



WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

OLD CAPITOL BUILDING • ROOM 253 • P.O. Box 47206 • 600 S.E. WASHINGTON • OLYMPIA, WA 98504-7206

BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENT WAIVERS

SUMMARY OF POLICY ISSUE /STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (SBE) STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The Board will be considering two applications for waivers from the Basic Education Act requirements at the November Board Meeting.

1. **Prescott School District** is requesting a waiver from the one hundred eighty-day school year requirement for the 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 school years. The waiver request meets the goals of restructuring to improve student achievement and is similar to a waiver granted to an adjoining school district. The district believes that the waiver will increase parent and guardian participation in the children's education, especially for their Hispanic community. They also believe that it is critical to their work on closing the achievement gap.
2. **Big Picture High School**, in Highline School District, is requesting a waiver from credit-based high school graduation requirements for the maximum four years that are allowed. The waiver request meets Washington State's school reform vision as stated in the State Board of Education's rules, specifically "shifting from a time and credit-based system of education to a standards and performance-based education system."¹ In place of traditional credits, the Big Picture High School has "developed an array of competencies based on college admission criteria adapted from work in other states and in collaboration with admissions staff from major colleges and universities in Washington."² The school believes that the waiver is an essential part of its work to "engage students at risk of dropping out as well as to provide increased rigor for all students."³ The school's vision is aligned with the Board's goals of improving student achievement and improving graduation rates. It also aligns with the purposes of a waiver, to provide an exceptional opportunity to be innovative in order to enhance the educational program for the school's students.

BACKGROUND

Prescott School District Application

Prescott School District, located in Prescott, is in Walla Walla County. It has 247 students in Grades K-12 attending two schools: Prescott Elementary School and Prescott Junior/Senior High School. The application for a waiver is a new application.

¹ WAC 180-51-001

² Highline School District Application

³ Highline School District Application

The details of the waiver are similar to a waiver previously approved by the Board for an adjoining district, Waitsburg School District. The request is to have two days waived from the one hundred eighty-day school year requirement. The purpose of the waiver request is to restructure the school's calendar to allow for four evening parent-teacher conferences, two in the fall and two in the spring. The District is small and rural with many of their families living far from the schools. The majority of the students come from Vista Hermosa, an agricultural working community.

The District believes that "by having two evenings in the fall and two evenings in the spring devoted to student/parent/teacher conferences, direct communication with parents and students will be accomplished. Evening conferences ensure greater participation, as 80% of our families live 20 miles from the Prescott School District and their workday ends at 4:00 p.m. Most are Hispanic families who need translators and this evening accommodation to maximize communication of their children's academic progress."⁴

The District had many formal and informal discussions with stakeholders and the parents have frequently asked for evening parent-teacher conferences. The District believes that the waiver will help build positive relationships with the working families of their community. Their teachers and staff also support the restructuring of the calendar as a means to positively impact student achievement.

Highline Big Picture High School Application

Highline Big Picture High School is in SeaTac and opened in 2005-06. This year the school has about 120 students in grades nine through twelve. Big Picture is one of 12 high schools in the Highline School District, which serves students in Burien, Des Moines, Normandy Park, SeaTac, Boulevard Park, and White Center.

The District is requesting a waiver for Big Picture High School from credit-based high school graduation requirements. This is a new application. The school requests to be permitted to graduate students based on successful demonstration of competencies through its curriculum, which is "both integrated and vocationally immersed, such that students acquire and demonstrate academic proficiencies through school-based work and also through internships in adult workplaces under the supervision of mentors who collaborate closely with school staff."⁵

The proposed competencies are closely aligned to the Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS), which was developed in Oregon in the 1990's, as part of an effort to create a seamless and aligned K-16 system of education. The competencies were created in consultation with admissions directors from major public and private colleges and universities in Washington and were built upon graduation requirements of other schools in the national Big Picture Learning Network.

⁴ Prescott School District application

⁵ Big Picture High School application

Big Picture High School is based on four interrelated principles: 1) multiple, meaningful, and extended adult relationships; 2) a small learning community; 3) academics in the context of real work outside the school; and 4) a school culture pervaded by the expectation of higher education for all students. The move to competency-based graduation requirements, at Big Picture High School, is aligned with the District's vision, as outlined by Superintendent John P. Welch in the application's cover letter:

“The vision of Highline is that all students leave high school prepared for college, career and citizenship, and that no door is closed to them that limits their postsecondary choice.”⁶

POLICY CONSIDERATION

Both applications for waivers meet the State Board of Education's criteria for the purpose and use of a waiver. Therefore, approval of the applications should not have any policy implications.

EXPECTED ACTION

Approval of both applications.

⁶ Big Picture High School application



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INITIAL APPROVAL OF A PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR

BACKGROUND

The school herein listed, having met the requirements of RCW 28A.195 and consistent with the State Board of Education rules and regulations in chapter 180-90 WAC, be approved as a private school for the 2008–09 school year.

RECOMMENDATION

The private school seeking State Board of Education approval is required to submit an application to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The application materials include a State Standards Certificate of Compliance and documents verifying that the school meets the criteria for approval, established by statute and regulations for this school seeking initial approval. A more complete description is attached for reference. Staff recommends approval of this school.

Enrollment figures, including extension student enrollment, are estimates provided by the applicants. Actual student enrollment, number of teachers, and the teacher preparation characteristics will be reported to OSPI in October 2008. This report generates the teacher/student ratio for both the school and extension programs. Pre-school enrollment is collected for information purposes only.

Private schools may provide a service to the home school community through an extension program, subject to the provisions of RCW 28A.200. These students are counted for state purposes as private school students.

Private Schools for Approval

2008-09

School Information	Grade Range	Projected Pre-school Enrollment	Projected Enrollment	Projected Extension Enrollment	County
Small World Montessori (Initial) Shelly Perera 12810 35 th Ave SE Everett WA 98208 425.338.7771	P-2	70	10	0	Snohomish



Washington State
Board of Education



Working to Raise Student Achievement Dramatically

Washington State Board of Education
Meeting Dates and Locations for 2009-10

Proposed Dates/Locations for 2009	Proposed Dates/Locations for 2010
January 14-15 Olympia New Market Skills Center	January 13-14 Olympia TBD
March 12-13 ** Olympia New Market Skills Center	March 18-19 Olympia TBD
May 14-15 ** Yakima Yakima Valley Community College	May 13-14 Spokane ESD
July 15-17 – to include Retreat Gig Harbor Inn at Gig Harbor	July 14-16 - to include Retreat TBD
September 17-18 Renton PSESD	September 16-17 Seattle PSESD
November 12-13 Vancouver Heathman Lodge	November 4-5 Seattle PSESD

** The March and May meeting date changes are due to dates already approved for the Professional Educator Standards Board 2009 meetings. All SBE 2010 meetings were reviewed with the PESB dates to ensure there are no conflicts.