

# The Washington State Board of Education

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

## State Board of Education Spotlight

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Greetings!

Over the last four years, the Washington State Board of Education has worked with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and other stakeholders to update and revise our academic learning standards in mathematics and science. Our efforts also included an independent review of K-12 mathematics curricula's alignment to the revised standards.

As a result, we know that Washington has some of the most rigorous mathematics academic standards in the nation. However, our English/Language Arts standards are in need of improvement to ensure our standards stay relevant to the requirements for college and work.

The pattern of standards and curricula review is perpetual and costly. Our state now has the opportunity to circumvent some of these costs through the formal adoption of the Common Core Standards, a joint effort by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Forty-one states have already adopted these standards. We cannot afford to stay on the sidelines.

Adoption of the Common Core Standards (currently available in mathematics and language arts) will ensure our state continues to provide rigorous and comprehensive learning targets for our students. The Common Core Standards do not represent a huge leap forward in terms of expectations (Washington already has high standards), but the incentives for joining the other states that have already adopted the standards are significant.

We will not have to engage in costly standards and curricula review. The resources currently allocated for state assessment development and maintenance will be drastically reduced. As our students' families move across state lines, they can be assured that their children will enter into new schools with similar learning expectations, reducing a common source of frustration for parents and students alike. School districts will also benefit financially

## Stay in the Know!



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  
Board of Education  
[Website](#)

from the greater competition that will inevitably come as publishing companies compete to provide outstanding materials to a much broader market.

The State Board of Education joins the Superintendent of Public Instruction in supporting the adoption of the Common Core Standards.

To learn more about the Common Core Standards, please visit the Common Core State Standards Initiative [website](#).

Cheers!

Edie Harding

## Graduation Requirements Update

At the [November 2010 Board Meeting](#), SBE approved the Career and College-Ready High School Graduation Requirements Framework.

While the new framework includes 24 credits, SBE is not requesting an increase of credits required for graduation or other changes that would have state fiscal impact during the 2011 Legislative Session.

SBE has approved several no-state-cost policy changes (based on the [OSPI fiscal analysis](#)) that will be put in rule for the class of 2016.

- Remove the 150-hour definition of a credit (recognizing that districts currently vary in their definitions of a credit and providing more flexibility to districts interested in developing competency-based credit).
- Allow Career and Technical Education (CTE) Equivalent Courses to satisfy two graduation requirements with one course. This "2 for 1" policy (one course = one credit = two requirements) would free up space in students' schedules to take more electives.
- Require that students' successful completion of Washington State History be noted on the transcript, but remove the credit requirement, allowing students to complete the course in middle

school. Districts can still offer the course for high school level credit if they choose.

- Increase English from 3 to 4 credits.
- Increase social studies from 2.5 to 3 credits.
- Add .5 credit of civics within the 3 credits of social studies (per [RCW 28A.230.093](#)).
- Decrease electives from 5.5 to 4 credits.

More information about graduation requirements can be found on our [website](#).

## The Washington Achievement Index

The Washington State Board of Education [website](#) now hosts the 2010 Achievement Index School Lookup Tool.

This Excel database provides users with a clear and comprehensive measure of our schools. The Achievement Index is not intended to rank schools, but rather to provide insight into specific areas of strength and areas that need improvement.

This is the second year that OSPI and SBE have partnered to produce the Achievement Index. For the first time this year, schools can view the degree to which they are closing racial and ethnic student achievement gaps. We have also added a statewide map displaying 2010 data by district.

The website also contains:

1. A video tutorial of how to understand the Achievement Index.
2. An overview that explains how the Achievement Index is used to identify the winners of the Washington Achievement Award.
3. Methodology for the Washington Achievement Award categories.
4. Business rules for the Achievement Index.
5. Frequently Asked Questions and answers on the Achievement Index.

The Washington State Board of Education and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction are proud to make these resources available to you.

## The Washington Achievement Awards

On February 15, 2011, [SBE](#) joined the [Office of](#)

[Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) to announce the winners of the Washington Achievement Awards.

A total of [186 schools](#) will receive the 2010 Washington Achievement Award.

The Washington Achievement Award is a recognition program based on the [Washington Achievement Index](#). Schools are acknowledged for achievement in the following award categories:

- Overall Excellence
- Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Extended Graduation Rate
- Improvement
- Closing Achievement Gaps

"Spotlighting best practices is not only a celebration of our most successful schools," said Jeff Vincent, Washington State Board of Education Chair, "but it also provides an opportunity for all of us to learn what those schools are doing right and how we might incorporate those same successful strategies in other schools across the state."

Click [here](#) to find out more about the Washington Achievement Awards.

## Student Video Contest

February marks the beginning of the second annual State Board of Education Student Video Contest. This year's contest will ask students to create a short documentary or creative film that celebrates learning in math, science, engineering, technology, and/or Career and Technical Education coursework.

Students will work in teams of three to produce films 5-10 minutes long. The students' DVD creations will eventually make their way on the [SBE YouTube channel](#). You can find last year's entries on this [channel](#) and our [website](#) as well.

The [video contest](#) will end on Monday, May 2, so there is plenty of time to encourage the students in your life to participate!

## Upcoming Board Meeting

[New Market Skills Center](#)

7299 New Market Street SW  
Tumwater, WA 98501  
360.570.4500

Meeting materials are available on our website prior to the meeting. Email your thoughts and questions to SBE at [sbe@k12.wa.us](mailto:sbe@k12.wa.us).