USE YOUR VOICE TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

Sample Town Hall Questions for State Legislators

1. How did you get involved and reach your current position? Why did you become a legislator?
2. This year, unless the Legislature and the Governor act, it's possible that more than 8,000 students could lose up to 40% of their state student aid. We're worried about this and wanted to hear your thoughts.
3. We want to be sure that every Washington student -- students of color, those who are the first in their families to go to college, those from Washington's rural areas -- have equitable access to state student aid programs. From your perspective, where are we doing well and what needs to be improved?
4. What actions are being taken or considered to support students facing education barriers, especially in terms of work-school balance, childcare support, financial aid eligibility, housing and food insecurity, etc., so they can focus on their studies without basic needs, parental, or work demands barriers?
5. What steps can the state take to address the rising costs of textbooks and course materials while increasing student awareness of affordable options such as Open Educational Resources (OER)? How might legislative action encourage wider adoption and accessibility of these resources for students who are not aware of them?
6. How can the state better support higher education institutions to build or strengthen partnerships with businesses to ensure students, including those attending independent and private institutions, can gain relevant skills through internships and connections, as well as building experience to help with job placement post-graduation?
7. Washington is projected to have 740k job openings in the next five years. Those jobs will require a post-secondary degree or certificate. What initiatives are being explored to expand loan forgiveness, provide alternate funding options, or help employers contribute to college costs, so students can pursue higher education without accumulating significant debt?
8. What strategies are being discussed to address the shortage of mental health services and counseling resources on college campuses? Additionally, how are campuses ensuring mandatory training for staff and faculty, including referrals and appropriate resources?
9. How is our state legislature working to improve the housing market for young adults in today's workforce economy?
10. This question speaks to your particular passion and interests you'd like to share with students. What are the current or future challenges and/or opportunities you foresee that students should be thinking about?
11. What words of advice, suggestions, or stories can you share to encourage community engagement from students, and the ways they can participate in the legislative process?

Source: The WA-SEN Guidebook, available from wa-sen.org