



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Board of Education Does Not Support A-F Grades for Schools

OLYMPIA, Wash. – The State Board of Education does not support organizations using the [Washington State Achievement Index](#) to issue a series of A – F- grades for schools. We believe that the Achievement Index provides valuable information about a school’s performance, but we believe it is only part of the story, and not sufficient to label an individual school a failure.

We are particularly troubled by the designation of an “F-” grade, which doesn’t exist in any real sense, and comes across as a gratuitous effort to demean the hard work that schools are doing. A letter grade does not do justice to the complexity of school performance and increases the risk of alienation and demoralization for schools.

Each year, the State Board of Education and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction analyze school performance data through the Achievement Index. It’s the only statewide school accountability system recognized by both the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education.

The Achievement Index measures student proficiency in math, reading, writing and science, student growth, and college and career readiness. It identifies high-performing schools for recognition and low-performing schools for support. The Index emphasizes improvement and recognition, not punishment. An A-F grading system oversimplifies school data, and it doesn’t do justice to schools working hard to serve students in a number of areas.

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About the State Board of Education: The State Board of Education provides advocacy and strategic oversight of public education. The Board comprises 16 members: five are elected by school board directors, seven are appointed by the Governor, two serve as student representatives, and one serves as a private school representative. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is also a member. For more information on the State Board of Education: www.sbe.wa.gov