

# The Washington State Board of Education

Governance | Accountability | Achievement |  
Oversight | Career & College Readiness

## State Board of Education Spotlight

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With the October 10 meeting of the [Achievement and Accountability Workgroup](#) now complete, work has begun in earnest towards the development of a revised [Achievement Index](#). The development of a revised Achievement Index begins with an examination of several key questions:

1. What performance indicators should be included?
2. What weight should tested subjects have in the Index?
3. How should student data be disaggregated?

Performance indicators are accountability measures aligned with the goals of the system. The selection of performance indicators is an essential first step to the Index's redesign. The current Index is primarily an "academic proficiency" - based Index - looking mostly at objective levels of student performance on state assessments. The Index also includes an improvement measure, a peers rating, and a score for graduation rates. The revised Index will likely include changes to the latter three measures, and may also incorporate additional performance indicators, such as academic growth over time, academic growth gaps between subgroups, and career and college readiness (such as graduation rates, and participation in college prep courses, dual enrollment courses, or industry certifications).

Once the performance indicators are selected, the next decision is the determination of weight. The current Index averages all tested subjects in the state's assessment system to generate a composite Index score. The revised Index could continue this model or perhaps assign different weight values to certain indicators. Further, the revised Index must also accommodate potential changes to the assessment system, impacting what subjects are tested at what grade level.

Finally, we must decide how the revised Index should disaggregate student subgroup data. The current Index uses combined subgroups (also known as super subgroups) to address race/ethnicity gaps. However, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the revised Index disaggregate data using Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) subgroups. The US Department of Education is approving

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states to use super subgroups only if the combination results in the inclusion of more students in the accountability system. In the next few months, we will explore the merits of developing an Index that disaggregates subgroup data by ESEA subgroups, super subgroups, or by super subgroups only when low N size makes gaps invisible.

The Achievement and Accountability Workgroup (AAW) provided valuable input on these questions during their October 10 meeting in Renton, Washington. A feedback report of members discussions will be posted on our website by October 21.

The work of the AAW will inform the Board as they move towards an adoption of performance indicators in the November meeting. The discussion of student subgroups disaggregation will continue in the December 12 AAW meeting.

Stay up-to-date with our continued work by visiting the Achievement and Accountability Workgroup [page](#) and Board materials [page](#) on our website. You're also welcome to join us in person (see meeting dates/times in the links above).

On behalf of the Washington State Board of Education,

Ben Rarick  
Executive Director

## A Revised Achievement Index - Theory of Action

To better understand the principles behind the Achievement Index revision, we encourage you to read our [Theory of Action](#). The Theory of Action, adopted by SBE during the September 2012 meeting, outlines the rationale behind the revised Index, the assumptions made, and the intended results.

SBE is committed to developing a revised Achievement Index that will meet the following criteria:

- Empower schools and districts to analyze their own data and inform curricular and instructional decision-making.
- Align incentives with education system goals.
- Include student proficiency and growth in multiple content areas to provide a broad-based and equitable evaluation of school and district performance over time.
- Drive resources and supports through an accountability framework.

The revised Achievement Index will be an essential component in an overall accountability framework that recognizes high-achieving schools and identifies and provides support to the state's persistently lowest-achieving schools.

## Native American Mascots - A Board Resolution

The Washington State Board of Education's [2012 Native American Mascot Resolution](#) urges districts to reevaluate the use of Native American mascots. SBE passed a [similar resolution in 1993](#).

The 2012 Resolution references a [2005 American Psychological Association report](#) demonstrating the adverse effects of Native American mascots on students. The resolution also acknowledges a widening achievement gap and graduation rate gap for Washington's Native American students.

The Oregon State Board of Education passed a similar resolution earlier this year. While Oregon bans the use of Native American mascots altogether, SBE's resolution is not a mandate for change. Instead, the resolution calls for districts to engage with their community to ensure their schools' mascots are appropriate and conducive to the education of the students served.

We encourage you to learn more about this issue by watching TVW's coverage [here](#).

## Implementation of Career and College-Ready Graduation Requirements

With ESHB 2261 (2009), the Washington Legislature redefined the instructional program of basic education to include the opportunity for students to earn 24 credits for graduation, subject to a phased-in implementation. The Legislature also directed that changes to graduation requirements resulting in additional costs to districts could not be implemented without legislative approval and funding.

The new graduation requirements for the class of 2013 ([WAC 180-51-066](#)) and the class of 2016 ([WAC 180-51-067](#)) move the state towards the [SBE's Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements framework](#), which will eventually provide the opportunity for students to earn 24 credits.

During the 2013 session, SBE will work with the Legislature to develop a schedule for phasing in the full Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements framework. SBE will also continue to advocate for funding to support the additional graduation requirements.

## Public Hearing on Waivers Rules Held in September

The September Board meeting in Walla Walla included a public hearing on [proposed rules](#) on waivers of the basic education act requirement of a minimum 180-day school year. The Board had approved the publication of the rules in the State Register at its July meeting. The proposed rules include the following changes:

- Specific criteria, as required by statute, for evaluation of requests for regular 180-day (Option One) waivers under [RCW 28A.305.140](#) and economy and efficiency (Option Two) waivers under [RCW 28A.305.141](#).
- Elimination of the Option Three pilot process for obtaining waivers under [WAC 180-18-050](#).
- A new procedure for obtaining waivers of up to five days for the purpose of full-day parent-teacher conferences.
- More time for districts to submit waiver requests.
- Technical and cleanup changes for greater clarity.

The rules will clarify waiver-related issues that have caused confusion, simplify overly complex waiver procedures, and better ensure that both SBE and school districts meet statutory responsibilities for basic education.

As required by 2012 legislation, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction has provided a [school districts fiscal impact statement](#). The OSPI analysis found no fiscal impact from the proposed rules.

The State Board anticipates adoption of the proposed rules at its meeting in Vancouver on November 8-9.

We continue to welcome your comments on the proposed rules. Please [write us](#) if you have questions or concerns our website.

## SBE Annual Data Review Now Available

September marked the first time SBE incorporated K-12 system

outcome data in the annual review of its strategic plan. The [2012 data review](#) focuses on on achievement and opportunity gaps as well as P-13 transition gaps within the pre-school through postsecondary educational continuum. Members reviewed five key data sets: socioeconomic inputs, fourth grade reading proficiency, 8th grade math proficiency, graduation rates, and college enrollment and remediation rates. Each data set was disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income, English Language Learner, and Students with Disabilities status whenever possible.

One takeaway of our analysis is the steady overall decrease in fourth grade reading scores since 2005-06. The number of students scoring proficient on reading have dropped from 81 percent in 2005-06 to 71 percent in 2011-12. There is also a widening gap in fourth grade reading for low-income students, English Language Learners, and students of color-particularly Native American students, of whom only 52.2 percent scored proficient on the 2011-12 MSP.

This annual system-data review is now available on our [website](#) in multiple formats.

### **Sounding Board - SBE Blog Excerpt**

From the entry: "Collections of Evidence"

When Washington State ushered in high-stakes tests as a graduation requirement, it also included a set of assessment alternatives. The most frequently utilized option is the Collection of Evidence, or COE. The theory was to provide some protection for students who do not 'test well' - who possess the level of knowledge necessary to meet academic standard but, for whatever reason, are not able to convey that knowledge effectively in a standardized testing environment.

Collections represent a valuable alternative to students who struggle with standardized tests, but they are also costly. The legislature currently requires COEs in Reading and in Writing, but only this year have Math COEs been required for graduation. Because pass rates for the Math assessments are relatively low, it is expected that more students will access the COE as an alternative to graduation. And since each COE comes with a state price tag of \$400, it is likely that the legislature will have to give serious consideration to just how valuable COEs are. Are they worth the cost?

In trying to answer that question, SBE staff member Linda

Drake discovered something noteworthy in the data. While racial achievement gaps are quite prevalent in the results of the state's standardized tests scores, they are far less prevalent in the COE results. COE pass rates range from 60% - 85% in Reading and Writing. And although gaps still exist, particularly in Writing, they don't follow the same conventional pattern as those revealed in the traditional standardized tests. American Indian students, for example, go from one of the lowest-performing subgroups in Writing on the standard HSPE to one of the highest performing on the COE. And the overall picture on COEs is a racial mish-mash. The type of mish-mash we hope for - where your performance does not appear in any way to be influenced by the racial group you belong to.

Read the entire blog entry and others at our blog site: [Sounding Board](#).

### **Board Member Highlight - Mary Jean Ryan (Seattle) Governor Appointed**

Mary Jean Ryan serves as director for the [Community Center for Education Results](#), which works to strengthen and support the growing coalition of organizations, parents and civic leaders who want to dramatically accelerate student achievement-especially in South Seattle and South King County neighborhoods.



Prior to this, Ms. Ryan served as the Director of the City of Seattle's Office of Policy and Management. Her office led many of the City's high-profile policy development and project management efforts. Before that, she was Seattle's Economic Development Director.

She is a 1988 graduate of the Seattle Chamber/United Way Leadership Tomorrow Program. In 2009 she was awarded the Wales Foundation Passionate Citizenship Honoree Award and was named by Seattle Magazine to its 2009 Most Influential People List.

Mary Jean has a B.A. from Georgetown University and a M.P.A. from the University of Southern California. She is a member of the Georgetown University Athletic Hall of Fame. She has a daughter who attends Pomona College.

You can learn more about Mary Jean and other Board members

by visiting our [Board member roster](#).

## Upcoming Board Meeting

November 8-9  
ESD 112  
Vancouver, Washington

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