The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Achievement & Accountability Workgroup (AAW) Feedback Report
from the August 14, 2013, Meeting

Overview

During this AAW meeting, members discussed ESSB 5491 in small groups and E2SSB 5329 in a large group. Experts from OSPI WaKIDS, OFM ERDC, OSPI Student Information, OSPI Secondary Education & Improvement, SBCTC, and WTECB participated in the small group discussions on ESSB 5491. Members were asked to self-report using feedback forms and staff members took notes on the discussions. Each member had the opportunity to review and contribute to this report prior to publication.

Executive Summary

During group discussions, AAW members provided input on the implementation of ESSB 5491 and E2SSB 5329:

ESSB 5491 Discussion Topics	Feedback
WaKIDS	Majority: Wait to set a performance goal until longitudinal data is available
4th Grade Reading	Mixed: 100% of all kids should be proficient, but realistic growth goals should be used
8th Grade Math	Mixed: 100% of all kids should be proficient, but realistic growth goals should be used
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Mixed: Aspirational goal of 100%, but may need to incorporate realistic gradual increases
HS Graduates in Postsecondary Education, Training, or Employment in 2nd and 4th quarters	Unanimous: Significant interagency collaboration is needed for preparing the data at ERDC for the indicator and setting the performance goal
Remediation Rate in College	Unanimous: Interagency collaboration is needed for setting the performance goal

E2SSB 5329 Discussion Topics	Feedback
How should the type and scale of support for districts in the 5329 accountability system vary with school designations?	Support should be flexible and based on the unique needs of the school. The credibility of school improvement professionals is critical to the success of the support. The support should be adequately funded based on school size and needs.
How should the Board operationally define "recent and significant progress" as exit criteria for Required Action?	Use an exit trajectory that is based on a definite goal instead of a moving target. Currently, a school can enter or leave the PLA list based on how other schools have performed since the list is calculated from the bottom 5% rather than a cut score.
How should the accountability framework address the transition to the Common Core State Standards?	Numerous questions about the effect of Common Core State Standards on test results. What is the predicted impact of the transition? The accountability framework should be open to being continuously evaluated and reworked if necessary.

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Old Capitol Building, Room 253
P.O. Box 47206
600 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

Question 1: What should ESSB 5491 indicator goals be based on? How would you approach establishing a goal?

Four of the indicators – WaKIDS, graduation rate, 4th grade reading, and 8th grade math – use data that are specified in ESSB 5491. For those four indicators, the AAW discussion revolved around how to set performance goals as required by ESSB 5491. The other two indicators – percentage of high school graduates in postsecondary education, training, or employment, and remediation rates in college – rely on data that are less clearly described in the legislation and will require the collaboration between multiple agencies to prepare the data. In addition to the discussion of how to set performance goals for these indicators, AAW members discussed technical considerations for the two postsecondary indicators.

Indicator: The percentage of students demonstrating the characteristics of entering kindergartners in all six (6) areas identified by the Washington kindergarten inventory of developing skills

Options for Setting a Performance Goal:
   A. "K-12 should use data as a needs assessment."
   B. "100% of the children should be at the "5-6 year-old K" level. The goals should be increased in % at a reasonable rate."
   C. "Maybe a goal could center on Early Learning knowing how to prepare Pre-K for their community K-12 system. i.e. if bilingual education is offered in K-12, Pre-K should support primary language preparation."
   D. "Another goal should be that the state collects data for 5 years before deciding on any action."
   E. "Low-income/FRPL status will have a disproportionate effect on WaKIDS."

Recommendation:

There was general agreement among the AAW members that the performance goal for WaKIDS should not be set until longitudinal data were available. In the most recent test, 18,000 kids and 4,000 volunteers were tested. By Fall, approximately 43.7% of kindergartners will be tested. By 2017-2018, 100% of kindergartners will be tested as state-funded full-day kindergarten is fully implemented.

Additional Considerations & Questions:
   • There was general concern from AAW members that the Department of Early Learning (DEL) was neither included in the ESSB 5491 legislation nor in attendance at this AAW meeting. (DEL was invited but could not attend this meeting.)
   • "Kindergartner teachers and ECE teachers should be deeply involved."
   • "October seems late for information that needs to be used at the start of the school year."
   • "WaKIDS assessment may not be aligned with the K-12 learning continuum and readiness goals."
   • "May want to focus on a couple of key skills like math readiness and social-emotional."
   • "Research should identify which of the six domains impact student achievement in K-12."
   • "WaKIDS testing could be seen as a barrier for some families if they feel that their child is deemed not ready."

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Old Capitol Building, Room 253
P.O. Box 47206
600 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

- "Three concerns: 1. Timing of the WaKIDS assessment 2. The domains that are used 3. Resources needed"

Indicators: The percentage of students meeting the standard on the fourth grade statewide reading assessment; and the percentage of students meeting the standard on the eighth grade statewide mathematics assessment

The AAW feedback on setting performance goals for fourth grade reading and eighth grade math was similar. Therefore, both indicators are represented in the following options, recommendations, and additional considerations.

Options for Setting a Performance Goal:
- A. 100% of students meeting standard.
- B. "Gradual percentage increase."
- C. "Point increase."
- D. "Set high annual growth goals so that reports trigger recommended improvement."
- E. "Use a percentage increase from baseline. What is realistic x 2 so that a bigger stretch is shown?"
- F. "Don't push this out too far. Create urgency so that change can happen while students are still in school."
- G. "Needs broader set of indicators to address 21st century skills."
- H. Need focus on growth and multiple measures.
- I. "Knowing that English learners need more time to become English language proficient, set more realistic goals for reading proficiency."
- J. The percentage of growth – i.e. 2-5% increase in annual growth.

Recommendation:

AAW members generally agreed that 100% of students meeting standard is what the system should strive for. However, members presented various options for realistic increases toward the 100% goal.

Additional Considerations & Questions:
- "New assessments will have a serious impact on assessment scores."
- "Tests should not be our god."
- "If ELLs need to meet the same goal – provide/fund year-round instruction. When these students are at risk of not reaching a goal, that information should be used to provide support to maintain and continue growth."
- "Need actions tied to goals."
- "More resources may not be needed to change 8th grade math. Rather, views should be challenged."
- "How the pie is sliced should be changed." (Allocation of resources.)

Indicator: The four (4)-year cohort high school graduation rate

Options for Setting a Performance Goal:
- A. Align to ESEA indicators
- B. 100% target, phased in with gradual increases
- C. Aspirational versus realistic goals

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Recommendation:

AAW members discussed the options of having an aspirational goal of 100% versus a realistic goal of a gradual increase toward 100% graduation.

Additional Considerations & Questions:
- "The four-year graduation rate does not account for kids who re-enter or who will take longer."
- "Ignores dropouts; once a kid misses 4-year graduation then no incentive to get them graduated."
- "All students do not get through HS equally because home support and other factors differ."
- "Identify the resources necessary to achieve the ideal situation that would help establish a realistic goal."
- "How linked to plan? There could be an issue in timing and lag in data." Graduation data do not become available at the same time as proficiency data.
- "Look backwards" and "start (planning for an improved graduation rate) in early learning."
- "Consider the new GED test as a graduation equivalency or re-entrance to a community college."

Indicator: The percentage of high school graduates who during the second quarter after graduation are either in postsecondary education or training or are employed, and the percentage during the fourth quarter after graduation who are either enrolled in postsecondary education or training or are employed

Steps Needed to Create this Indicator:
- "This requires interagency coordination with a group of experts."
- "Pull a group together with experts who know their data sets, craft definitions that work in every area of the state. "
- "Decide on whether employment is part-time, full-time, or living wage."
- "Detail should be specified on the amount of employment or earnings that will be included in this indicator."
- "Decide on whether postsecondary education is part-time or full-time"
- "Define training: 1. Apprenticeships 2. Private Career Schools 3. Military? Difficulty getting data on military recently due to agreements with the federal government."
- ERDC can serve as the data warehouse and provide the indicator, but WTECB will need to help with the training data.
- "Cooperate with ERDC on setting goals. Currently, there are gaps in the data on training and military. WTECB is working to get that data to ERDC."
- AAW members expressed concern about preparing the data for the December 1 deadline.

Recommendation:

Begin a collaborative process among SBE, ERDC, WTECB, OSPI, EOGOAC, WSAC and SBCTC to prepare the data, create definitions, and set performance goals. Via interagency collaboration, discuss the data limitations and arrive at definitions of "training" and "employment." Then, WTECB transfers the training data to

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance I Accountability I Achievement I Oversight I Career & College Readiness

Old Capitol Building, Room 253
P.O. Box 47206
600 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

ERDC and ERDC runs a custom report that provides the indicator. Continue the interagency collaboration with all entities named in ESSB 5491 to set a performance goal for this indicator.

Additional Considerations & Questions:
- "There should be a relationship between goals and resources."
- "Employment issue: Unique identifier match with Washington, Oregon, and Idaho is available. However, the major limitation is the use of social security numbers. K-12 students may not have submitted their social security numbers and the employment search can only be made by social security number. The search and match cannot be made by name or birthdate. This restricts the number of high school graduates that can be tracked as they enter employment. Students who attended a public college after graduation can be tracked easier because most of them will submit their social security number during registration. Fortunately, the capacity for national matching is slowly growing."
- "Unique policies in colleges could impact this measure without any change in HS performance. Colleges use various entry tests and have various standards for what test scores require students to take remedial courses."
- It is important to disaggregate English acquisition by language spoken at home.
- Multiple AAW members expressed concern with the accuracy and completeness of the data needed for this indicator.
- "There is a definite need for a follow-up workgroup for remediation rates and postsecondary ed/training/employment."
- "There is no systemic accountability in higher education to work towards reducing the opportunity gap."
- "Concern over how to count quarters: For college enrollment, Spring grad = Fall (2nd quarter) Spring (4th quarter). For employment, 6 months (2nd quarter) and 12 months (4th quarter). How do On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs fit into this timeframe?"
- National Student Clearinghouse collects national enrollment data from participating colleges.
- For training, the December 1 indicator could include apprenticeship and private career schools. That is the most feasible start for this indicator. The next set of data to be included would be on training through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the military (if an agreement is established with the federal government). The more challenging data set includes assorted non-WIA on-the-job training (OJT).
- An AAW member suggested that discussion should be held on aligning strategic planning and goal-setting with the Governor's education initiative and metrics.

Indicator: The percentage of students enrolled in precollege remediation courses in college

Options for Setting a Performance Goal:
A. Limit this indicator to high school graduates within the first year after high school.
B. Include all students who are enrolled in precollege remediation courses in college.
C. Separate this indicator by two-year and four-year colleges.
D. Aggregate two-year and four-year colleges in this indicator.

Recommendation:

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Old Capitol Building, Room 253
P.O. Box 47206
600 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

AAW unanimously agreed that interagency collaboration between SBE, OSPI, ERDC, EOGOAC, WSAC, SBCTC, and WTECB should take place when setting a performance goal for this indicator.

Additional Considerations & Questions:
- There is a definite need for a follow-up workgroup for remediation rates and postsecondary ed/training/employment.
- Test scores may be more consistent information than remedial enrollment because both placement tests and standards for entry into remedial courses can differ depending on the college.
- "ERDC needs more than adequate funding."

Question 2: How should the type and scale of support for districts in the 5329 accountability system vary with school designations?

AAW Recommendations and Concerns:
- **Flexible Method of Support.** The type and scale of support should vary with school needs and student population, not designations. Defaulting to the national principles isn't always applicable because the school improvement plan must be tailored to the unique needs of the school. Therefore, the plan should be local in nature. A grant application process could be used so that OSPI and SBE can better understand the needs of the school.
- **Credibility of School Improvement Professionals.** The success of this support will rely on the quality, credibility, and knowledge level of the school improvement professionals that are working with the RAD. These professional should be knowledgeable enough to provide deep and significant coaching. The support provided to the district should be applied as directly to the children as possible.
- **Beware of Burnout.** Care should be taken when applying pressure to Required Action District (RAD) schools because they often have the most challenging students. Too much pressure on these schools can worsen problems of principal and teacher burn-out.
- **Funding/Resources.** Adequate resources are needed to successfully improve a Required Action District. Money is needed to extend the school year, provide students with access to twenty-first century technology, and retain skilled school improvement professionals. Funding could be based on the needs of an effective school improvement model. Alternatively, funding could be based on school size. If sufficient resources are not provided then there should not be an identification of RAD II. However, not all changes require more money. Money is not necessarily the principal agent in changing the views of school officials, community members, and students. Existing resources can be re-allocated to meet the needs of the students.

Question 3: How should the Board operationally define "recent and significant progress" as exit criteria for Required Action?

Options for defining "recent and significant progress" as exit criteria for Required Action:
A. Trajectory/trend toward leaving the PLA list based on the bottom 5% (presents the 'moving target problem'—a school might leave PLA status merely because other schools do worse)
B. Trajectory/trend toward leaving the PLA list based on a static and definite goal (solves the moving target problem but complicates the calculation of the bottom 5%)

The Washington State Board of Education
Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Old Capitol Building, Room 253
P.O. Box 47206
600 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Washington 98504

C.   There was general concern among AAW members about the temporal measure of "recent and significant progress"—what is "recent?" Is one or two years sufficient to show progress?

D.   "This should be a long-term measure, not just three years."

E.   "The trajectory for exit should be within three years."

F.   "Researchers should follow a cohort of students from the priority schools to monitor long-term progress towards graduation."

G.   "Changes in the classroom are vital to school improvement. Instructional practice improvement could be used as an indicator of progress. However, it is unclear what the methodology for measuring change in instructional practice would be."

H.   The measure of "recent and significant progress" could be based on qualitative data instead of quantitative data.

Recommendation:

There was no consensus on recommendations.

Additional Considerations & Questions:

- If the only measure for exiting RAD status is the results of state tests, then schools with 80% ELL will never exit because the acquisition of cognitive academic language takes time.

- "Getting support to the children is very important, but that support isn't always quantitatively measurable."

- The Persistently Lowest-Achieving (PLA) list consists of the bottom 5% of schools. The PLA list is not based on a cut score. This means that it is possible for a school to exit the PLA list because another school drops in performance rather than the school actually improving. Basically, the schools in the PLA list are aiming at a moving target because they cannot predict how much the performance of other schools will improve or decline. Therefore, there should be a definite and static goal for exit. That being said, the criteria for exiting RAD should still be based on a trajectory toward leaving the PLA list.

Question 4: How should the accountability framework address the transition to the Common Core State Standards?

AAW Recommendations and Concerns:

- **Prediction of the Impact of Common Core State Standards.**The transition to the Common Core State Standards presents a looming question: what is the prediction of the impact on student scores? How much will the scores drop? Will the transition have a greater effect on some student groups, schools, or regions than others? In New York, the transition to Common Core State Standards resulted in a substantial drop in test scores.

- **Design of the Accountability Framework.** The Accountability Framework should be norm-referenced to start with. The framework should be designed so that it can be evaluated and reworked throughout its existence.