

Dear partner in education:

Greetings!

The close of August is soon followed by the beginning of another exciting school year, and teachers across the state are gearing up to ensure all students learn the skills and obtain the knowledge necessary for success.

August also marks the arrival of the 2009 WASL data, giving all of us a chance to reflect on last year's academic accomplishments and identify areas for improvement.

So how did we do?

Although the reading and writing scores of the [WASL](#) remain strong, students are still under-performing in math and science.

Where do we go from here?

We need to start by providing clear and comprehensive learning targets. Our recently revised K-12 [math](#) and [science](#) standards fit the bill. Washington teachers can now ensure that their curriculum and instruction is tailored to our 21st century math and science learning objectives.

Secondly, we need to help districts/schools select and find funding sources for new curriculum that meets the revised standards.

SBE and OSPI have completed reviews of selected K-8 and secondary [mathematics curricula menu options](#). There are several recommended curricula in both elementary and middle schools. However, the high school curricula menu didn't fare as well in meeting the state standards (only one program was selected by the Superintendent). Hopefully publishers will take heed, revising those textbooks in the near future to address our new standards.

SBE will make official comment and recommendations on OSPI's preliminary science curricula recommendations at a special meeting on August 25. The Board is committed to working with OSPI to support districts looking to adopt the OSPI recommended curriculum. Selection of all curriculum is, however, a local decision.

Finally, we need to attract, train, and retain top notch science and math teachers. Without these premier professionals at the

Learn more about our key initiatives

[A Meaningful High School Diploma](#): preparing students for life after high school no matter what path they choose.

[World-class math](#): providing students with the math foundation they need to succeed.

[Exemplary science](#): fostering science education to expand students' minds and broaden horizons.

[Accountability](#): providing assistance to schools and districts so that no student falls through the cracks.

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helm, widespread improvement in student achievement will not be possible.

As the [class of 2013](#) is the first group required to pass the math and science portion of the [high school proficiency exam](#), the Board and other educational stakeholders will be sure to keep both our [math](#) and [science](#) student achievement goals at the forefront, not resting until all students graduate with the mathematic and scientific knowledge and skills necessary for post secondary education, careers, and citizenship.

Cheers!

Eddie Harding

SBE Accountability - Improving AYP

Although the [2008 WASL results](#) were very similar to our scores over the last three years, over 400 additional schools did not make [AYP](#).

Many of these schools scored well in key content areas, but by not meeting [AYP](#) in even one of the thirty seven "cells," they are classified as "failing."

In this system, both high and low performing schools are thrown into the same mix. This can result in significant confusion for parents and understandable frustration for educators.

Clearly No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has shown the spotlight on the achievement gaps in our schools, but it does not reflect the improvement some schools have made.

We believe there is a better way.

SBE's provisional [accountability index](#) provides a much more rigorous, fair, clear, and comprehensive system by which to assess schools.

SBE continues to seek input on its [provisional accountability index](#), with the ultimate goal of federal approval of the index as a

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replacement for the current [NCLB assessment system](#).

Unlike the current federal system, [SBE's provisional accountability index](#) will help education stakeholders easily identify schools requiring intensive assistance vs. those simply needing to shore up areas of weakness in student achievement.

The purpose of the [Board's Accountability Framework](#) is to ensure all students receive an excellent and equitable education. One of our primary goals in this regard is to help schools target areas for improvement, with the ultimate goal of closing the achievement gap that is prevalent in many of our schools today.

The Board will consider proposing legislation this next session to address required action for schools and districts that continue not to improve after a set time. This will be discussed at our [September Board meeting](#).

SBE/OSPI Recognition Program

This fall, SBE and OSPI will work together to acknowledge the outstanding achievement of Washington's top schools. SBE and OSPI will use the [provisional accountability index](#) to determine the award recipients.

The "Outstanding Overall Achievement Award," presented by OSPI, will be given to the top 5 percent of all schools in the state (based on the average index number). SBE will recognize schools for six specific categories of achievement, including:

1. Language Arts
2. Math
3. Science
4. Extended Graduation Rate
5. Closing the Achievement Gap

SBE will also recognize the top 5 percent of "gifted and talented" schools in the state.

More information about the new recognition system will be available in September on both the [OSPI](#) and [SBE](#) websites.

CORE 24 Task Force and the Meaningful High School Diploma

The Board's [CORE 24 Implementation Task Force](#), comprised of 20 education practitioners, continues its work on pioneering strategies that schools/districts can use in implementing the opportunity for a [24 credit graduation requirement](#).

On [August 14](#), the Board met to make recommendations about ways to phase in [CORE 24](#), addressing issues such as teacher supply, scheduling, infrastructure, and more. This information will assist the Board as it considers possible recommendations for submission to the Quality Education Council.

The Task Force will present an update on their work during the Board's [September 17-18 meeting](#).

SBE Vacancy and Elections

It's a busy time at SBE.

The Board is filling [one vacancy](#) and closing applications for [two elected positions](#) at the end of August.

Two positions are available as a result of expiring terms (one on the westside of the state and another on the eastside). A third position is open due to an immediate vacancy. The current four elected members of the Board hope to fill the vacancy by the [September 2009 Board meeting](#).

The filing dates for the [two elected positions](#) will be from July 23, 2009 - August 30, 2009. School board members will have from October 30, 2009 - November 25, 2009 to place their votes. OSPI will conduct the elections.

More information is available on the [OSPI Web site](#).

Get to Know Your Board Members: Jeff Vincent (Appointed)

Jeff Vincent brings a wealth of experience to the Board, including more than 20 years of business leadership in such roles as CEO, CFO, corporate development officer, and strategy consultant.

Jeff particularly enjoys his current challenge of leading [Laird Norton](#), an investment firm that specializes in helping family businesses succeed.

In addition to his work on the SBE's executive committee, Jeff has assumed a leadership position in guiding the work of the [science advisory panel](#).

Jeff enjoys reading and watching sports, but nothing tops the time spent with two "freshmen," (one daughter in college and one son in high school).

More information [about Jeff](#) and the other board members is available on the [SBE website](#).

Upcoming Board Meeting

September 17-18, 2009
Puget Sound Educational Service District
Renton, WA

For meeting agendas, click [here](#).

E-mail your thoughts and questions to SBE at sbe@k12.wa.us.