



September 24-25, 2008 Meeting Highlights

On September 24-25, the State Board of Education met in Pasco at Educational Service District 123 to:

- Review proposed accountability concepts for: an accountability index, as well as state and local partnerships for struggling schools.
- Receive recommendations from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) on a math curricular menu for elementary and middle school.
- Review the proposed work for the CORE 24 implementation task force.
- Review efforts to OSPI social studies grade level expectations for Native American History and Tribal Sovereignty curriculum.
- Adopt the Board's final strategic plan and budget proposals for the 2009 legislative session.
- Approve a joint request with the Professional Educator Standards Board to improve OSPI's workforce educator system.

The Board listened to a presentation on the proposed new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) high school for the Tri-Cities area. A joint public, private partnership is underway to develop this school, which will accept 9th graders next year, if the location can be found. Panelists presenting included: Mike Kluse, Director at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; Saundra Hill, Pasco Superintendent; and Vicki Carwein, Chancellor, WSU, Tri-Cities.

State Board of Education Actions

The Board approved the following:

- The Board's Strategic Plan, Work Plan, 2008-2009 Supplemental and 2009-2011 Biennial Budget Requests.
- A joint proposal with the Professional Educator Standards Board to request that OSPI implement the Educator Workforce Data System.
- Approval of Private Schools in Washington for the 2008-2009 School Year.
- Dates for the 2009 and 2010 Board Meetings.
- A contract for work on accountability index and data analysis.

Update on System Performance Accountability

The Board reviewed the work (studies, public outreach, and feedback from advisors) it has conducted over the last year and a half to prepare a policy framework for its proposals. This background report, as well as reports from consultants, Pete Bylsma and Mass Insight, is on the Board's Web site: www.sbe.wa.gov. The Board will decide what action to take on the draft proposals below, at its November Board meeting. A work session will be held on October 21.

Board members and staff are meeting with a variety of stakeholders to discuss these proposals prior to the November Board meeting.

Accountability Index Proposal

Consultant, Pete Bylsma, presented a draft accountability index that would be used to identify exemplary schools as well as those in need of a targeted investment. Schools and districts could use the system to examine continuous improvement. He has worked with an advisory group of local school district staff on this proposal.

Why is the state proposing a new system? Approximately one in 14 students attends a struggling school. The legislature required the Board to identify objective systematic criteria for successful schools and districts, as well as for those in need of assistance.

The index contains five outcomes: (four assessments and the extended graduation rate). It also contains four indicators: achievement (percent of students meeting standard and the extended graduation rate), achievement v. peers, improvement over last year, and achievement by low-income students.

The proposed state accountability index is an improvement over the federal system for many reasons including: 1) it recognizes improvement for all students; 2) there is no uniform achievement bar that is continually raised; 3) it includes science and writing assessments as well as reading and math; 4) extended graduation rates; 5) the index is based on an average of all the grades in one school, not individual grades; and 6) it includes all students, not just those who are continuously enrolled. There would be many ways to recognize schools that do well.

Those schools identified as struggling would be reviewed in more depth to examine contextual factors such as student mobility, sub group assessment trends, student/teacher ratio, and funding from local levies. A list of priority schools within districts would then be identified from this group. A district with one or more priority schools would be eligible for the Innovation Zone described below.

State and Local Partnerships Proposals

Mass Insight presented its draft proposals for state and local partnerships. These include an Innovation Zone and Academic Receivership. Under the Innovation Zone a local school board whose district contains Priority Schools would be invited to apply to participate. If the Board has a strong proposal that meets the Board's readiness criteria, the local school board will draw up a performance contract with the Board. In that contract, the local board will identify issues they want to address, in exchange for a resource investment by the state. The Innovation Zone concept will enable a small number of districts to undertake transformative change. This could include, for example: extending the school day or year, revising the collective bargaining agreement with approval from management and the union, and combining state funds from different sources to address student achievement issues in a more holistic way.

Districts with Priority Schools that elect into the Innovation Zone or pursue their own actions and yet do not make progress after a specified period of time, would go into "Academic Receivership." These districts would be referred to a peer review group who would develop a tailored recommendation, to the Board, to address a change in management or governance in the school district.

CORE 24

The Board's Meaningful High School Diploma committee will lead the policy development of the Board's approaches to the culminating project, High School and Beyond Plan, and essential skills. At the same time, the Board is forming a CORE 24 Implementation Task Force comprised of practitioners. The Task Force will help the Board more fully understand implementation considerations so they can determine what policy direction is needed to implement the CORE 24 Graduation Requirements Policy Framework, adopted in July 2008.

The Board recommended revisions to the draft charter for the CORE 24 Implementation Task Force, and directed staff to begin designing a formal recruitment and application process. Formal action on the revised charter will be taken in November 2008. The Board will move forward with a funding request to the Legislature and the Joint Basic Education Finance Task Force, to support the implementation of CORE 24.

TRIBAL Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

The Board discussed possible responses to the Memorandum of Agreement with the Tribal Leader Congress on Education. The Board asked Tribal Board Lead Bernal Baca, with the assistance of Steve Dal Porto and Linda Lamb, to bring back to the Board, in November, concrete suggestions for actions the Board might take.

Math Curricular Menu Review

OSPI recommended to the Board two programs in both elementary and middle school that, based on its review, best met the alignment with the new K-8 math standards. The Board's consultant, Strategic Teaching, is reviewing those programs, as well as two others that were ranked highest by OSPI. The Board's Math Panel will work with Strategic Teaching on providing feedback to the OSPI recommendations. The Board will receive this feedback report at its November meeting.

The next State Board of Education meeting will be at Highline Community College November 5-6 2008.

For additional information and Board meeting materials go to: www.sbe.wa.gov or call the Board office at: 360-725-6025.