

# 2013

## **Summative Stakeholder Feedback Report on Phase 1 of the Achievement and Accountability Workgroup: Revising the Achievement Index September 2012-June 2013**

**June 2013**

**The Achievement and Accountability Workgroup (AAW) Phase 1 was convened to inform and advise the State Board of Education on the development of the revised Achievement Index. The group responded to State Board of Education policy questions and provided stakeholder perspectives.**

Sincere appreciation is extended to the members of the Achievement and Accountability Workgroup for their time, expertise, and commitment to developing a revised Achievement Index.

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## Overview

Beginning in September 2012, a process was established to gather stakeholder feedback and provide a SBE staff recommendation for the Board's consideration as it made decisions to revise the Achievement Index.



Throughout this process, SBE staff consulted regularly with a steering committee comprised of staff from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as well as a technical advisory committee made up of data analysts and subject matter experts. Over the next nine months, the Board used this process to make decisions on the following questions:

- What performance indicator(s) should be used to measure the achievement and opportunity gap?
- What, if any, performance indicators should be used to measure improvement?
- How should tested subjects be weighted?
- How should we disaggregate student data in the Index?
- What performance indicator(s) should be used in the revised Index to measure Career & College Readiness?
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- Should the revised Index include English language acquisition data in addition to content proficiency data?
- How should subgroups be (dis)aggregated for the purpose of accountability in the revised Index?
- Should performance targets be criterion or norm referenced, or both?
- What relative weight should be assigned to each performance indicator for elementary, middle, and high school calculations?
- How should the revised Index be used to establish Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for schools?
- Given that the ESEA flexibility waiver requires the identification of schools for recognition (Reward) as well as schools in need of improvement (Priority, Focus, and Emerging), what are the challenges to creating a coherent system using the revised Index?
- Do you think growth should be weighted equally or more heavily in the scoring of primary schools (K-8)?
- Do the model Index data strike the right balance in scoring student growth, proficiency, and career and college-readiness (secondary only)?
- What should the criteria be for exemplary schools?

- What additional data sources should the state invest in to improve future Index measures, and how?

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## September – November 2012

	<b>Question:</b>	<b>AAW Input</b>	<b>SBE Staff Recommendation</b>	<b>SBE Decision</b>
<b>October – November 2012</b>	What performance indicator(s) should be used to measure the achievement and opportunity gap?	Index should measure gaps in student proficiency and student growth.	Same.	<i>The revised Index will measure achievement gaps in student proficiency and student growth.</i>
	What performance indicator(s) should be used to measure career and college readiness?	Index should use graduation rates plus sub-indicators of college and career readiness.	Same	<i>The revised Index will include graduation rates as well as additional sub-indicators of college and career readiness.</i>
	What, if any, performance indicators should be used to measure improvement?	Members were split on using student growth or the existing Learning Index to measure improvement.	Use improvement in a school's overall Index score for recognition, but do not include it as a scored performance indicator.	<i>Schools may be recognized for an improved Index score, but improvement will not be a part of the Index score.</i>
	How should assessed subjects be weighted?	Index should assign equal weight to all assessed subjects.	Same.	<i>All assessed subjects will be weighted equally in the revised Index.</i>
	How should we disaggregate student data in the Index?	Most supported disaggregation beyond federal subgroups whenever possible.	Further study is needed.	<i>This decision was tabled for the January Board meeting, pending additional consideration.</i>

### Achievement Gap Closing Measures

The AAW believes that the ultimate goal is proficiency for all students and recommended the revised Index include proficiency gaps: the gap between students' performance on state assessments and the proficiency standard. However, the AAW acknowledged that proficiency alone is not adequate as a comprehensive school measure. Additionally, the AAW noted that proficiency gaps are a lagging indicator in that they measure student and school performance after the fact.

The AAW identified that growth gaps are a leading indicator, predicting when or if a student will reach proficiency at his/her current rate of growth, and they tell stakeholders whether or not a student's growth rate needs to increase to reach proficiency within a specific time period. To provide a more holistic picture of students and schools, the AAW recommended the revised Index measure both proficiency and growth gaps. The SBE staff recommendation was the same as the AAW's input, and the Board passed a motion to measure achievement gaps in both proficiency and growth.

## Assessment Results

A number of AAW members emphasized the limitations of any Index which relies primarily on test scores as the exclusive measure of the effectiveness of schools. There are already concerns among many educators in the state about overreliance on test scores and the associated narrowing of the curriculum to core subjects like math and reading. This input is directed primarily not at the Index itself, but its proposed uses. Test data is limited in what it can answer about a complex endeavor like classroom instruction and student learning. The education system should take a closer look at schools that have been identified by the index as underperforming before drawing conclusions about the failure of the students and staff in that school. Policymakers should also continually consider expanding its portfolio of data elements to reflect aspects of student progress that do not derive from assessment results, although these discussions should always weigh the local costs of data collection and reporting. Above all, there needs to be an acknowledgement that test scores are not what make students successful in life. The education system should focus on producing students who love learning, are prepared to challenge themselves, who work well with others, and are well positioned to be gainfully employed with a living wage job. We should not rely on an Index to measure that.

## Career and College Readiness Performance Indicators

The AAW recommended the revised Index include both high school graduation rates and additional sub-indicators of career and/or college readiness. SBE staff recommended the same, and the Board passed a motion to include sub-indicators of career and college readiness in addition to graduation rates.

## Improvement

The AAW wanted to include improvement as a scored performance indicator, but was split on whether the Learning Index or changes in student growth should be used to calculate the improvement score.

SBE staff recommended removing improvement as a scored performance indicator, but using improvement in a school's overall Index score for recognition and awards. This recommendation was based on the inflationary and deflationary effects of scoring improvement in the current Index. The Board agreed with staff's recommendation to use improvement as the basis for recognition and awards and decided not to include it as a performance indicator in the revised Index.

## Weighting Assessed Subjects

The AAW recommended weighting all assessed subjects – math, reading, writing, and science – equally. SBE staff recommended the same, and the Board passed a motion to weight all tested subjects equally in the revised Index.

[Some members were concerned that all assessed subjects are not assessed with the same frequency—science and writing are not assessed every year, and high school science is assessed only with a biology exam.](#)

## Subgroup Disaggregation

The AAW discussed disaggregation of subgroups extensively at the October 2012 meeting. SBE staff presented the workgroup with five options:

1. Use current federal subgroups only.
2. Use current subgroups PLUS add new subgroups – former ELL, “catch-up students,” or “lowest 25%.”
3. Create super subgroups for schools with low N size.
4. Both options two and three.
5. Other.

The AAW provided mixed input. Most of the AAW supported further disaggregation of subgroups whenever possible, and specifically for the African American/Black subgroup. However, the AAW also wanted schools to be accountable for small minority populations. Members pointed out that further disaggregation and super subgroups for schools with a small N size are not mutually exclusive. [Members recommended schools should collect the “finest grain” of data possible, even if the state data system is not yet ready to handle that level of data. Aggregated data can’t be disaggregated if the data was never collected in the first place, and schools and districts should be collecting data that accurately reflects the complete composition of their communities.](#) Some members strongly supported tracking both former ELLs and special education students. No clear recommendation emerged from the AAW. Staff recommended further examination and discussion, and the Board tabled the issue of subgroup disaggregation for their January 2013 meeting.

## December 2012 – January 2013

December 2012 – January 2013	Question:	AAW Input	SBE Staff Recommendation	SBE Decision
	What performance sub-indicator(s) should be used in the revised Index to measure Career & College	Mixed input on 4,5 year graduation rates; or 4,5,6,7 year graduation rates	4,5,6,7 year graduation rates	<i>The revised Index will include a sub-indicator for the four and five year high school graduation rate.</i>
		Percent of students passing Common Core assessments.	Same	<i>A sub-indicator will be phased in to measure the percent of students who pass high school Common Core assessment at a career and college ready level.</i>
		Percent of students earning high school credit in dual credit courses OR receiving an industry certificate.	Same	<i>A sub-indicator will be phased in to measure the percent of students earning high school credit in dual credit courses or receiving an industry certificate.</i>
	Should the revised Index include English language acquisition data in addition to content proficiency data?	Add English language acquisition as a performance indicator.	Further study and work with stakeholders.	<i>The Board tabled this decision for its March meeting, pending further study.</i>
	How should subgroups be (dis)aggregated for the purpose of accountability in the revised Index?	Mixed feedback. Most want to use the federal subgroups plus former ELL.	Disaggregated data based on the eleven federal student subgroups.	<i>The revised Index will include disaggregated data for the eleven federal subgroups.</i>
	Should performance targets be criterion or norm referenced, or both?	Most want targets to be both norm and criterion referenced. Some want targets to be only criterion referenced.	Criterion-based targets for proficiency and graduation rates. Norm-based targets for dual credit and the 11 <sup>th</sup> grade Common Core assessment. Norm and criterion-based targets for student growth (median growth and growth to standard).	<i>Proficiency indicators and graduation rates will have criterion referenced targets. Growth indicators will have norm referenced targets in the 2013-14 SY and criterion referenced targets in the 2014-15 SY. The sub-indicators dual credit/industry certification and 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessments will have norm referenced targets.</i>

## Career and College Readiness

AAW Members discussed graduation rates at length, and there was no consensus on whether or not to include graduation rates beyond 5 years. The Board decided to score and hold secondary schools accountable for their four and five year graduations rates, but continue to report 6 and 7 year graduation rates.

There was general agreement among the AAW that the Index should include as sub-indicators of career and college readiness the percent of students who passed the high school Common Core assessment at a career- and college-ready level and the percent of students who earn high school credit in dual credit courses or receive an industry certificate.

[Members recognized that these subindicators do not adequately describe many college and career ready attributes including "soft" skills such as goal-setting, perseverance, communication, etc, that individual students need to be successful in post-secondary education and careers.](#)

The AAW reached consensus that postsecondary remediation rates should not be included as accountability measures for schools for a variety of reasons. Members pointed out the lack of alignment between high school academic standards and higher education placement tests, and they were also concerned about the redundancy of measuring both postsecondary remediation rates and the percent of students passing the Common Core assessment at a career- and college-ready level. In theory, the Common Core assessment 11th grade test results should be the definitive indication that remedial coursework will be required in the future. Incorporating remediation rates in the Index might essentially amount to measuring the same factor twice.

The Board passed motions to include the percent of students earning high school credit in dual credit courses or an industry certification, as well as the percent of students who pass the 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessments at a career and college ready level, as sub-indicators of career and college readiness in addition to 4 and 5 year graduation rates.

## English Language Learners

The AAW unanimously supported including English language acquisition for English Language Learners as an accountability measure. Measuring language acquisition in addition to content proficiency could mitigate the impacts of testing ELLs in English when they are at a beginning level of language acquisition. However, members acknowledged that including language acquisition data results in creating a more complex Achievement Index.

SBE staff recommended additional study for two main reasons. First, Washington recently transitioned from using the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT) II to the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA), and is expected to transition to the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) 21 as a result of joining

a multi-state consortium that won a grant to design a new English language proficiency test. Staff also recommended additional study and work with stakeholders because of ongoing discussions with OSPI's Title III Migrant/Bilingual Office to revise Washington's Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for schools' ELL student progress and proficiency in English language acquisition. The Board decided to table this issue for their March meeting to allow for more research and collaboration.

## Subgroup Disaggregation

The majority of AAW members supported using the federally required subgroups with the addition of two new subgroups: former ELL and former Special Education. The group discussed at length the distinction between reporting disaggregated data and using disaggregated data for accountability purposes and the trade-offs associated with both further disaggregation as well as creating "super" combined subgroups.

Some AAW members who initially advocated for further disaggregation ultimately preferred to use the federal subgroups plus former ELL and former Special Education for accountability; however, there was broad stakeholder agreement that data needs to be further disaggregated and made more readily available for reporting purposes.

Several AAW members preferred to use super subgroups combining racial/ethnic subgroups on an as needed basis for schools with small minority "N size." Although this would include more students for accountability purposes, AAW members acknowledged that this option would create additional complexity.

SBE staff recommended using the 11 federal subgroups and not adding former ELL and former special education subgroups for scoring purposes. Staff learned that students who transitioned out of the TBIP are actually included in a schools ELL subgroup for up to two years in cases when their inclusion improves a school's performance. Acknowledging that students with disabilities and students learning the English language have different needs and should receive different kinds of support and intervention; staff did not find compelling research on or examples of other states including a former special education subgroup. Staff recommended further disaggregation of the African American/Black subgroup, and other subgroups requested by the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC), for reporting purposes.

The Board passed a motion to use the 11 federal subgroups for scoring in the Index ~~and;~~ the Board will ~~advocated for further disaggregation for reporting purposes~~ for reporting by schools and districts of the additional subgroups that represent the composition of their communities.

## Criterion and Norm Referenced Targets

All AAW members wanted the Index to include criterion referenced performance targets, but frequent changes to assessments and our assessment system caused many AAW

members to support using criterion and norm referenced performance targets as a provisional measure.

SBE staff recommended criterion referenced targets for proficiency and graduation rates. Staff recommended both norm and criterion referenced targets for growth – median student growth percentiles and growth to standard (adequate growth). Due to the nature of the performance sub-indicator, staff agreed with input from the AAW that the percent of students earning high school credit in a dual credit course or an industry certification should be initially norm referenced. The anticipated rigor of the Common Core aligned 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessment combined with the sub-indicator measuring the percent of students who pass the assessment at a career and college ready level caused staff to recommend norm referencing this sub-indicator until such time as better statewide data enable thoughtful establishment of performance cut-points.

After taking the AAW’s feedback and staff recommendations into consideration – especially with regard to the transition to a new state assessment system – the Board passed a motion approving the staff recommendation.

## February – March 2013

	<b>Question:</b>	<b>AAW Input</b>	<b>SBE Staff Recommendation</b>	<b>SBE Decision</b>
<b>February – March 2013</b>	What relative weight should be assigned to each performance indicator for elementary, middle, and high school calculations?	Achievement gaps should be weighted heavily.	Achievement gaps should count for half of each performance indicator and half of the overall Index score.	<i>Achievement gaps will count for half of the each performance indicator and half of the overall Index score.</i>
		Mixed input on weighting growth vs. proficiency, but most believed growth should be weighted more heavily in K-8.	Build and test options that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal weighting of performance indicators</li> <li>• More weight for growth in K-8, more weight for proficiency and college and career readiness in high school.</li> </ul>	<i>Staff were directed to build and test two options for weighting performance indicators.</i>
		Proficiency, graduation rates, and career and college readiness should be weighted more heavily in grades 9-12.	Phase-in dual credit/industry certification sub-indicator for the 2014 Index and 11 <sup>th</sup> grade assessment sub-indicator for the 2015 Index.	<i>The board approved phasing-in dual credit/industry cert for the 2014 Index and 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessments for the 2015 Index.</i>

<p>How should the revised Index be used to establish Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for schools, and would this be preferable to the current AMOs?</p>	<p>The AMOs should be changed to a set of goals based on performance in the Index; however, the AAW did not offer specific suggestions.</p>	<p>Maintain current AMOs through the 2013-14 SY separate from the Index. Using 2013-14 data, simulate growth-based AMOs.</p>	<p><i>Staff were directed to <a href="#">simulate model</a> growth-based AMOs using 2013 Index data.</i></p>
<p>Given that the ESEA flexibility waiver requires us to identify schools for recognition (Reward) as well as schools in need of improvement (Priority, Focus, and Emerging), what are the implications for the structure and function of the revised Index in order to establish a coherent system?</p>	<p>Schools with large or persistent achievement gaps should not receive recognition or awards. Supportive of using overall Index score to identify priority, focus, and emerging schools.</p>	<p>Align Reward, Priority, Focus, and Emerging schools with the full revised Index. Add recognition for student growth. Do not award highest recognition to schools with large or persistent achievement gaps.</p>	<p><i>The revised Index will be used to determine awards for high performing schools and identification of lower performing schools for support and intervention.</i></p>

## Weighting Performance Indicators

There was no group consensus on weighting performance indicators. Most participants were adamant that gaps in subgroup student achievement should be weighted equally, if not more heavily, than growth and proficiency. This conviction was also held by almost the entire parent and teacher panel. Many participants advocated for equal weighting of all performance indicators. Several valued proficiency more than growth in both K-8 and high school, while others valued growth more in K-8 and proficiency/college and career sub-indicators more in high school.

SBE staff recommended weighting achievement gaps as half of every performance indicator and half of a school's overall score. This imbeds achievement gaps at every level of the Index. With regard to weighting growth and proficiency, staff recommended testing two weighting options before making a decision. To see the impact of weighting growth more heavily for K-8 schools, staff recommended testing an equal weighting option and an option weighting growth 75% and proficiency 25%. Staff recommended weighting growth, proficiency, and career and college readiness equally for secondary schools. The Board passed a motion directing staff to work with contractors and run the recommended data simulations.

## Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

Most AAW members advocated for a unified accountability system and believed the AMOs should be clear goals that align with the revised Index. Several members wanted to keep the AMOs the same, because they wanted to see how schools perform in the revised Index

– especially with the addition of student growth data – before changing the AMOs. They believe slowly phasing in changes to AMOs will result in fewer overall changes as we transition to the new system.

In addition to requesting suggestions from the AAW, SBE staff researched how other states have handled their AMOs. Staff did not see a clear path to revising the AMOs for alignment with the 2013-14 school year, and instead recommended using 2014 Index data to simulate student growth-based AMOs. These AMOs would then be reviewed by the AAW and decided upon by the Board. The Board passed a motion directing staff to simulate growth-based AMOs using the 2014 Index data.

### Identifying Priority, Focus, Emerging, and Reward Schools

The AAW's discussion focused on the framing of this question and on how the highest performing schools would be identified. Members found it helpful to think of this question in the context of recognizing schools for the purposes of allocating resources to meet school/district needs. There appeared to be two different schools of thought on allocating resources. Some participants advocated for providing additional support to Priority and Focus schools without stipulations or "strings." Others believed that additional resources should be provided to Priority and Focus schools, but that those resources should be used to replicate best practices.

There was general agreement that schools with unaddressed or widening achievement gaps should not be eligible for the "highest performing" designation and the AAW strongly supported the recognition of schools closing gaps.

SBE staff recommended using the overall Index score to identify Priority, Focus, Emerging, and Reward schools; adding recognition awards for student growth; and excluding schools with large or persistent achievement gaps from consideration for highest levels of recognition. The Board passed a motion to use the revised Index to determine awards for high performing schools and identify lower performing schools for support and intervention.

## April – May 2013

April – May 2013	Question:	AAW Input	SBE Staff Recommendation	SBE Decision
	Do you think growth should be weighted equally or more heavily in the scoring of primary schools (K-8)?	Most of the AAW supported weighting growth more heavily for primary schools.	Weight growth 75% and proficiency 25%.	<i>The revised Index will weight growth 60% and proficiency 40% for K-8 schools.</i>
	Does the model Index data strike the right balance in scoring student growth, proficiency, and career and college-readiness (secondary only)?	Most agreed that growth should not be weighted more heavily than graduation rates or proficiency.	Equally weight growth, proficiency, and career and college readiness (33% each).	<i>The revised Index will equally weight growth, proficiency, and career and college readiness for secondary schools.</i>
	What should the criteria be for exemplary schools?	AAW members valued high growth, high proficiency, and closing or no achievement gaps.	Use the overall Index score to identify the top 10% or top 5% of schools in the state as "exemplary." Rate Priority (bottom 5% overall) and Focus schools (bottom 10% based on achievement gaps) "struggling." Rate Emerging (next 5% up from Priority and next 10% up from Focus) schools as "fair."	<i>The revised Index will rate the top 5% of schools that also meet the minimum bar of 60% students proficient in all tested subjects. Priority and Focus schools will be rated "struggling." Emerging schools will be rated "fair."</i>
	What additional data sources should the state invest in to improve future Index measures, and how?	Recurring suggestions included 21 <sup>st</sup> century "soft" skills as well as parent, teacher, and student surveys to assess school climate.	No staff recommendation at this time.	<i>No Board action at this time.</i>

### Weighting Growth for Primary Schools (K-8 only)

While a few AAW members preferred to wait and see how growth data impacts school ratings, the majority of the workgroup voiced a strong preference for weighting growth more heavily. These members see growth data as the most accurate measure of the work schools do and believe that weighting growth more heavily will lead to meaningful policy discussions about closing the achievement gap. Members also believe that growth will rate

schools more equitably – particularly schools with large numbers of low income, ELL, special education and historically disadvantaged minority students.

SBE staff recommended weighting growth 75% and proficiency 25%. Because student growth percentiles are a new measurement tool for our state, the Board decided to weight growth 60% and proficiency 40% for primary schools.

## Weighting Growth, Proficiency, Career and College Readiness (Secondary only)

AAW members provided less feedback on weighting of indicators for secondary schools. Most agreed that growth should not be weighted more heavily than graduation rates or proficiency, although some members preferred to weight growth more heavily at the secondary level as well.

SBE staff recommended equally weighting growth, proficiency, and career and college readiness (33% each). The reasoning behind this recommendation being that while primary schools are being scored more heavily on student growth, the ultimate goal of secondary schools is attainment – graduation, proficiency, and other sub-indicators of career and college readiness. Proficiency and career and college readiness are equally weighted but together make up 66% of a high school’s score, while growth is 33% of the overall Index score. The Board agreed with staff’s recommendation and passed a motion to equally weight growth, proficiency, and career and college readiness for secondary schools.

## Cut Points, Tier Labels, and Identifying Exemplary Schools

AAW members tended to value high growth, high proficiency, and closing opportunity gaps (or no opportunity gap). SBE staff recommended unifying the current Index tier labels with the school designations used for federal accountability as shown in Figure B.

**Figure B**

Index Tiers	Federal System
Exemplary	Reward - top performing and top improving Schools with no achievement gaps that are not closing
Very Good	to be determined
Good	to be determined
Fair	Emerging schools: next 5% and 10% on Priority and Focus lists
Struggling	Priority and Focus Schools: bottom 5% of All Students and bottom 10 % of individual subgroups

Staff recommended identifying exemplary schools as aligning to Reward schools in the federal system. Board members had concerns that Reward schools may not have high enough levels of student proficiency to be considered exemplary, and wanted to set a high bar for schools to earn this title. The Board passed a motion requiring exemplary schools to meet two conditions: they must be in the top 5% based on the overall Index score and they must meet a minimum bar of 60% students proficient in all tested subjects.

In the same motion, the Board also decided that both Title I and non-Title I schools designated as priority and focus would receive the “struggling” rating; and that emerging schools would receive the “fair” rating.

## Feedback Reports and the AAW Charter

Included in this summative report are the Feedback Reports from each of the AAW meetings, the September 18 Introductory Webinar, and the AAW Charter.

September 18, 2012 AAW Introductory Webinar and the full meeting packets are available on the SBE Website: <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/aaw.php>

October 10, 2012 Feedback Report:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2012.10.10%20AAW%20Feedback%20Report.pdf>

December 12, 2012 Feedback Report:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2012.12.12%20AAW%20Feedback%20Report.pdf>

February 13, 2012 Feedback Report:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/AAWFeedbackReportFeb2013.pdf>

April 10, 2012 Feedback Report:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/AAWFeedbackReportApril2013.pdf>

AAW Charter:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/2012.07.12%20Achievement%20Index%20Workgroup%20Charter.pdf>