

# Strategic Lean Project Report



**For Reporting Period:** January 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015

## I. General Information:

**Lead agency name:** Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)

**Improvement project title:** Creation: GET Project Manager

**Date improvement project was initiated:** 1/15/2015

**Project type:** New Project

**Project is directly connected to:**

- Results Washington performance measures
- WSAC Agency Strategic Plan
- Other

**If applicable, specify the alignment:**

Goal #1 – World Class Education  
Goal #5 - Efficient, Effective and Accountable Government  
Increasing educational attainment by offering a safe and secure way for families to save for college.  
STEP UP – Internal Plan, Goal #2 – strive for exceptional work and continuous improvement.  
GET Program – Mission, Vision, Values

**Report reviewed and approved by:** Dr. Gene Sharratt, WSAC Executive Director

## II. Project Summary:

The GET Program was in need of a project manager to ensure the growing number of IT projects remained within schedule, scope and budget. However, no additional FTEs were available to fill this position. It was identified that a current Records department staff member already had the needed skill set and showed an interest in the position. By recognizing opportunities to restructure the Records department and streamline processes, this individual was able to fill the needed Project Manager position without the need to create a new FTE, and without losing capacity in the Records department. Additionally, as the staff member already possessed the necessary project management qualifications, no additional training was needed. We were also able to fast track the hiring process and begin the position three months earlier than anticipated, due to a coordinated transition plan. We anticipate an estimated savings of \$100,000 (\$50,000 FTE for salary/benefits and \$50,000 for savings in training) for FY15. Going forward, we anticipate \$50,000 in annual savings.

## III. Project Details:

**Identify the problem:**

With a growing number of important IT projects and needed security updates, enhanced communication and coordination needs were identified that could be addressed by the hiring of a Project Manager. Collaboration and timely communication between IT staff and GET staff are key for proper development and execution of projects. In the past year, the GET IT department hired a quality assurance coordinator and an additional developer, bringing their FTE total to four and increasing their project capacity. They also continue to recognize efficiencies, focus on enhancing customer experience and security, and strive to meet all compliance standards, which continues to be added as the program grows. To

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successfully handle this increased output, it was identified that additional project coordination and communication was needed, in the form of a project manager.

**Problem statement:** GET manages over 162,000 prepaid tuition accounts valued at nearly \$3 billion. It is imperative that all customer information remain secure and that all IT projects uniformly meet objectives, stay within scope, schedule and budget, and employ clear and consistent communication. Additionally, increased oversight from OFM has brought the need to produce additional reports from CSS (our database management system provider). It was identified that increasing IT demands required a Project Manager to facilitate successful project development and implementation. The original plan was to hire by July 1, 2015. However, with increased IT project capacity due to the recent addition of a quality assurance coordinator and a new web developer, it was crucial to begin sooner. Our hire date was moved to April 1, 2015, to accommodate additional projects and increased interdepartmental communication needs. Adding to the challenge was that no new FTEs were available for this position.

**Improvement description:** GET unit functionality was reviewed and discussed. With workloads and employee aptitudes and interest, the Records unit was realigned. A Records staff member was identified who was trained in Banner, Laserfiche, has project management credentials and showed interest in the position. This individual has successfully moved into the role of Project Manager, while we have been able to avoid losing capacity within the Records department, and without the need for new FTEs.

**Customer involvement:** Timely communication and IT project execution that meets strict quality control standards is vital in maintaining stringent security standards, keeping customer information up-to-date, managing all 162,000 GET accounts and effectively communicating with all internal and external stakeholders. Our annual customer survey indicates that the GET website and online account portal are the primary ways in which customers get information about the program and their accounts (50% website visitation rate among customers). Our website and subsequent IT projects are constantly and consistently updated with accuracy and meets all time commitments.

## IV. Project Details:

<b>Improved process as measured by:</b> <i>(Click those that apply)</i>	<b>Specific results achieved:</b> <i>(Complete the narrative boxes below)</i>	<b>Total Impact:</b> <i>(Actuals; Current Reporting Period)</i>	<b>Results status:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Cost</b>	Reduced costs for realignment of the Records unit and the hiring of a project manager. Specialized skill set with existing staff. No new FTE or training needed. Cost savings.	\$100,000 in savings for FY15; \$50,000 a year going forward	Final
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Quality/Time</b>	Increased oversight – testing, communication, efficiency, and security. No rework.	Quality/Time avoidance for delayed projects (scope creep)	Final

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	Increased responsiveness to customer needs and enhanced communication and security. Avoided possible risks for communication and customer account/communication. Increased security. Program value is nearly \$3 billion. Cost avoidance for program.		Final
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Employee Engagement</b>	Increased trust for process development with employees. Discussion, implementation of realigned work group and new project manager with existing staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A (or)	Final

## V. Contact information:

**Name:** Betsy Hagen

**e-mail:** [betsyh@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:betsyh@wsac.wa.gov)

**Phone number:** 360.753.7860