

**Serving *Every* Child Well:
Washington State's Commitment to Help
Challenged Schools Succeed**

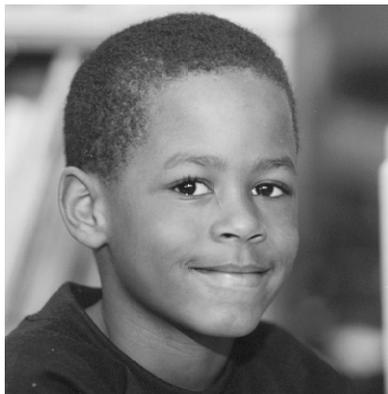
Draft Recommendations
for the State Board of Education
July 24, 2008



Background

- **Our task:** Develop draft proposals and recommendations for state and local partnerships to turn around schools identified as Priority Schools – the state’s new “Tier 4” of school underperformance
- **Our goal:** Significantly increased student achievement in these schools – the elimination of the poverty and racial achievement gap
- **Our process:** Incorporate viewpoints of all key Washington stakeholders through varied outreach efforts, including a deeply involved Design Team, as well as national research on turnaround design

What is this initiative really about?



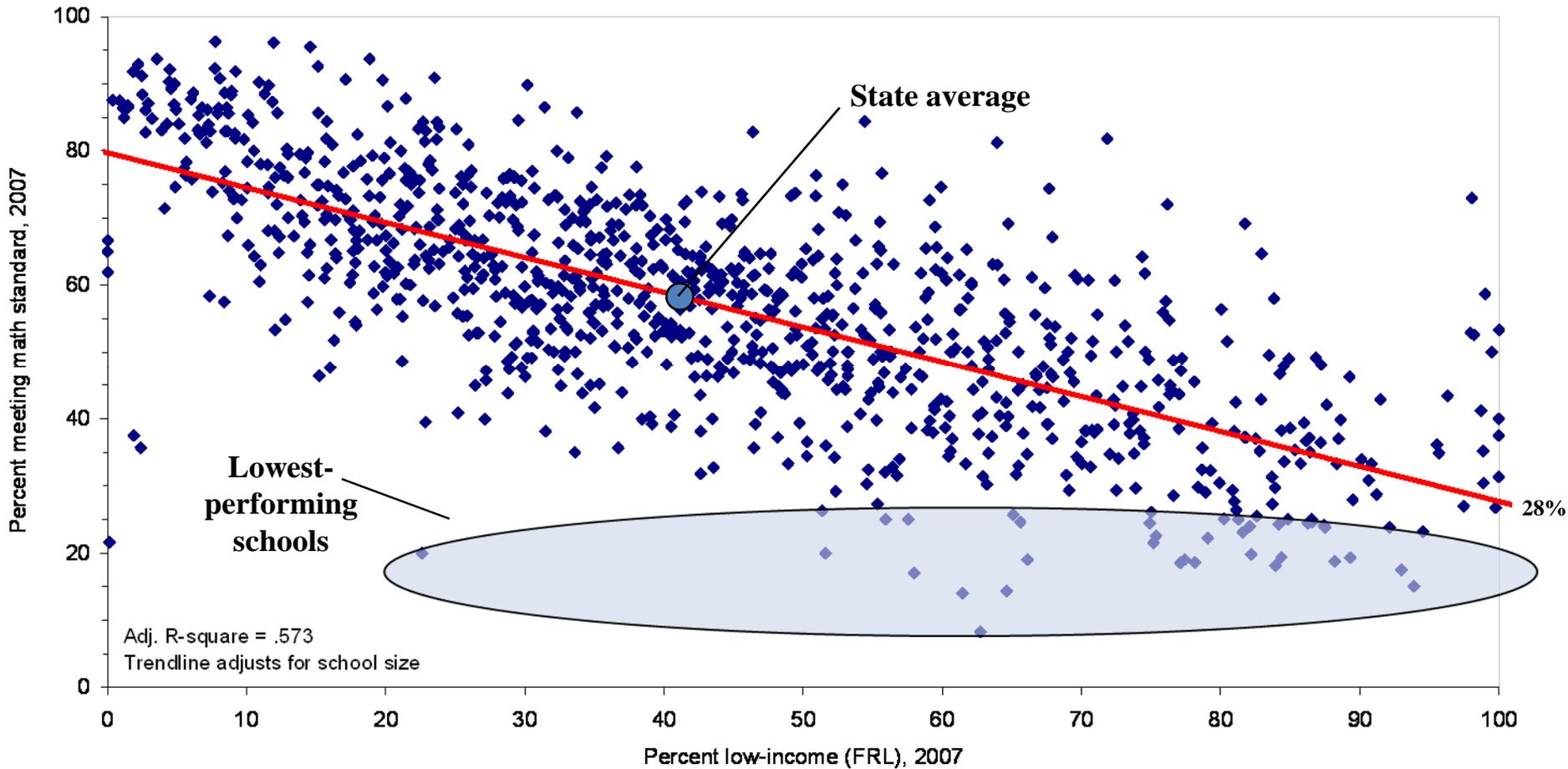
**“Instead of helping some
kids beat the odds...**

***...why don't we just
change the odds?”***

Geoffrey Canada, Founder, Harlem Children's Zone, 2004

What this is about: Changing the odds

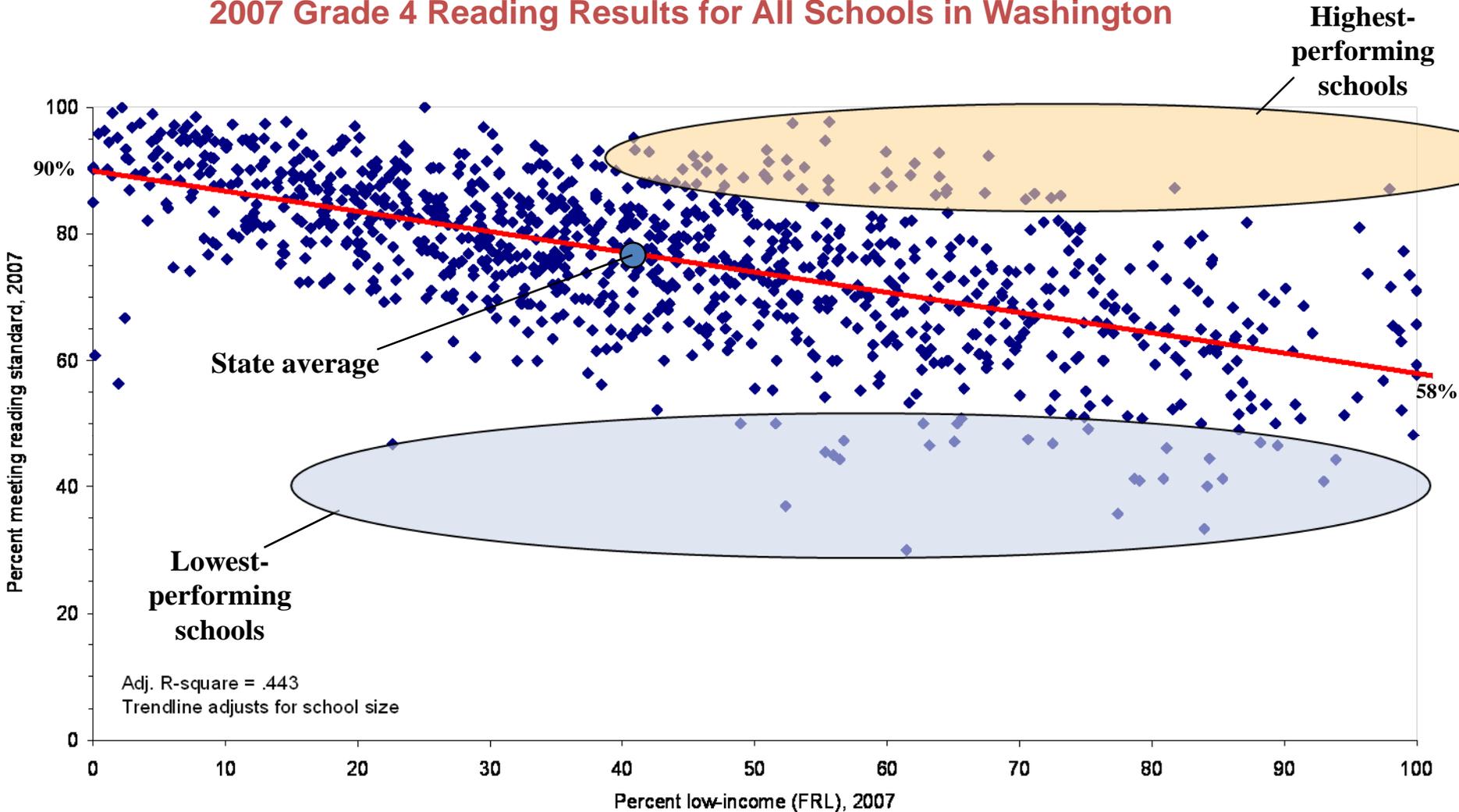
2007 Grade 4 Math Results for All Schools in Washington



Source: Washington State Board of Education

What this is about: Changing the odds

2007 Grade 4 Reading Results for All Schools in Washington

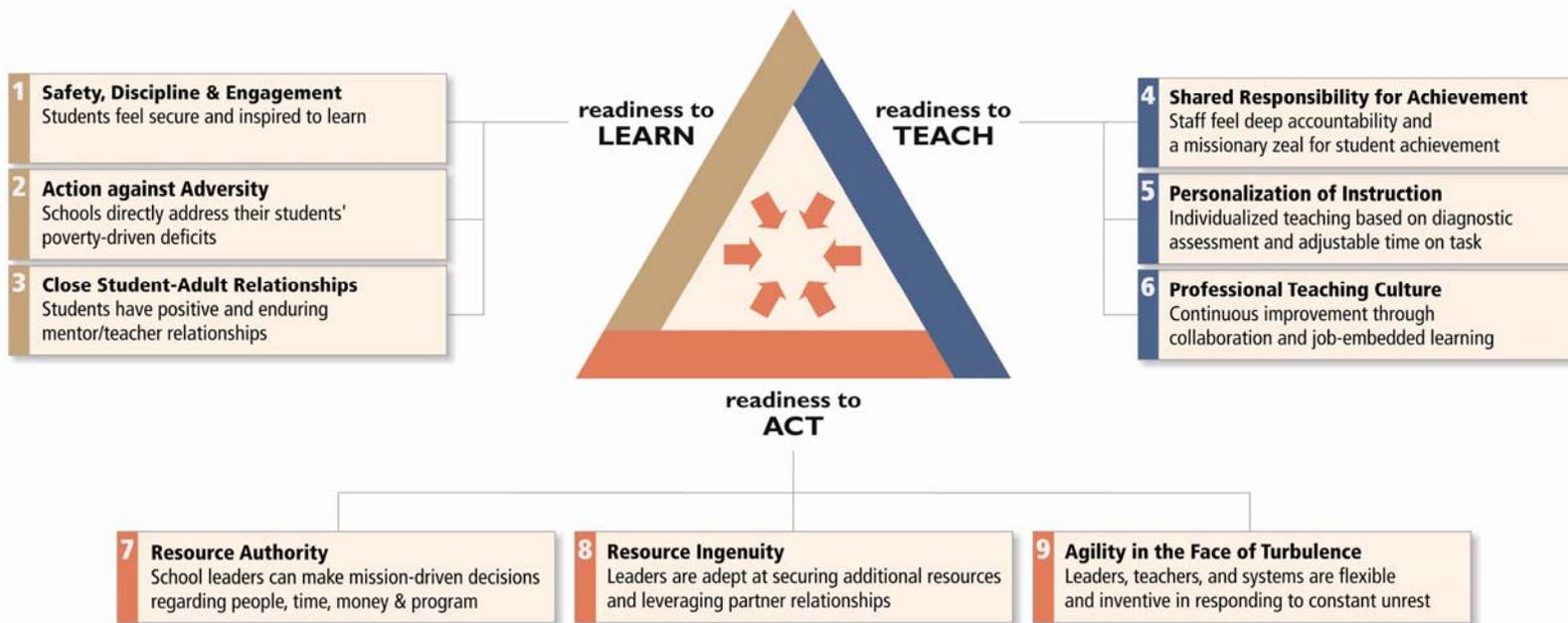


Source: Washington State Board of Education

**How will we know that
something *different* –
reforms that can serve high-challenge
student enrollments effectively –
is underway?**

Indicators of *turnaround* vs. incremental reform

Elements of High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools: the “Readiness” model



Sufficient Time: 90 minutes more per school day, 10 days per school year

Sufficient Funding: \$250K-\$1M per school, per year

Sufficient Flexibility: Same operating authority any turnaround manager needs

Sufficient Leadership & Partner Capacity: Shared authority, accountability

**How can we ensure that
Washington State's context
and circumstances drive
the initiative's design?**

Guiding principles that emerged from the development process

1. The initiative is driven by *one* mission: student success
2. The solution we develop is collective
3. There is *reciprocal accountability* among all stakeholders
4. To have meaning, reciprocal accountability is backed by reciprocal consequences
5. The solution directly addresses common barriers to reform
6. The solution requires a sustained commitment
7. The solution requires absolute clarity on roles

Guiding principle No. 1

- The initiative is driven by *one* mission: student success.

So:

- Every implementation choice needs to ensure the success of the first cohort of Innovation Zone schools, which means (as an example):
 - Focusing state funding more intensively on fewer schools, rather than broadly and too thinly across more schools

Guiding Principle No. 2

- **The initiative we develop is collective.**

So:

- **Every key stakeholder has a voice in creating the initiative and a role in the implementation**
- **But: the buck stops with the state**

Guiding Principle No. 3

- There is *reciprocal accountability* among all stakeholders.

So:

- The field *and* the state will be expected to fulfill their responsibilities to the initiative – or the deal is off. No mandates without sufficient support; no additional resources without necessary reforms.

Guiding Principle No. 4

- **To have meaning, reciprocal accountability is backed by reciprocal consequences.**

So:

- **All of the stakeholders – the state, districts, schools, teachers, students, community leaders – have clear incentives to fulfill their responsibilities.**

Guiding Principle No. 5

- **The solution directly addresses common barriers to reform.**

So:

- **The Innovation Zone will be characterized by transformative, not incremental change, which means:**
 - **Sufficient time in school for high-challenge students to succeed**
 - **Flexibility to make decisions about people, budgets, programs, and teaching approaches based on the needs of children**
 - **Capacity to implement fully, quickly, and well, in part through the presence of a strong lead partner**

Guiding Principles 6 and 7

- **The solution requires a sustained commitment.**
- **The solution requires absolute clarity on roles.**

So:

- **The initiative will demand a new kind of partnership between the state, communities, and school districts – the piloting of a second generation of standards-based reform in Washington State.**

**Step by Step
through the Innovation Zone**

Four key questions the initiative needs to address clearly and straightforwardly

1. **Voluntary vs. mandatory:** At what point, if any, does it become mandatory for schools to participate?
2. **Conditions change:** What is the best way to achieve flexible authority over key school resources – staff, money, and time?
 1. Bargain it locally with statewide templates available
 2. Regulatory changes at the state level
3. **If students continue to fail:** What should the state's final “buck-stops-here” school accountability status look like?
4. **Roles for SBE and OSPI:** What specific roles should each play in implementing the initiative?

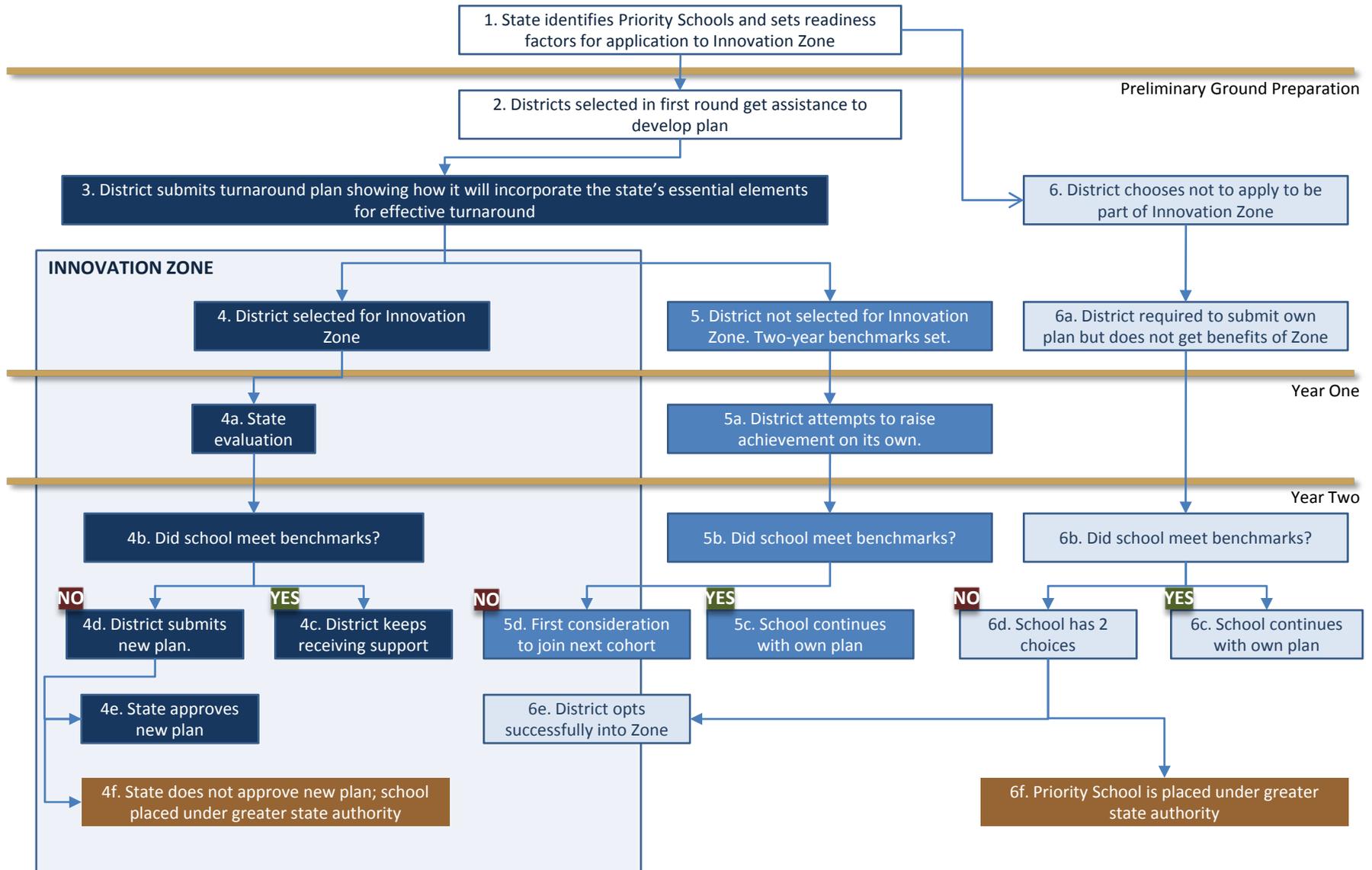
One key point to clarify from the outset

Is this a school-based initiative or a district-based initiative?

- *Both.* It focuses on transformation where it counts: at the school level. But it is designed to achieve that transformation systemically, across clusters of schools organized by districts and their partners.

District reform must be part of the long-term solution for underperforming schools.

Washington State's Innovation Zone: Flowchart of Options and Outcomes



1. State identifies Priority Schools and sets first vetting for district readiness

- **Schools that meet the common-sense test:**
most would agree, these are schools that need help
- **First vetting for district readiness to participate:**
 - Short expression of interest and commitment
 - Local stakeholders indicate alignment on collaborating
 - Clear understanding of the issues and the need to address with reform that is deeper than incremental
 - Indication of adequate capacity to respond to the state's Innovation Zone RFP, both inside and outside
 - Indication of a reform base already in place, including systems for staff development, school leadership teams, use of student performance data

1. State identifies Priority Schools and sets first vetting for district readiness

- **Why would districts want to participate in the Innovation Zone?**
 - Fulfillment of the Guiding Principles and all that they imply, especially:
 - Resources to pay for implementation: additional time, staff, professional development, partner support
 - Flexible operating conditions, streamlined compliance burden
 - Strong strategic and implementation support from an embedded lead partner organization
 - Opportunity to pilot new internal structures and approaches in a “mini-district” cluster, as a key element in district redesign
 - Best opportunity to avoid having school be placed under greater state authority

2. Districts selected in first round get assistance to develop plan

- **Assistance = time for planning, and partner support from state list of preferred providers**
 - State supports development of partner resource base
- **Assumption is that all districts entering this phase will be funded**
 - However: implementation funds would not be awarded to districts that cannot meet state criteria
- **Plausible statewide cohort size: 25-40 schools**
- **Proposals on behalf of clusters encouraged:**
 - 2-5 schools: same level or within a feeder pattern
 - Can include non-Priority schools (preference given to Tier 3 schools)

3. Plan must meet state criteria built on key turnaround elements:

Benchmark indicators of <i>turnaround</i> vs. incremental improvement
Necessary Operating Conditions
<i>People</i>
Can the turnaround leadership team staff the school as needed? (Hiring/removal/placement/roles)
<i>Money</i>
Does the school receive sufficient additional resources to achieve the turnaround plan? (Depending on school size and level: \$250K-\$1M per year, sustained for 3 years, new or reallocated funding)
Is extra compensation provided to pay staff for extra time, responsibilities, and leadership roles?
Does the turnaround leadership team have flexibility over how resources are spent?
<i>Time</i>
Is the day and year significantly extended (ex: 90 minutes) to allow for more time for learning and collaborating?
Does the turnaround leadership have the ability to adjust the school schedule as needed?
<i>Program</i>
Does the school enhance students' <i>readiness to learn</i> by providing significant social supports, such as advisories, counselors, after-school programs, targeted remediation, and community/home/parental outreach?
Does the leadership team have authority to adjust programming to support the turnaround plan, and to make choices and respond to crises with a minimum of compliance-driven oversight?
Necessary School-Level and Partner Capacity
Do the school's principal and turnaround leadership team have the skills necessary for success?
Is a lead partner organization deeply embedded with school/district leadership to plan and execute turnaround design, make best use of the operating conditions, and align other partners? Is that lead partner present in the school on an intensive basis, and is it contractually accountable for student performance?

4. District selected for participation in Innovation Zone (*dark blue boxes*)

- **Timeline:**
 - Fall 2008-Spring 2009: final SBE proposal development, legislative action, school identification
 - Summer 2009: first step of recruiting/vetting process
 - Fall 2009-Winter 2010: districts and partners prepare, submit plans, SBE selects/approves
 - Spring/Summer 2010: planning and initial training, recruiting
 - Fall 2010: Innovation Zone clusters open for first full implementation year
- **Following Year One: state evaluation/monitoring**
- **Following Year Two: first “goals threshold” and evaluation of progress, with differentiated outcomes**



4b-f. Did school meet benchmarks after two years of implementation?

- **If Yes: district keeps receiving support**
 - Five year goal: match non-poverty student achievement averages for the state (eliminate the achievement gap)
 - As funding expands, district may apply to include additional schools and/or create new clusters
- **If No: district submits new plan addressing issues from first two years of implementation**
 - If SBE approves revised plan, district continues to implement with annual evaluation
 - If district fails to submit a plan SBE can approve, school is placed under greater state authority
 - Some loss of control by local district on programming, budget, staff, schedule
 - Potentially increased role for school partner

5. District not selected for Innovation Zone after submitting proposal (*medium blue boxes*)

- **Assumption that there will not be many, if any, in this category**
- **Eligible to receive all other OSPI supports**
- **Can re-apply for second Innovation Zone cohort, with initial preference given**

6. District chooses not to apply to be part of Innovation Zone (*light blue boxes*)

- **Still required to prepare, submit a plan for turnaround of its Priority School(s)**
- **Eligible to receive all other OSPI supports**
- **After two years of implementation:**
 - If school met benchmarks, continues with its own plan
 - If not, district has two choices:
 - Prepare plan and proposal for Innovation Zone, or:
 - Priority School is placed under greater state authority

Where the state will be by Summer 2012:

- **Clarity on progress made against goals by Priority Schools and their clusters after two years of implementation**
- **Comparison with progress made by districts with Priority Schools that did not participate in the Zone**
- **Decision point:**
 - Expand funding and access to the Innovation Zone
 - Continue with first cohort but hold on expanding until more results are obtained
 - Eliminate program if insufficient progress is shown

Key roles for SBE

- **Prepare, submit, advocate for package to legislature for 2009 session**
- **Set initial factors for participation in the Zone (first round of vetting) and essential elements required of all Zone turnaround plans**
- **Selection, approval of plans (with OSPI input)**
- **Decision-making authority on outcomes for Priority Schools after two years and monitoring of schools placed under greater state authority (with OSPI assistance)**
- **Catalyst in developing deeper role for, and resource base of lead partners**

Key roles for OSPI

- **Diagnostic role and assistance in development, implementing proposals to enter the Zone**
- **On-going management of Zone initiative in general (possibly through new sub-office)**
 - Assistance to districts in integration of Zone initiative with other reform efforts, including DCIA
- **Analysis, monitoring of school progress and recommendations to SBE after two years of implementation**
 - Could also be done by separate agency (reporting to legislature and governor), to keep implementation support separate from evaluation
- **Assistance on expansion of lead turnaround partner capacity in the state**

Reprise: Four key questions the initiative needs to address clearly and straightforwardly

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