

State Board of Education E2SSB 5329, ESSB 5491, and Accountability Framework Workgroups

On July 10, board members split into three workgroups, discussed assigned topics, and recorded their comments. Board members rotated between the workgroups so that they could cover the following topics: E2SSB 5329, ESSB 5491, and the Accountability Framework. This document reflects the comments and conversation of the board members during the workgroups.

E2SSB 5329

During the discussion of ESSB 5329 in workgroups, board members focused on how to support improvement of Required Action Districts (RAD) and how the Accountability Framework will address the transition to Common Core State Standards.

In order to encourage successful school improvement, goals must be set with broad buy-in from educators, administrators, and community members. Establishing an agreed-upon trajectory of growth toward proficiency is of paramount importance to school improvement and closing the opportunity gap. Goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated, and Reevaluated (S.M.A.R.T.E.R.). SMARTER goals should be individualized for schools by looking at how much growth is necessary and reasonable for the students to become proficient. Success will not only be dependent on money and school capacity, but also deep motivation, cultural and belief shifts in the schools and community. High yield strategies should be employed to reach the SMARTER goals that are set. A menu of school improvement strategies should be provided to each RAD. During the evaluation and reevaluation process, successful and unsuccessful strategies should be identified. The plan for a school should be frequently reviewed and updated if necessary. The implementation of a school's plan may be most successful when it is done through balanced leadership rather than top-down directives.

OSPI could develop a crosswalk or sampling system that compares test results before and after the introduction of Common Core. Special attention should be paid to the 11th grade SBAC.

The discussion of E2SSB 5329 led to several questions:

- After calculating how much growth is necessary for students to meet proficiency, what will be the decision-making process on what will be reasonable expectations for significant progress?
- How long should the school be held accountable for maintaining the specified level of growth?
- Is three years enough to show a turnaround in student proficiency levels at schools?
- What student data (formative assessment) is provided to a school to determine progress to a goal?
- What is the feedback loop process for RAD districts – internally and with OSPI?
- What needs to be accomplished with RAD? How will it be evaluated? What will be done if the RAD does not improve?
- How would the decision be made to shut down a failing school that has moved from RAD I to RAD II?
- How can schools be improved and their status quo of failing students changed? How can that change process be designed around the unique identity of the district, school, and community?

ESSB 5491

While discussing ESSB 4591 in workgroups, board members were mindful of the importance of each indicator, how goal-setting should occur, and how the indicators should relate to the Achievement Index.

The response to ESSB 5491 should not result in two evaluation systems. The Achievement Index should be used to provide a data dashboard for indicators of system health. Decision-makers should have access to analysis of Washington's data in comparison to other states and the nation. In order to better align the testing system, there should be a common placement test that is used in community colleges and higher education.

Moving forward with using indicators in decision-making, the board members considered the following data and information to be useful for goal-setting:

- Remediation rates of high school students in community colleges and institutions of higher education
- Both 4-year and extended graduation rates could be used
- Employment and wage data
- Data related to understanding and closing opportunity gaps

The discussion of ESSB 5491 led to several questions:

- Why is 4th grade reading being used instead of 3rd grade reading?
- Why are we using 8th grade math?
- How can goal-setting be used to close opportunity gaps?
- How does ESSB 5491 relate to the McCleary decision?
- How do Washington's systems indicators compare to other states or the nation?

Accountability Framework

During the discussion of the Accountability Framework in workgroups, board members considered what they hope to achieve with the framework and considered the guiding principles and statements of belief behind the framework.

The Achievement Index can be used for accountability purposes to identify what are effective tactics for improving schools. Members felt that it will be just as important to properly use the data from the Index as it will be to correctly collect the data to create the Index. Thus, it is vital that the Index be used to identify and support best practices that meet the needs of students. The Accountability Framework should be used to improve student outcomes, instructional practices, and reduce achievement gaps.

The Accountability Framework serves a role in uniting the system and setting a new tone. It should better align state and federal accountability requirements. It can be used for transparency, providing support, and involving parents. It should be used by districts, schools, and communities during decision-making. SBE, OSPI, and WSSDA should collaborate to provide technical support for districts. However, it

is essential that SBE remembers the value of involving community members in school improvement efforts.

Members discussed updating the guiding principles and statements of belief from the July 2012 Accountability System Resolution to:

- The key performance indicators in the revised Index align with the goals of preparing students for postsecondary education, gainful employment and citizenship.
- Student growth data is a fair and equitable means of evaluating school and district performance over time.
- Aggregate assessment results mask large achievement and growth gaps impacting our most vulnerable student populations. Disaggregation by subgroup illuminates growth gaps of our most vulnerable students
- The revised index incorporates both school and district level achievement data in recognition of the unique roles in external accountability and internal improvement.
- The Index is systematically reviewed and revised over time with input from stakeholders.