or 21 or higher on ACT
- Basic graduation requirements
- Well-written admission letter

“To have a formal partnership with University of Washington Tacoma that will allow qualifying Puyallup School District graduates an opportunity to directly matriculate from high school to a four-year university is truly outstanding,” said Superintendent Tim Yeomans. “I believe that this

will be the catalyst to help move our district forward in helping create a post-secondary opportunity (4-year university, 2-year college, military, or specific apprenticeship or job training) for every student in Puyallup.”

The new program is based on the work of a leading education researcher Pat McDonough, who developed a model called Nine Elements to Support and Encourage a College-Going Culture. These elements include:

- College talk
- Clear expectations
- Information and resources
- Comprehensive counseling
- Testing and curriculum
- Faculty involvement
- College partnerships
- Articulation (seamless experience from K-12)

Through the partnership, students are expected to have a more seamless transition to a four-year university with the overall objective of increasing the number of high school graduates from Puyallup who earn a college degree.

“To fulfill our mission as an urban-serving university, UW Tacoma is partnering with Puyallup School District to help them develop a college-going culture and encourage students to attend college,” Howard said. “This program is not about encouraging students to attend UW Tacoma. It’s about ensuring they are prepared to take advantage of post-high school educational opportunities to pursue their dreams after high school graduation.”

The new partnership with UW Tacoma is yet another effort in the Puyallup School District to promote post-secondary opportunities. In the past, Puyallup has also partnered with other colleges and post-secondary institutions. Additionally, the district currently prepares students for life beyond high school through programs such as the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), No Excuses University, College Bound Scholarship, and annual post-high school planning nights.