

# The Washington State Board of Education

Governance | Achievement | High School and College Preparation | Math & Science | Effective Workforce

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

March 31, 2011  
Department of Licensing  
Olympia, Washington

- Members Attending in Person:** Dr. Kris Mayer, Vice-chair Steve Dal Porto, Dr. Bernal Baca, Ms. Connie Fletcher, Mr. Randy Dorn (5)
- Members Attending by Phone:** Ms. Amy Bragdon, Dr. Sheila Fox, Ms. Phyllis Frank, Mr. Bob Hughes, Ms. Mary Jean Ryan, Mr. Warren Smith, Chair Jeff Vincent (7)
- Members Absent:** Mr. Eric Liu (excused), Mr. Jack Schuster (excused), Ms. Anna Laura Kastama (excused), Mr. Jared Costanzo (excused) (5)
- Staff Attending:** Ms. Edie Harding, Dr. Kathe Taylor, Mr. Aaron Wyatt, Ms. Loy McColm, Ms. Sarah Rich (5)
- Staff Absent:** Ms. Ashley Harris (excused) (1)

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Dr. Kris Mayer.

Dr. Mayer welcomed the members and visitors and provided information about the process for decisions being made on the Required Action plans at today's special meeting.

During the 2010 Legislative Session, a new Required Action process was adopted to address the needs for dramatic turnaround in the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools. The process mandates that certain districts with persistently lowest-achieving schools participate in required action when designated to do so by the SBE. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will use federal school improvement grants to support the schools. Approximately \$7 million in federal funds is available for this fiscal year for both the MERIT schools and Required Action Districts.

At the January 2011 Board meeting, the Board designated the following districts for Required Action:

1. Lakeridge Elementary School, Renton School District
2. Morton Junior-Senior High School, Morton School District
3. Onalaska Middle School, Onalaska School District
4. Soap Lake Middle and High School, Soap Lake School District

The Board was not required to act on the Required Action Districts until May 15 of each year; however, OSPI requested that the Board make its decisions by March 31, 2011 so that it could begin an implementation of each school's plan in early spring 2011. The Board agreed to do so, although it was concerned about the tight timeframe requested for Required Action District plans as well as for Board review.

The requirements of Required Action Districts were presented to the Board. The Required Action plan must include the following federal intervention models:

1. Turnaround
2. Restart
3. Closure
4. Transformation

The SBE Review Team included Board Members (Dr. Mayer and Ms. Fletcher), along with staff who conducted a thorough review of the original plans, revised plans, academic performance audits, and other

supplemental materials in order to make a recommendation to the full Board to approve or not approve each Required Action plan. During their review, the Team ensured that the plans provided sufficient remedies to the issues identified in the audit as well as that rapid turnaround will occur.

A summary of each district plan by the Review Team was submitted to the Board and the Required Action Districts for their consideration.

### **OSPI Role in Required Action District Process**

Tonya Middling, OSPI

Ms. Middling highlighted that all four schools being considered today are new to the persistently lowest achieving (PLA) list this year so the learning curve for staff was steep. The superintendents and key district leaders' demonstrated commitment and passion to the schools served in their respective communities by sharing their hopes and dreams for these schools. All of the schools being considered today present unique challenges and while the staff and families of the communities grappled with their current realities, they have successfully created a broad based community of support that is rallying behind them, cheering them on, and providing whatever support is necessary to do their part. After the December 1, 2010 identification of PLA's was received, Ms. Middling worked with the superintendents to help them understand the federal requirements of the grants and how they came to be required as a result of 6696 to implement a federal intervention model. Ms. Middling explained the process used by the BERC Group for the academic performance audits, which began in January 2011. Ms. Middling commended the four districts for their work on the plans submitted.

### **Renton School District**

Mary Alice Heuschel, Superintendent

Susan Mather, Chief Academic Officer, Elementary Education

Rob MacGregor, Assistant Superintendent, Learning and Teaching

Phil Barber, District Improvement Facilitator

The Review Team concluded that the plan provides for sufficient remedy in all aspects of the academic performance audit. Comments from the Team included in the summary are as follows:

- The District and building should ensure that English Language Learner and Special Education teachers are fully integrated into the professional learning communities and that the District reviews the special education referral process. The building is urged to address high expectations for all students as well as advanced learning opportunities for accelerated students. The building may need to consider ways to address gang activity and student safety.

The Team concluded that there is excellent support from the District and the focus on additional learning time for all students is clearly planned out. There is a concrete plan for improving staff capacity and recruiting additional high quality staff. The professional development and support for staff in using student data is impressive. The sustainability plan is well thought out.

Dr. Heuschel and her staff gave an overview of their plan moving forward to address the Review Team comments. Clarifying questions were asked by the Board and discussion followed.

### **Onalaska School District**

Dana Anderson, Assistant Superintendent, ESD 113

C.J. Gray, Principal

Terri Dahlstedt, Teacher

The Review Team concluded that the plan does not provide sufficient remedy for the five areas of concern in the academic performance audit, excerpted from the BERC Group report. Comments from the Team, included in the summary, are as follows:

- The academic achievement audit placed a very strong emphasis on developing the mission and goals, but there is not a clear plan to work with the Board, staff, parents, and community to develop a mission, define clear goals, and develop benchmarks for performance. The link from the mission and goals to student learning should be explicit.
- The plan also implies that many structures will not be in place until the end of three years. This is too late for the work planned to be complete, especially when it comes to mission, goals, and strategies.

The timeframe does not reflect a sense of urgency. There is an expectation of improvement after three years. The plan needs more specificity about the action planning process.

- There doesn't appear to be a specific plan for recruiting and hiring new teachers. Overall, this part of the plan is not specific enough. Readers were concerned that there may not be sufficient staff capacity once the contractors leave in three years. It was not clear when the new evaluation system will be implemented and it is an important component of the improvement effort.
- There is no clear plan for staff to work together to identify high expectations for ALL students and develop common language around those expectations. There was no mention of opportunities for students to take advanced classes. The responsibility for setting high expectations for students seems to lie exclusively with the K-8 principal. Specifically how will this individual build high expectations with staff, especially considering the expanded role to serving as principal of both the elementary and middle schools?
- The timeline is not aggressive enough for rapid improvement. Many things are scheduled to be completed by the end of the three year grant. There was no description of a gap analysis for reading and math. We highly encourage the district to adopt curricula and instructional materials that are aligned to the standards.
- The academic audit spoke of bullying of students by teachers, not just student to student, and a pattern of inappropriate use of behavior rewards. The plan should address not just the attitudes and behavior of students, but the entire school community in the building as well. There did not appear to be a clear plan for holding teachers accountable for their actions or consistent implementation of the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS). Monitoring the implementation of the PBIS plan should be a priority.

The presenters addressed the comments of the Team and the Board asked clarifying questions.

### **Soap Lake School District**

Dan McDonald, Superintendent

Kevin Kemp, Principal

The Review Team concluded that the plan does not provide sufficient remedy for five areas of concern in the academic performance audit. Comments from the Team included:

- It was not clear to the Review Team specifically what professional development would be provided for teachers and district leaders, or when. The plan was unclear about additional instructional time for students, specifically how the after school tutoring would work and what the structure and content of the daily Advisory/Intervention time would be. The Plan states that the district will 'begin the process of looking at extending the school learning time" which left the Review Team with the impression that there was not yet a concrete plan. The academic audit spoke of the need for the principal to build his instructional leadership skills and be more visible in the classroom, but there was not a concrete clear plan for this support to be provided.
- The plan does not reflect a sense of urgency about conducting an action planning process to develop a mission, goals, and specific strategies. The plan states the intention to do this but not enough details or a rigorous timeline. The plan states, "the District plans on adopting three distinct, but key system elements: a quality teaching-learning framework, an intervention-advisory format, and an extended learning structure for students." More detail about these elements would strengthen the plan.
- There is not a clear plan to add rigor to existing coursework or to add advanced coursework. There is not a plan to ensure that staff develop high expectations for students or common language around expectations.
- There did not appear to be a long-term vision to adopt aligned materials. The curriculum and lesson alignment relies heavily on Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA). The Review Team is concerned that there is not a strong plan for accountability for adoption and alignment of new materials beyond the TOSA involvement. It is not clear how teacher buy in and responsibility will be built. Minimal funds were requested for materials, which led to concerns that even if a vision is developed that the funds may not be there to adopt new materials.
- No specific leadership structure is mentioned. There are committees but most of the leadership appears to come from the Superintendent and Principal, rather than a distributed leadership model to build buy-in and commitment from staff.

The presenters addressed the comments of the Team and the Board asked clarifying questions.

### **Morton School District**

Dana Anderson, Assistant Superintendent, ESD 113

Tom Manke, Superintendent

Angela Bacon, Principal

Terry Fagen, Teacher and Association President

The Review Team concluded that the plan does not provide sufficient remedy for two areas of concern in the academic performance audit. Comments from the Team included:

- It is not clear that the plan as outlined is for a distributed leadership model sufficiently involving current staff. It relies on hired outside experts. It did not seem that this plan would provide sufficient capacity building with current staff to ensure sustainability of improvements. The plan is not clear how the proposed leadership structure will involve current staff, or what the plan is for deciding what forms of leadership are needed and clear delineation of responsibilities.
- The issue of setting high academic expectations was not clearly addressed in the plan. There was no discussion of developing common language among staff, no plan to identify other districts to investigate how high expectations are supported, and no plan to use data from high school outcomes to make decisions about course offerings for ALL students. The plan should address the need to change the culture and perception of the school to one that is rigorous and challenging.

The presenters addressed the comments of the Team and the Board asked clarifying questions.

### **Board Discussion**

Dr. Mayer reviewed the next steps for those districts not approved at this meeting. She answered clarifying questions from Board Members.

Ms. Middling spoke in support of the four districts and reported that the MOUs have been reviewed and approved. All four schools are on track and understand the intervention models. All four schools are ready to initiate their plans with the approval of the SBE. She explained that each year all four schools will be monitored to ensure they are on track with the requirements. OSPI looked at compliance as well as the plan from each district. Districts will have an opportunity to get more in-depth in to their plan moving forward.

Bill Mason, OSPI, gave an overview of the funding for the Required Action Districts and answered clarifying questions for the Board.

### **Basic Education Compliance Rules Approval of Draft Language**

Ms. Edie Harding, Executive Director

During the 2009 Legislative Session, the Legislature and Governor amended the definition of Basic Education and Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB 2261). The legislation made the definition of a school day more specific and replaced the student-to-teacher ratio requirements with the prototypical school model of funding. Although ESHB 2261 became law in 2009, these changes do not go into effect until September 1, 2011.

Due to statute changes, the following sections of SBE's rules will be repealed:

- WAC 180-16-210: K-3 students to classroom teacher ratio requirement will no longer be needed since the underlying statute will be repealed as of September 1, 2011. The proposed rule revision repeals this entire section of rule.
- WAC 180-16-215: Minimum one hundred eighty school day year contains a subsection that quotes the current definition of a school day and will be incorrect as of September 1 as follows:
  - ✓ School day means each day of the school year on which pupils enrolled in the common schools of a school district are engaged in academic and career and technical instruction planned by and under the direction of the school. The proposed rule revision repeals this entire section of rule.
- WAC 180-16-195: Annual reporting and review process would change the signature requirements and submission date and require school district to submit compliance forms electronically by the local district superintendent and board members rather than mailing or faxing in paper forms.

## **Business Items**

Approval of Required Action Plans, pursuant to RCW 28A.657.060, for the following school districts:

### Renton School District

**Motion** was made to approve Renton School District's Required Action Plan

**Motion** seconded

### **Board Discussion**

**Motion** carried with one abstention (Bunker)

### Soap Lake School District

**Motion** was made to not approve the Soap Lake School District's Required Action Plan

**Amended Motion** was made to approve Soap Lake School District's Required Action plan, provided that the District's response, consistent with the presentation and written comments provided to the Board, is incorporated into a revised plan and resubmitted to the SBE by no later than April 11, 2011. If the District does not submit a revised plan by April 11, 2011, the District's plan shall be deemed denied and the District will need to submit a revised plan to the SBE by May 10, 2011, unless it elects to file an appeal to the Review Panel.

**Motion** seconded

### **Board Discussion**

**Motion** carried with four nays

### Morton School District

**Motion** was made to not approve Morton School District's Required Action Plan

**Amended Motion** was made to approve Morton School District's Required Action plan, provided that the District's response, consistent with the presentation and written comments provided to the Board, is incorporated into a revised plan and resubmitted to the SBE by no later than April 11, 2011. If the District does not submit a revised plan by April 11, 2011, the District's plan shall be deemed denied and the District will need to submit a revised plan to the SBE by May 10, 2011, unless it elects to file an appeal to the Review Panel.

**Motion** seconded

### **Board Discussion**

**Motion** carried with four nays

### Onalaska School District

**Motion** was made to not approve Onalaska School District's Required Action Plan

**Motion** seconded

### **Board Discussion**

**Motion** carried with four nays

Approval of Proposed Rulemaking for Filing with the State Code Reviser:

1. Repeal of WAC 180-16-210
2. Repeal of WAC 180-16-215
3. Amendments to WAC 180-16-195

**Motion** was made to approve for filing with the Code Reviser, a CR102 repealing WACs 180-16-210 and 180-16-215.

**Motion** seconded

**Motion** carried

**Motion** was made to approve for filing with the Code Reviser, a CR102 with the proposed amendments to WAC 180-16-195

**Motion** seconded

**Motion** carried

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. by Dr. Mayer