

The Washington State Board of Education

Accountability | Graduation Requirements | Math | Science

State Board of Education Spotlight

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Dear partner in education:

Greetings and Happy Spring!

This April I had the pleasure of seeing the cherry blossoms in full bloom in Washington DC. It was very beautiful, and I was lucky my trip coincided with this all-too-short flower of spring.

I was also fortunate to join Bob Harmon from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction on a visit to the U.S. Department of Education to share the [State Board of Education's Accountability Index](#). This Index, the culmination of extensive work on behalf of the Board over the last two years, is an improvement over the current, federal Adequate Yearly Progress assessment. We hope the Department of Education will grant our state the authority to use the Board's Index in exchange for the current AYP model or at least consider some of our ideas for the reauthorization of the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#). As the Board's Index extends the AYP model, providing a much clearer and comprehensive analysis of a school and district's performance, we are confident the Index would prove to be a valuable tool as we continue to improve the K-12 system in this state.

Strengthening the AYP matrix is just one of the many K-12 improvements happening in D.C. and much closer to home. The federal [Race to the Top Grant](#) and the pending reauthorization of the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#) will have far-reaching effects for schools across this country. And in our state, the passage of [ESHB 6696](#) heralds multiple education measures that will have a lasting, positive impact on public education.

It is exciting to see the budding reforms that will undoubtedly improve our K-12 system.

Those improvements can only benefit the already tremendous work our local schools are doing on behalf of students. Over [174 of those great schools](#) were recently identified as [2009 Washington Achievement Award](#) Recipients, and they will be honored by both the

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This e-newsletter is just one of the many ways to make sure you have the latest education news.

Our [website](#) is updated daily, and we also make good use of [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [RSS feeds](#), and our [Youtube channel](#) to ensure you stay abreast of the latest news in P-12 education.

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The Washington State
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State Board of Education and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in a formal ceremony on May 5, 2010.

Spring marks a symbolic beginning, and I feel like we are on the eve of profound and lasting change. It's a great time to be a public school advocate.

Cheers!

Edie Harding

Race to the Top Update

Delaware and Tennessee are the Round 1 winners of the [Race to the Top competitive grant](#). The grant, facilitated by the [U.S. Department of Education](#), is designed to support states in their efforts to institute comprehensive education reform.

Forty-one states applied for Round 1 of the grant process. With only two states selected thus far, the competition for Round 2 should be especially fierce. In order to best compete for the grant, many states are taking action now to put the prerequisite reforms in place. Washington is following suit, as evidenced in the omnibus [education reform legislation](#) introduced this session. Washington will apply for Round 2 of the grant (application due June 1), with the winning states announced September 30.

The selection of Tennessee and Delaware demonstrates winning states must have an education reform plan driven by state laws and supported by a wide scope of education stakeholders.

So what about Washington state?

The [Race to the Top Grant](#) outlines several prerequisites for a successful application, including the ability of a state or local education authority to institute charter schools, the use of data to guide teacher evaluations, the power of states to intervene in persistently low-achieving schools, and more.

Our [education reform legislation](#) was developed and enacted with significant and widespread support from the community, a trait we share with both Tennessee and Delaware. We are also fully engaged in the development of a comprehensive education reform plan designed to guide our education improvement efforts in the years to come.

Our [educational reform legislation](#) and our soon-to-be-released education reform plan are direct benefits of the [Race to the Top competitive grant](#). The draft education reform plan will be available the week of May 3; see the Washington Race to the Top [website](#) for more information. We want your comments.

Win or lose, we will have a better K-12 system as a result of this work.

The Changing Job Market - Update

Question: What country leads the world in young college graduates (ages 25-34)?

If you guessed the United States, you're close (we are ranked sixth - with Washington state ranked 34 out of 50 for postsecondary attainment/participation). Japan? They're second. Leading the pack is Canada, with over 55 percent of its 25-34 demographic holding postsecondary degrees ("[A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education](#)," Lumina Foundation for Education, February 2009).

Not content with sixth place, President Obama announced his goal to lead the world in postsecondary degree attainment. The positive social and economic consequences of a more educated electorate are numerous - the education of our country increases literacy, health, active citizenry, and more.

Independent economic security increasingly relies on

some sort of postsecondary training or education. More firms today are seeking employees capable of working high-skill (college degree and beyond) and middle-skill jobs (those requiring a college diploma and/or some sort of postsecondary training or degree). With over 75 percent of the current job market requiring at least middle-skill workers, and with the ever flattening global economy, personal financial independence is going to increasingly rely on postsecondary training or attainment (Billitteri, Thomas J., "[The Value of a College Education](#)," November 2009).

As the State Board examines the issue of a meaningful high school diploma, we are very much focused on the need to give all our graduates the opportunity to pursue postsecondary education or training.

If we wish to make the Obama Administration's goal a reality, then the transition between high school and post secondary training/education must be seamless. We must equip our students with the breadth and depth of classes they need to pursue any option.

If we do this right, then postsecondary attendance and attainment will rise, the current high rates of remediation required for college freshmen will fall, and America may claim the prize as the foremost leader of postsecondary education in the world.

Celebrating the Arts - Student Video Contest Deadline Approaching

The [2010 State Board of Education Video Contest](#), designed for student videographers in middle school and high school, will wrap up May 3.

The judges for the contest, led by our student Board representatives Austianna Quick and Anna Laura Kastama, will scour through the entries using the published [rubric](#), with winners to be announced Friday, May 7, via the State Board of Education's [website](#), [Facebook Fan Page](#), [Youtube Channel](#), [Twitter](#), and [RSS feed](#).

The [student video contest](#) is in its inaugural year. This year's topic, "The Importance of the Arts in School," has inspired many young artists and film makers to use their creativity and passion to advocate for arts education.

"This contest is exciting because it's empowering young people to stand up and speak out for what they need in a complete education," said Una McAlinden, Executive Director of ArtsEd Washington.

Jessica Upton, Director of Programs for ArtsEd in Washington, believes the contest "is a great opportunity for [students] to share their story about the importance of arts in school. Students who love the arts [need] to get out there and start filming."

AnneRene Joseph, Program Supervisor, the Arts, in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, ardently supports the Board's contest. "The research is clear about how arts education [enhances] life and learning. This contest is an exceptional opportunity to celebrate arts education in Washington state."

More information is available on the State Board of Education [website](#).

A New Leadership Era

Jeff Vincent (Bainbridge Island) and Steve Dal Porto (Quincy) are the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Washington State Board of Education. The pair, elected independently during the Board's March Board meeting at Highline Community College, will serve for at least two years in their respective roles.

The elections end the two terms of former Chair Mary Jean Ryan (Seattle) and former Vice Chair Warren Smith (Spanaway). Mary Jean Ryan will continue to serve as past chair for the Board.

Jeff Vincent, the Chief Executive Officer and President of the Laird Norton Company LLC., has more than 30 years of business experience in such roles as CEO, CFO, and corporate development officer.

"It's an honor to work with the State Board on issues that will directly and positively affect students in

Washington for the next decade," said Jeff Vincent.

Steve Dal Porto has been directly involved in the education of Washington public school students for 33 years as an elementary, junior high, and high school teacher; an elementary and junior high school principal; an assistant superintendent with duties in curriculum development, professional development, and business management; and as superintendent of schools. Steve Dal Porto was elected to the State Board of Education by Eastern Washington school board members after he retired as a school superintendent in July 2005. He was reelected to the Board in 2007.

"We have important work ahead of us," said Steve Dal Porto. "Our tasks of further developing statewide school accountability and implementing improved graduation requirements will require tremendous efforts on the part of all Board members. I am lucky to be part of this process."

Mr. Vincent and Dr. Dal Porto will guide the Board as they continue to work on a comprehensive statewide accountability system and the implementation of 21st century graduation requirements.

They will be joined on the Board's Executive Committee by Dr. Sheila Fox (Bellingham) and Jack Schuster (Ocean Shores).

Please visit the State Board of Education [website](#) for more information.

On Her Way. . . Departing Senior Student Member Austianna Quick

The May Board meeting marks the final step in Oroville High School senior Austianna (Austi) Quick's two-year journey with the Washington State Board of Education.

Austi began her work with the Board in May of 2008 as the eastern Washington student representative. Austi and fellow student Board member Anna Laura Kastama will welcome a new student representative during the May 13-14 Board meeting.

Austi has been an important member of the Board as it continues to work on system-wide accountability, meaningful high school graduation requirements, and world-class math and science.

"Our student representatives bring unique perspectives to the Board," said State Board of Education Director Edie Harding. "Austi has served students well, advocating for K-12 policy that will improve education for all of Washington's students."

"I'm sad to see it end," said Austi. "But I'm also thankful for the time I spent with everyone on the Board. This experience has prepared me for college and taught me a lot about being responsible and active in my education. I've also learned how to work with different people with a similar goal, which is a good lesson for my future."

In addition to her work with the Board, Austi has been active with the Washington Association of School Councils, the Future Business Leaders of America, and her high school's music program. Couple these activities with four sports and her stellar grades and you have one busy high school senior.

These high school experiences will undoubtedly help Austi as she transitions to college. She will be attending Brigham Young University (Provo) in the fall.

Upcoming Board Meeting

[NEWESD 101](#)

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

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

