REQUIRED ACTION to Turn Around Low-Achieving Schools

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A PROCESS, A PLAN, AND A PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

REQUIRED ACTION is a key element of the State Board of Education's **(SBE) Accountability Framework**.

The Required Action process will provide critical resources to districts with persistently low achieving schools. These resources provide more flexibility in hiring, hours, and operations.

The Required Action process is designed to **end the education gap** – the inequity that exists in Washington's public schools.

All students deserve an excellent and equitable education and the Required Action is designed to make that ideal a reality.

"One of the most powerful tools for empowering individuals and communities is making certain that any individual who wants to receive a quality education can do so…We must work to help all families and all communities realize their dream of a better future."

– Gov. Christine Gregoire

A **Required Action District** is a School District with:

Title I schools in improvement and Title I eligible schools that have very low overall student achievement in reading and math, no significant improvement, and low graduation rates.

A PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPROVEMENT

If the Legislature approves, Required Action will create a collaborative partnership between the state and local school district to turn around persistently low achieving schools.

STATE ASSISTANCE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

With the support of federal funds, the State can focus support and technical assistance so that districts can make significant changes.

REQUIRED ACTION WILL RESULT IN POSITIVE, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

+ **Increase** achievement for all students
+ **Close** the achievement gap
+ **Reduce** the dropout rate
+ **Create** district capacity to help schools that need it the most
+ **Foster** mutual accountability for all

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REQUIRED ACTION: A FIVE STEP PROCESS

STEP 1: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION

Using federal criteria, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will identify the bottom five percent of the lowest achieving schools and their districts. The identified districts will be able to volunteer to participate in 2010 and will be required to participate in 2011.

STEP 2: ACADEMIC AUDIT

- ✓ **SBE** directs **OSPI** to conduct an Academic Performance Audit of **Required Action Districts**.
- ✓ The audit, conducted by third party experts in the field, will examine factors, such as:
  - Student demographics and mobility patterns.
  - Effective school leadership; strategic allocation of resources; clear and shared focus on student learning; high standards and expectations for all students; high level of collaboration and communication.
  - Aligned curriculum, instruction and assessment to state standards.
  - Focused professional development.
  - High level of family and community involvement.
- ✓ **OSPI** communicates audit findings to **SBE** and the **Required Action Districts** and their communities.

STEP 3: PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Based on the audit findings, the **local board** develops a Required Action Plan in **collaboration with staff and the community**. If necessary, the district must reopen the collective bargaining agreement to address the audit's findings. The Required Action plan must also include detailed information on the necessary budget for improvement, the resources needed, and a metric for the measurement of desired outcomes. The Required Action plan must use one of the following four federal improvement models (state/local models in subsequent years):

- **Turnaround:** Replace principal and 50% of staff.
- **Restart:** Open the school under third party education management organization.
- **Closure:** Send students to other schools in district that are higher achieving.
- **Transformation:** Reform instructional environment, develop teacher and school leader effectiveness, increase community engagement, extend learning time.

STEP 4: PLAN APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ **OSPI** reviews the required action plan, and **SBE** approves the Required Action Plan and ensures that **the district** has sufficient resources and authority for implementation. In certain cases, mediation and, if necessary, a superior court decision to avoid an impasse.
- ✓ The **District** implements the Required Action Plan and has 3 years to make significant progress based on approved plan metrics.
- ✓ Federal funds will be provided for plan implementation.
- ✓ **OSPI** continues to provide assistance as needed.

STEP 5: REVIEW & NOTIFICATION

- ✓ During the third year, **OSPI** notifies **SBE** of a district's Required Action progress and determines whether a **district** has demonstrated sufficient improvement.
- ✓ **SBE** notifies a **district** that it is no longer a Required Action District or that insufficient progress has been made and a new Required Action Plan is needed.

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