Washington State Board of Education

Working to Raise Student Achievement Dramatically

CHARTER FOR CORE 24 IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Project Purpose

The purpose of the CORE 24 Implementation Task Force (ITF) is to examine the implementation issues associated with the CORE 24 High School Graduation Requirements Framework, passed by the State Board of Education (SBE) in July 2008. The ITF will advise the SBE on strategies needed to implement the requirements, including a phase-in process that would begin with the graduating class of 2013. Although it is the SBE's intent for the CORE 24 requirements to be fully implemented by the graduating class of 2016, assuming funding by the legislature, the ITF should take into consideration ways to move the system forward *toward* CORE 24 requirements in the event only partial funding is attained.

Background

At the July 2008 SBE meeting, the SBE approved the CORE 24 High School Graduation Requirements Framework through the following motions, which included specific direction to staff to establish an Implementation Task Force. The motions reference the Meaningful High School Diploma (MHSD) memorandum (the "larger paper") approved by the Board on July 24, 2008.

1. Establish the CORE 24 Graduation Requirements Policy Framework, per the attached Adoption Document, consisting of subject area requirements, Culminating Project, and High School and Beyond Plan to be phased in over four years, beginning with the class of 2013 and becoming fully implemented with the class of 2016, contingent upon funding approved by the legislature.

2. Maintain the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plan as graduation requirements, with modifications developed in consultation with the Board's implementation advisors. Begin the High School and Beyond Plan in middle school.

3. Direct staff to establish an Implementation Task Force to make recommendations to the Board by June 2009, to address implementation issues identified through (prior) public outreach and cited in the larger (July 2008 MHSD memorandum) paper. These include, but are not limited to:
    - An implementation schedule that prioritizes phase-in of new credit requirements.
    - Ways to operationalize competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements.

- Ways to assist struggling students with credit retrieval and advancing their skills to grade level.
- Phasing in CORE 24 to address issues such as teacher supply, facility infrastructure, etc.
- Ways to provide appropriate career preparation courses, as well as career concentration options.
- Scheduling approaches to 24 credits that can meet the required 150 instructional hours.

4. Affirm the intention of the Board to advocate for a comprehensive funding package and revision to the Basic Education Funding formula, which among other necessary investments, should link the implementation of CORE 24 directly to sufficient funding to local school districts for a six-period high school day[1], a comprehensive education and career guidance system, and support for students who need additional help to meet the requirements. The Board directed staff to prepare a funding request for the 2009-2011 biennium to begin implementation of CORE 24.

Connection to the Board's Mission, Goals, and Work Plan

One key strategy to meet the SBE's goal to improve student preparation for post-secondary education and the 21st century world of work and citizenship is to create a coherent and rigorous set of graduation requirements that keeps all options open for all students. With the actions taken in July 2008, the SBE established the CORE 24 High School Graduation Requirements Framework. The CORE 24 Implementation Task Force, part of the SBE's September 2008-August 2009 work plan, is an integral step in moving the work forward.

Board Role

The SBE's role is to receive the recommendations of the Implementation Task Force (ITF), consider them in the context of the larger policy environment, and ask for further clarification if needed. The SBE will formulate policy for CORE 24 implementation.

ITF Co-leads

Jack Schuster and Steve Dal Porto will serve as Co-leads for the ITF. The Co-leads will oversee the work of the ITF, including:

- Helping to select the membership.
- Attending all meetings of the Task Force, bringing forward questions from the Board.
- Identifying policy questions to be considered by the SBE.
- Reporting back to the Board on the progress of the Task Force.
- Attending meetings (AWSP, WSSDA, WASA, etc.) with staff, as possible, to discuss CORE 24 and its implementation.
- Being a "sounding board" for staff as questions arise.

[1] The Board's intent is not to require all school districts to implement a six-period day, but rather to advocate for funding up to the level of six periods.

Relationship of Implementation Task Force and Meaningful High School Diploma (MHSD)

Eric Liu will continue to serve as the Board lead on the Meaningful High School Diploma project. He will provide strategic guidance needed to advocate for CORE 24, and will continue to carry the unfinished MHSD work forward, leading the policy development of the Board's approaches to the Culminating Project, High School and Beyond Plan, essential skills, and middle school/high school connections.

As appropriate, the ITF will consider the issues of the Culminating Project, High School and Beyond Plan, essential skills, and middle school/high school connections and make recommendations to the MHSD Lead, Eric Liu.

Scope of Work

The CORE 24 Implementation Task Force (ITF) will be comprised of a central leadership group that will consider the systems issues that need to be addressed in order to implement the CORE 24 framework, as approved by the Board. Individuals wishing to serve on the ITF must express their interest formally. The ITF will:

- Develop a strategy for addressing the implementation issues identified in the Board's motion approval language and any other issues the Board and/or Task Force deems important (see list of implementation issues below).
- Provide options for a phase-in process within the 2013-2016 parameters established by the Board.
- Help identify people to serve on practitioner-based work groups, if needed.
- Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of recommendations, in order to provide the Board with different options to consider.
- Consult informally with colleagues to provide ongoing feedback from the field.

The central leadership group of approximately 15 people will include working or recently retired practitioners well-respected by their peers for their deep and wide understanding of systems issues, depth of expertise, and ability to think systemically and creatively. This group of leaders *collectively* will bring expertise in:

- Rural, suburban, and urban districts.
- Districts of different sizes and from eastern and western areas of the state.
- Districts with different levels of career and technical education involvement, including skills centers.
- Districts with Navigation 101.
- Comprehensive and alternative high schools.
- Middle and high school perspectives.
- Curricular issues spanning an array of subjects.
- Counseling.
- Struggling and gifted students.
- English Language Learner (ELL) perspectives.
- Private schools.

The ITF will seek people in different leadership roles who serve, or have recently served, in the K-12 system. Practitioner-based, issue-specific, and ad-hoc work groups, coordinated by staff will support the work of the Implementation Task Force, as needed.

Implementation Questions and Issues

This list represents the issues identified in the Board's motion, as well as other issues that have been raised during the SBE discussions of CORE 24 with stakeholders. The list, with any additions the SBE might make, is intended to be a starting place for discussion with the Implementation Task Force.

1. **What is the optimal strategy for phasing in the CORE 24 requirements, beginning with the graduating class of 2013 and becoming fully implemented with the graduating class of 2016?**
   The ITF will advise the SBE on strategies needed to implement the requirements, including a phase-in process that would begin with the graduating class of 2013. Although it is the SBE's intent for the CORE 24 requirements to be fully implemented by the graduating class of 2016, assuming funding by the legislature, the ITF should take into consideration ways to move the system forward toward CORE 24 requirements, in the event only partial funding is attained.

2. **What flexibility, if any, is needed to make CORE 24 requirements work for all students, e.g., ELL learners, IB diploma candidates, struggling students, etc.?**
   The ITF should consider, at a minimum, the advantages, disadvantages, and optimal use of competency-based credit, credit "plus" approaches that allow students to earn one credit but satisfy two requirements, credit earned in middle school, and limited credit waiver authority for local administrators.

3. **What conventional and out-of-the-box ideas should the SBE consider to implement CORE 24?**
   The ITF should recommend creative, practical, and doable ways (e.g., the role of online learning, collaborative arrangements across districts, etc.) to address the capacity issues that CORE 24 will inevitably raise.

4. **What scheduling approaches assure sufficient opportunities for students to earn 24 credits <u>and</u> meet the definition of instructional hour credit, established in rule?**
   The ITF should outline different scheduling scenarios to identify the challenges and solutions districts might consider to satisfy the requirements of CORE 24.

5. **What should the career concentration requirement look like in practice?**
   The ITF should recommend ways to assure that the career concentration requirement incorporates the expectations of the current occupational education requirement, and considerations for the relationship of the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plan to the career concentration requirement.

6. **What issues need to be addressed in order for the High School and Beyond Plan to begin in middle school?**
   The ITF should recommend ways to build connections between high school and middle school.

Deliverables

The Implementation Task Force will produce:

- Recommendations with analyses of advantages and disadvantages related to the issues itemized in Motion #3, passed in July 2008 (see details in background section of this paper).
- Recommendations with analyses of advantages and disadvantages related to other relevant issues the ITF identifies.
- Regular feedback from the field on CORE 24 perceptions, concerns, and support.

Suggested Timeline

Although the original motion language specified June 2009 as the deadline "to address implementation issues identified through (prior) public outreach and cited in the larger paper," this suggested timeline is probably a more realistic approximation of the extended time that will be needed to think carefully through the different issues. Specific dates are included only for the first two meetings; later dates will be established in consultation with the ITF.

Meetings	Dates
First meeting of Task Force	February 2, 2009
Second meeting of Task Force	March 2, 2009
Third meeting of Task Force	May 2009
Fourth meeting of Task Force	June or August 2009
Fifth meeting of Task Force	October 2009
Sixth meeting of Task Force	December 2009

Communication Plan

Updates from the Implementation Task Force will be provided at regularly-scheduled meetings of the Board. Board members and SBE staff will be making formal presentations in a variety of venues in order to provide information about CORE 24 and seek input on implementation issues from stakeholders. The SBE will work with OSPI, legislative staff, and the Governor's staff to keep them informed of the work and share progress with key stakeholders, including the legislature.

Staff Project Manager
Kathe Taylor, Policy Director

Expected Action

Motion to approve the charter for the Implementation Task Force and extend the timeline from June 2009 to the suggested schedule outlined above.