

Race to the Top

Senate Early Learning and K-12
Committee

January 18, 2010

The need for innovation

- We are in unprecedented times.
- But that gives us an opportunity.
- We need true reform that affects all students far into the future.
- We need true reform that rewards effective teaching.
- We need true reform that helps give all students the education they need this century.

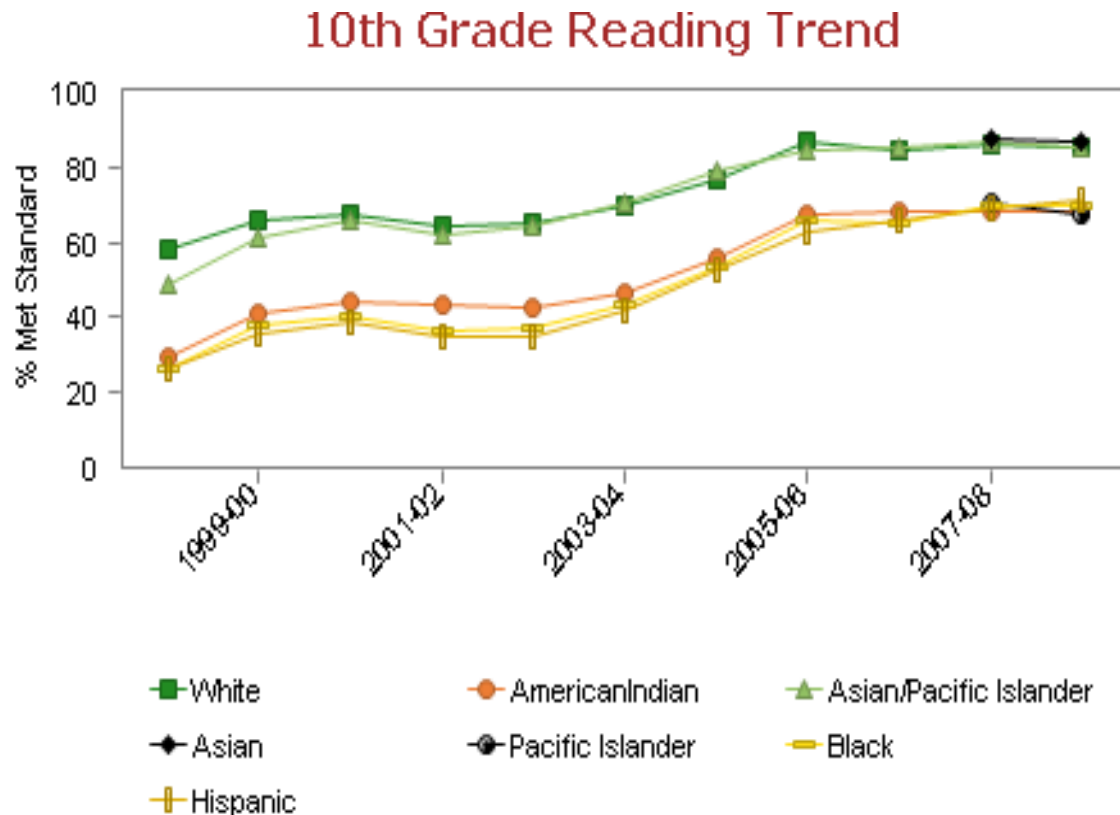


“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

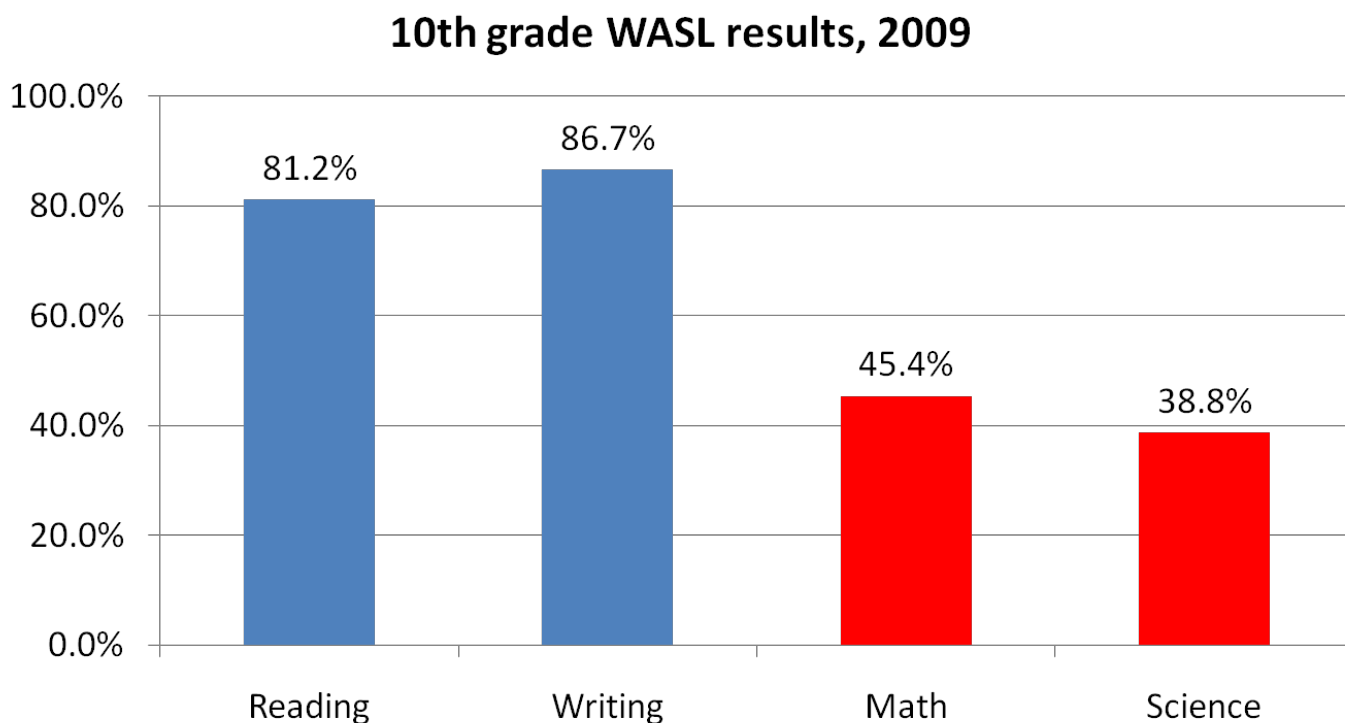
Challenges in our education system

1. Our achievement gap is not going away.



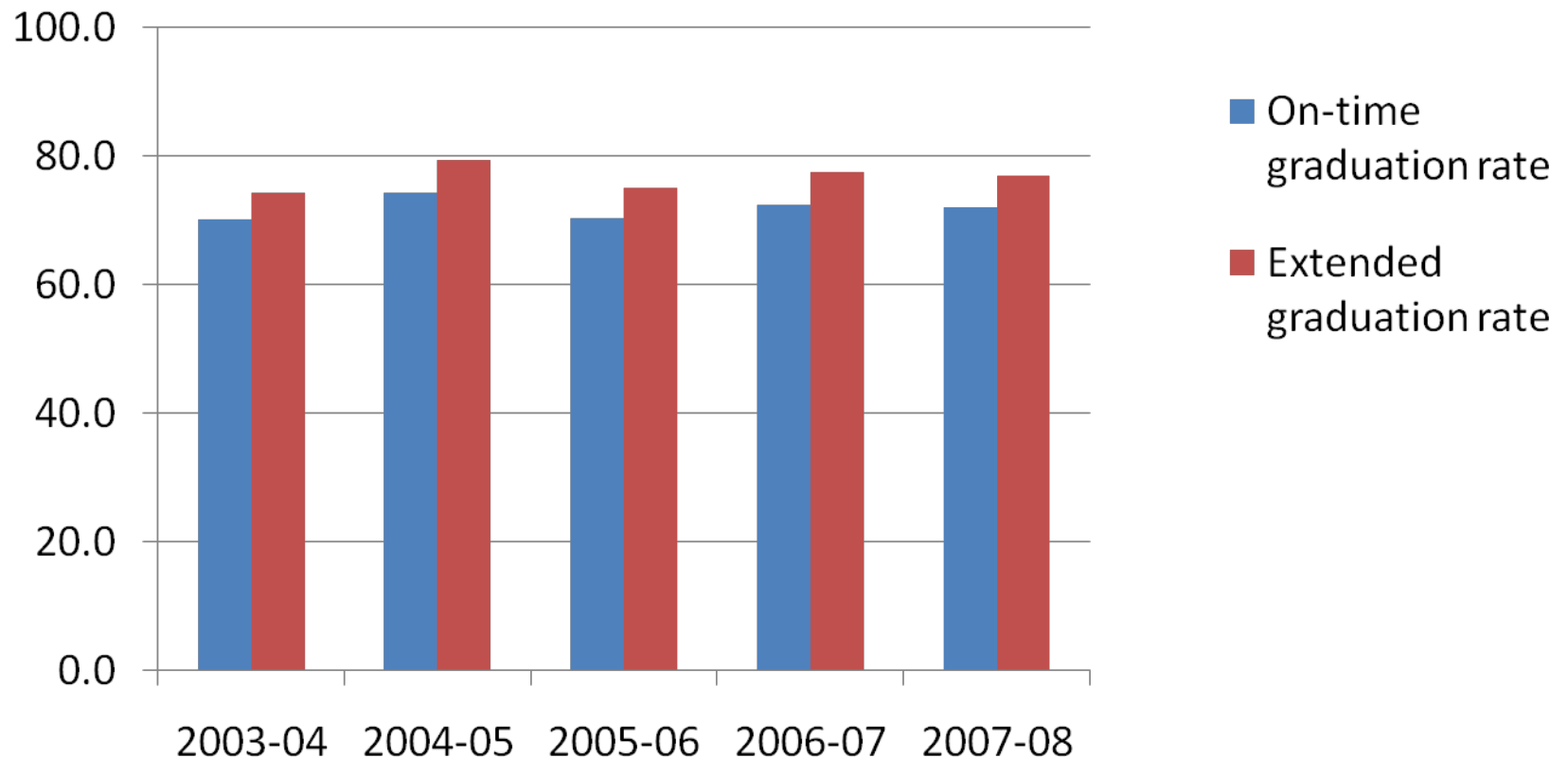
Challenges in our education system

2. Performance in math and science is unacceptable.



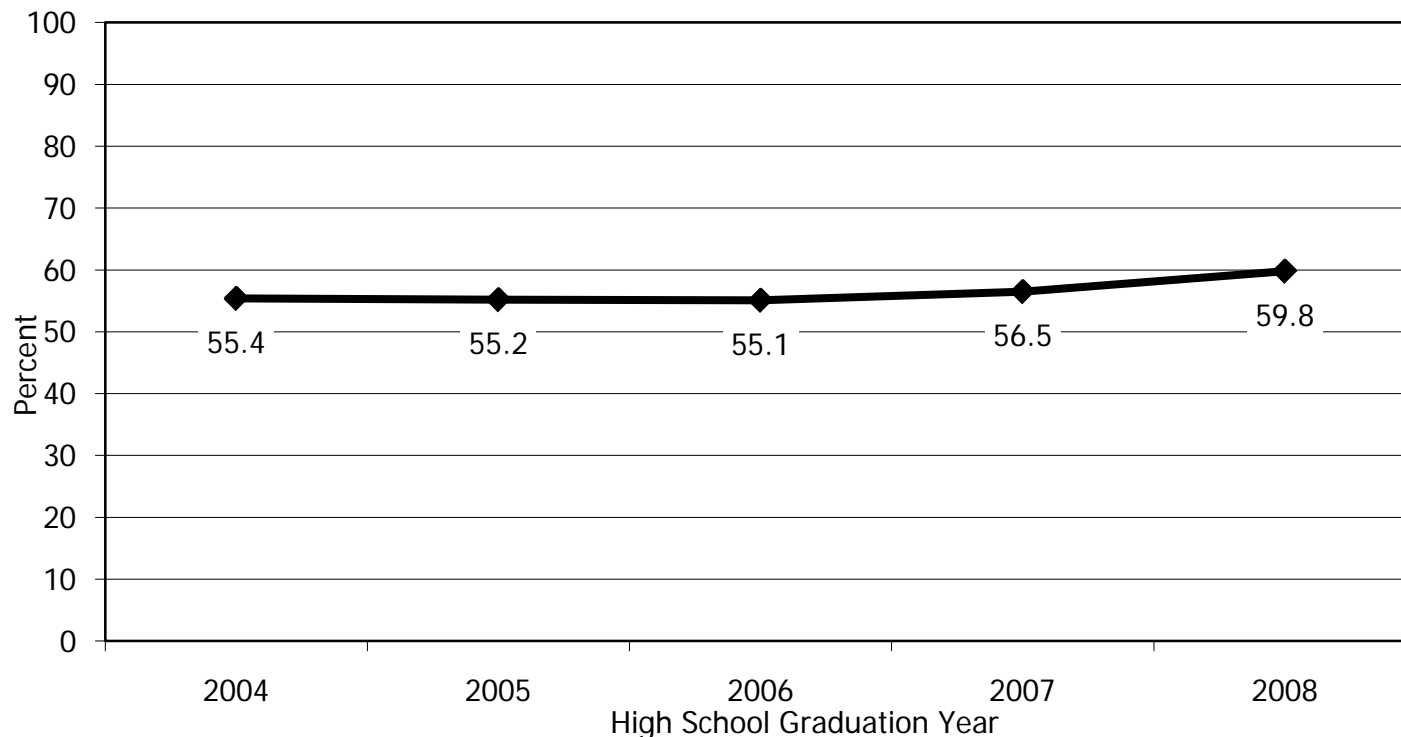
Challenges in our education system

3. Too many students drop out.



Challenges in our education system

4. Flat two- and four-year college attendance rates.



But there is a solution.

[Obama clip](#)

What is Race to the Top?

- A federal grant program that could deliver \$150-\$250 million to Washington state
- Underlying principles:
 - Reward past accomplishments
 - Incentivize future improvements
 - Build on state reform efforts
- Phase II applications are due June 1
- Winners will be announced by Sept. 30

What is Race to the Top?

- RTTT is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- ARRA defines four areas of funding priorities:
 1. Standards and assessments
 2. Teacher/leader quality
 3. Data collection and use
 4. Struggling schools

Why is RTTT important to Washington?

- The reforms promoted by RTTT will help:
 - Close achievement gap
 - Allow our students to be competitive in global society
 - Create and retain great teachers and leaders
 - Improve math and science achievement
- RTTT incentivizes education change
 - It fits with ESHB 2261, which will create a new school funding system

We need bold legislation

1. Michigan last month passed a comprehensive bill that, among other things:
 - Calls for a data system that ties individual students to individual courses and thus teachers.
 - Establishes merit pay for teachers.
 - Assigns a state school redesign officer to create a turnaround plan if the local district is unable to.
2. California this month passed a sweeping education bill. It allows a public school to become a charter school if 50 percent of the parents sign a petition.
3. At least eight states have lifted caps on the number of possible charter schools

The grant application

- The Department of Education will score all applications based on a 500-point scale.
- The points will be divided into six criteria and one competitive priority, as follows:

	Points
▪ Criteria A: State success factors	125
▪ Criteria B: Standards and assessments	70
▪ Criteria C: Data systems to drive instruction	47
▪ Criteria D: Great teachers and leaders	138
▪ Criteria E: Turning around the lowest achieving schools	50
▪ Criteria F: General criteria	55
▪ Competitive priority: STEM	15

Challenges to receiving RTTT money

- No authority to intervene in low-performing schools. Our current system is voluntary.
- We have no official process for identifying and intervening in our lowest achieving schools.
- We don't have a way of determining the best teachers and those that need to improve.
- We aren't preparing enough students for STEM careers.
- We do not have strong incentives for innovation.

Our proposed legislation

- Three major components:
 1. Alternative routes to certification
 2. Teacher and principal performance
 3. Required action (low achieving schools)

Alternative routes to certification

- Expands eligible PESB-approved providers of teacher and administrator preparation programs;
- Requires PESB to establish processes for approval and oversight of a broader range of providers;
- Creates state data-driven regional reporting related to forecasting educator workforce need

Teacher/principal performance

- Increase time for tenure from two to three years
- Get help for low-performing teachers
- Use student assessment data as one component in teacher and principal evaluations
- Begin an evaluation process for principals

Required action

- The new SBE accountability system for districts with low achieving schools will include three phases:
 1. OSPI will conduct an audit of the district and provide technical assistance
 2. The district will develop a collaborative plan of action with its staff, students and community
 3. The SBE will approve the plan
- Districts will then have three years to implement the plan

Required action – Collaborative plan

- Districts must select must include one of four federal school improvement models:
 1. **Turnaround:** Replace principal and 50 percent of staff, adopt new governance
 2. **Restart:** Open school under “new management”
 3. **School closure:** Send students to other schools in district with higher achievement
 4. **Transformation:** Develop teacher and school leader effectiveness, comprehensive instructional reforms, extended learning time; provide operating flexibility and sustained support

Required action

- Federal funds will be used to support the local plans
- If local parties cannot agree on the creation of a local plan disagreements may go to mediation and then the superior courts

RTTT: a culture of innovation

- RTTT will jump-start needed reform in our state
- We will learn from our data and modify our practices
- We will train and retain the best teachers and principals
- We will ensure that **all** students receive a to-quality education