

## **UPDATE ON CORE 24 IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE AND MHSD-RELATED RESEARCH PROJECTS**

### **BACKGROUND**

Since 2006, the State Board of Education (SBE) has been considering the components of a Meaningful High School Diploma, including revising the purpose of a diploma (January 2008) and approving a proposed framework of CORE 24 graduation requirements (July 2008). The SBE approved a charter (Attachment A) in November 2008 to establish the CORE 24 Implementation Task Force (ITF). The charter asks the ITF to advise the SBE on strategies to implement the proposed requirements. The ITF met for the first time in March 2009, and has met four times to date. At the same time, the SBE is continuing to address the unfinished policy issues related to the Meaningful High School Diploma.

SBE members, Steve Dal Porto and Jack Schuster, serve as co-leads for the twenty-member ITF. The ITF has met once since July 2009 when the SBE was last updated on its work. The ITF will meet again on: September 28, November 2, a date to be announced in February 2010, and, if needed, a date in March 2010. SBE members who cannot attend the meetings of the ITF can access all meeting materials at: <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/CORE24Dates&Materials2.html>.

### **Preliminary ITF Considerations**

At its August 14, 2009 meeting, the ITF identified preliminary *considerations* that they were ready to discuss with the SBE. The considerations are still in process and will not become formal recommendations until the ITF has shared them with stakeholders and discussed them further. (See Attachment B for a communication flow chart).

Each consideration is related to one of the questions posed to the ITF in the Board's ITF charter.

Mark Mansell and Jennifer Shaw, ITF co-chairs, will review the considerations with the Board. The considerations, listed in the following table, will be presented to the SBE by the ITF co-chairs.

### **Relationship of SBE, ITF, QEC, and Legislature**

The Quality Education Council (QEC) was created by HB 2261, and met for the first time on August 27, 2009. According to HB 2261, one of the first priorities for the QEC will be to consider "phase-in of the changes to the instructional program of basic education and the implementation of the funding formulas and allocations to support the new instructional program of basic education..." The charge of the QEC is, of course, much broader than the implementation of CORE 24; the SBE's position on the QEC will assure that key SBE initiatives are voiced. The role of the ITF will be to advise the SBE on relevant graduation-related issues (e.g., phase-in) that may come before the QEC in the next six months.

The following table illustrates the intersections of the work of the SBE, ITF, QEC, and Legislature. The ITF is expected to complete its work in March 2010. The SBE will then begin the policy discussions that emerge from the ITF's recommendations.

**Update on CORE 24 and MHSD-related Research Projects.**

See Attachment C for an update on the status of each project.

**EXPECTED ACTION**

Information only, no action at this time.

## Summary of CORE 24 Implementation Task Force Considerations—September 2009

	Original SBE Motion	Related Questions from SBE Charter for ITF	What the Task Force is Considering	Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	Produce recommendations, with analyses of advantages and disadvantages, about ways to provide appropriate career preparation options, as well as career concentration options.	<i>What should the career concentration requirement look like in practice?</i>	<p>Consider a definition of career concentration that integrates both academic and CTE/occupational courses with sufficient flexibility to address students' interests in a variety of ways, such as:</p> <p>Fulfill three credits of career concentration courses by taking: CTE courses; credited, work-based learning experiences; approved independent study; and/or general education courses that prepare students for postsecondary education based on their identified program of study in their High School and Beyond Plan. One of the three credits should meet the standards of an exploratory CTE course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides sufficient flexibility to address different students' needs.</li> <li>• Retains core (employability and leadership skills) of occupational education requirement.</li> <li>• Connects High School and Beyond Plan with course selection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relies on a High School and Beyond planning process that may not yet exist in some schools.</li> </ul>
2.	Produce recommendations, with analyses of advantages and disadvantages, about ways to provide appropriate career preparation options, as well as career concentration options.	<p><i>What flexibility, if any, is needed to make CORE 24 requirements work for all students, e.g., ELL learners, IB diploma candidates, struggling students, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>What conventional and out-of-the-box ideas should the SBE consider to implement CORE 24?</i></p>	<p>Consider implementing a "2 for 1" or "Credit Plus" policy that would enable students taking classes formally identified as course equivalents to document the academic credit on the transcript and satisfy a CTE requirement at the same time, thereby creating space for an additional elective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides greater flexibility for students to build other courses into their schedules.</li> <li>• Provides greater flexibility for students in skills centers.</li> <li>• Will encourage districts to establish course equivalencies, and the process of collaboration among teachers to establish equivalencies could contribute to professional learning communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without clear state parameters, the policy could be interpreted inconsistently across districts and make it difficult for students to transfer credits across schools.</li> <li>• Might require changes to standardized transcript.</li> </ul>

	Original SBE Motion	Related Questions from SBE Charter for ITF	What the Task Force is Considering	Advantages	Disadvantages
3.	Produce recommendations, with analyses of advantages and disadvantages, about scheduling approaches to 24 credits that can meet the required 150 instructional hours.	<p><i>What flexibility, if any, is needed to make CORE 24 requirements work for all students, e.g., ELL learners, IB diploma candidates, struggling students, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>What conventional and out-of-the-box ideas should the SBE consider to implement CORE 24?</i></p>	<p>The ITF recognizes that CORE 24 could work with both standard and block schedules, but the current time-based requirement creates inconsistencies across different types of schedules in the number of instructional hours typically provided. Different policies may be needed to assure that whatever type of schedule a school adopted, and whatever needs specific groups of students might have, they could still meet the requirements of CORE 24. The ITF will revisit these discussions at its upcoming meetings.</p> <p>One consideration is to amend the time-based WAC definition of a credit to reinforce the connection between a credit and student learning: "A high school credit shall mean the student has demonstrated proficiency in the identified learning outcomes of a course approved by the district as meeting the relevant state subject-area standards."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent with the state's direction toward standards-based learning.</li> <li>• Does not artificially connect learning to time.</li> <li>• Creates more flexibility for districts to focus on student-centered learning that will enable students to progress at their own rates.</li> <li>• Acknowledges the realities of online learning, where learning is not time-based.</li> <li>• Eliminates existing inconsistencies created by differences in schedules; evidence suggests that the time-based requirement varies across districts, depending on the type of schedule the schools are following, and is not being met by all districts.</li> <li>• Eliminates inconsistencies in the ways districts define and count</li> </ul>	<p>A non time-based requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be viewed as less objective, measurable, and easy to understand.</li> <li>• Lacks the power of a time-based requirement to act as an equalizer—a form of standardization that reduces the likelihood that districts will cut corners.</li> <li>• Creates no minimum, measurable threshold of expectation.</li> </ul>

	Original SBE Motion	Related Questions from SBE Charter for ITF	What the Task Force is Considering	Advantages	Disadvantages
4.	Make recommendations about ways to operationalize competency-based methods for meeting graduation requirements.	<p><i>What flexibility, if any, is needed to make CORE 24 requirements work for all students, e.g., ELL learners, IB diploma candidates, struggling students, etc.?</i></p> <p><i>What conventional and out-of-the-box ideas should the SBE consider to implement CORE 24?</i></p>	<p>Permit students who meet proficiency on end-of-course state assessments to earn credit, even if they fail the course.</p> <p>Note: Individual districts could elect to grant credit in this way today, based on the SBE's current WAC that defines a high school credit. Whether this statement would become part of the SBE's WAC is the issue. The ITF will be returning to this question and seeking feedback from stakeholders on key questions such as, "Does a student have to take the course at all? Is proficiency on an end-of-course (EOC) assessment sufficient to earn credit? What if a student asks to take the EOC assessment before ever taking the course (assuming this were feasible)—and the student passes the EOC?"</p>	<p>"instructional hours."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides guidance to districts about competency-based credit.</li> <li>Consistent with the state's direction toward standards-based learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If students know they can earn credit as long as they pass the EOC, they may choose to disregard other course requirements.</li> <li>If students don't have to take the course, they may miss out on aspects of the course not covered by the assessment.</li> </ul>

**CORE 24 2009-2011 Work Plan for SBE and Its Work With  
Implementation Task Force, Quality Education Council and Legislature**

<b>SBE Task in Response to ITF Work</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>State SBE of Education (SBE)</b>	<b>Quality Education Council (QEC)</b>	<b>Legislature</b>
Receive first interim report from the Implementation Task Force (ITF).	September 2009	SBE receives first interim report with the ITF's preliminary considerations on: 1) ways to provide appropriate career preparation courses, as well as career concentration options; 2) scheduling approaches to 24 credits that can meet the required 150 instructional hours; and 3) ways to operationalize competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements. SBE will consider action to assign an additional task to the ITF.		
Receive second interim report from the ITF on phase-in schedule; take action on advocacy for six instructional hours.	November 2009	SBE receives second interim report with preliminary recommendations from ITF on: 1) an implementation schedule that prioritizes phase-in of new credit requirements; and 2) phasing in CORE 24 to address issues such as teacher supply, facility infrastructure, etc.  SBE takes formal action to "authorize" advocacy for six instructional hours in the 2011-2013 biennium to the QEC.	Brief QEC on CORE 24 and recommend to QEC that funding for six instructional hours begin in 2011-2013 biennium so CORE 24 can be fully implemented by 2016. (QEC initial report due January 1, 2010).	
Refine policy for High School and Beyond Plan, Culminating Project, and other unfinished policy issues (e.g., middle school, essential skills).	January 2010	SBE reviews policy recommendations from MHSD work group.		
Conduct outreach on ITF considerations.	fall 2009 and winter/ spring 2010	SBE staff, Board members, and ITF members seek and receive feedback on implementation considerations.	Continue to represent SBE interests to QEC during its meetings.	Advocate for funding during the 2010 session.
Receive final report from the ITF.	May 2010	SBE receives final report with recommendations on each of the assigned		

SBE Task in Response to ITF Work	Date	State SBE of Education (SBE)	Quality Education Council (QEC)	Legislature
		tasks given to the ITF. Each recommendation will include advantages and disadvantages. SBE begins consideration of policy implications of ITF recommendations.		
Adopt CORE 24 Implementation Policies.	July 2010	SBE adopts implementation policies and gives direction to staff for development of draft CORE 24 rules.		
Work with OSPI on fiscal impact of proposed changes.	summer 2010	SBE staff works with OSPI staff on fiscal impact of key elements of CORE 24— instructional hours, struggling students, comprehensive guidance, and curriculum/materials.		
Review draft CORE 24 rules.	September 2010	SBE reviews draft CORE 24 rules.	Continue to represent SBE interests to QEC during its meetings.	
Approve draft CORE 24 rules.	November 2010	SBE adopts draft rules to submit to 2011 Legislature and QEC for consideration as “proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements.”	Present draft rules for proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements to QEC for review, in conjunction with OSPI fiscal impact analysis; advocate with QEC to recommend funding for CORE 24 on proposed timeline.	Present draft rules for proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements to education committees for review, in conjunction with OSPI fiscal impact analysis. Advocate for funding and go-ahead from Legislature.
Adopt new graduation requirement rules for the Class of 2016.	Fall 2011	SBE adopts rules for the Class of 2016. (The Class of 2016 will enter 9 <sup>th</sup> grade in 2012).		

*Issue: We need to determine whether the SBE has authority to mandate that a high school graduation requirement begin in middle school. If not, we may want to seek legislative authority during the 2010 session.*



## **CHARTER FOR CORE 24 IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE** *(Adopted by SBE in November 2008)*

### **PROJECT PURPOSE**

The purpose of the CORE 24 Implementation Task Force (ITF) is to examine the implementation issues associated with the CORE 24 Graduation Requirements Policy Framework, passed by the State Board of Education (SBE) in July 2008.

The ITF will advise the SBE on strategies needed to implement the requirements, including a phase-in process that would begin with the graduating class of 2013. Although it is the SBE's intent for the CORE 24 requirements to be fully implemented by the graduating class of 2016, assuming funding by the Legislature, the ITF should take into consideration ways to move the system forward *toward* CORE 24 requirements in the event only partial funding is attained.

### **BACKGROUND**

At the July 2008 SBE meeting, the SBE approved the CORE 24 Graduation Requirements Policy Framework through the following motions, which included specific direction to staff to establish an Implementation Task Force. The motions reference the Meaningful High School Diploma (MHSD) memorandum (the "larger paper") approved by the SBE on July 24, 2008.

1. Establish the CORE 24 Graduation Requirements Policy Framework, per the attached Adoption Document, consisting of subject area requirements, Culminating Project, and High School and Beyond Plan to be phased in over four years, beginning with the class of 2013 and becoming fully implemented with the class of 2016, contingent upon funding approved by the Legislature.
2. Maintain the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plan as graduation requirements, with modifications developed in consultation with the SBE's implementation advisors. Begin the High School and Beyond Plan in middle school.
3. Direct staff to establish an Implementation Task Force to make recommendations to the SBE by June 2009, to address implementation issues identified through (prior) public outreach and cited in the larger (July 2008 MHSD memorandum) paper. These include, but are not limited to:
  - An implementation schedule that prioritizes phase-in of new credit requirements.
  - Ways to operationalize competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements.
  - Ways to assist struggling students with credit retrieval and advancing their skills to grade level.
  - Phasing in CORE 24 to address issues such as teacher supply, facility infrastructure, etc.
  - Ways to provide appropriate career preparation courses, as well as career concentration options.
  - Scheduling approaches to 24 credits that can meet the required 150 instructional hours.



4. Affirm the intention of the SBE to advocate for a comprehensive funding package and revision to the Basic Education Funding formula, which among other necessary investments, should link the implementation of CORE 24 directly to sufficient funding to local school districts for a six-period high school day<sup>1</sup>, a comprehensive education and career guidance system, and support for students who need additional help to meet the requirements. The SBE directed staff to prepare a funding request for the 2009-2011 biennium to begin implementation of CORE 24.

### **Connection to the SBE's Mission, Goals, and Work Plan**

One key strategy to meet the SBE's goal to improve student preparation for post-secondary education and the 21<sup>st</sup> century world of work and citizenship is to create a coherent and rigorous set of graduation requirements that keeps all options open for all students. With the actions taken in July 2008, the SBE established the CORE 24 High School Graduation Requirements Framework. The CORE 24 Implementation Task Force, part of the SBE's September 2008-August 2009 work plan, is an integral step in moving the work forward.

### **SBE Role**

The SBE's role is to receive the recommendations of the Implementation Task Force (ITF), consider them in the context of the larger policy environment, and ask for further clarification if needed. The SBE will formulate a policy for CORE 24 implementation.

### **ITF Co-leads**

Jack Schuster and Steve Dal Porto will serve as co-leads for the ITF. The co-leads will oversee the work of the ITF, including:

- Helping to select the membership.
- Attending all meetings of the Task Force, bringing forward questions from the SBE.
- Identifying policy questions to be considered by the SBE.
- Reporting back to the SBE on the progress of the Task Force.
- Attending meetings (AWSP, WSSDA, WASA, etc.) with staff, as possible, to discuss CORE 24 and its implementation.
- Being a "sounding board" for staff as questions arise.

### **Relationship of Implementation Task Force and Meaningful High School Diploma (MHSD)**

Eric Liu will continue to serve as the SBE lead on the Meaningful High School Diploma project. He will provide strategic guidance needed to advocate for CORE 24, and will continue to carry the unfinished MHSD work forward, leading the policy development of the SBE's approaches to the Culminating Project, High School and Beyond Plan, essential skills, and middle school/high school connections.

As appropriate, the ITF will consider the issues of the Culminating Project, High School and Beyond Plan, essential skills, and middle school/high school connections and make recommendations to the MHSD Lead, Eric Liu.

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<sup>1</sup> The SBE's intent is not to require all school districts to implement a six-period day, but rather to advocate for funding needed for the equivalent of a six-hour instructional day.

## Scope of Work

The CORE 24 Implementation Task Force (ITF) will be comprised of a central leadership group that will consider the systems issues that need to be addressed in order to implement the CORE 24 Framework, as approved by the SBE. Individuals wishing to serve on the ITF must express their interest formally. The ITF will:

- Develop a strategy for addressing the implementation issues identified in the SBE's motion approval language and any other issues the SBE and/or Task Force deems important (see list of implementation issues below).
- Provide options for a phase-in process within the 2013-2016 parameters established by the SBE.
- Help identify people to serve on practitioner-based work groups, if needed.
- Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of recommendations, in order to provide the SBE with different options to consider.
- Consult informally with colleagues to provide ongoing feedback from the field.

The central leadership group of approximately 15 people will include working or recently retired practitioners, well-respected by their peers for their deep and wide understanding of systems issues, depth of expertise, and ability, to think systemically and creatively. This group of leaders *collectively* will bring expertise in:

- Rural, suburban, and urban districts.
- Districts of different sizes and from eastern and western areas of the state.
- Districts with different levels of career and technical education involvement, including skills centers.
- Districts with Navigation 101.
- Comprehensive and alternative high schools.
- Middle and high school perspectives.
- Curricular issues spanning an array of subjects.
- Counseling.
- Struggling and gifted students.
- English Language Learner (ELL) perspectives.
- Private schools.
- Teaching.

The ITF will seek people in different leadership roles who serve, or have recently served, in the K-12 system. Practitioner-based, issue-specific, and ad-hoc work groups, coordinated by staff will support the work of the Implementation Task Force, as needed.

## Implementation Questions and Issues

This list represents the issues identified in the SBE's motion, as well as other issues that have been raised during the SBE discussions of CORE 24 with stakeholders. The list, with any additions the SBE might make, is intended to be a starting place for discussion with the Implementation Task Force.

- 1. What is the optimal strategy for phasing in the CORE 24 requirements, beginning with the graduating class of 2013 and becoming fully implemented with the graduating class of 2016?**

*The ITF will advise the SBE on strategies needed to implement the requirements, including a phase-in process that would begin with the graduating class of 2013. Although it is the SBE's intent for the CORE 24 requirements to be fully implemented by the graduating class of 2016, assuming funding by the Legislature, the ITF should take into consideration ways to move the system forward toward CORE 24 requirements, in the event only partial funding is attained.*

- 2. What flexibility, if any, is needed to make CORE 24 requirements work for all students, e.g., ELL learners, IB diploma candidates, struggling students, etc.?**

*The ITF should consider, at a minimum, the advantages, disadvantages, and optimal use of competency-based credit, credit "plus" approaches that allow students to earn one credit but satisfy two requirements, credit earned in middle school and limited credit waiver authority for local administrators.*

- 3. What conventional and out-of-the-box ideas should the SBE consider to implement CORE 24?**

*The ITF should recommend creative, practical, and doable ways (e.g., the role of online learning, collaborative arrangements across districts, etc.) to address the capacity issues that CORE 24 will inevitably raise.*

- 4. What scheduling approaches assure sufficient opportunities for students to earn 24 credits and meet the definition of instructional hour credit, established in rule?**

*The ITF should outline different scheduling scenarios to identify the challenges and solutions districts might consider to satisfy the requirements of CORE 24.*

- 5. What should the career concentration requirement look like in practice?**

*The ITF should recommend ways to assure that the career concentration requirement incorporates the expectations of the current occupational education requirement, and considerations for the relationship of the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plan to the career concentration requirement.*

- 6. What issues need to be addressed in order for the High School and Beyond Plan to begin in middle school?**

*The ITF should recommend ways to build connections between high school and middle school.*

## **Deliverables**

The Implementation Task Force will produce:

- Recommendations with analyses of advantages and disadvantages related to the issues itemized in Motion #3, passed in July 2008 (see details in background section of this paper).
- Recommendations with analyses of advantages and disadvantages related to other relevant issues the ITF identifies.
- Regular feedback from the field on CORE 24 perceptions, concerns, and support.

## Suggested Timeline

Although the original motion language specified June 2009 as the deadline “to address implementation issues identified through (prior) public outreach and cited in the larger paper,” this suggested timeline is probably a more realistic approximation of the extended time that will be needed to think carefully through the different issues. Specific dates are included only for the first two meetings; later dates will be established in consultation with the ITF.

Meetings	Dates
First meeting of Task Force	February 2, 2009
Second meeting of Task Force	March 2, 2009
Third meeting of Task Force	May 2009
Fourth meeting of Task Force	June or August 2009
Fifth meeting of Task Force	October 2009
Sixth meeting of Task Force	December 2009

## Communication Plan

Updates from the Implementation Task Force will be provided at regularly-scheduled meetings of the SBE. SBE members and SBE staff will be making formal presentations in a variety of venues in order to provide information about CORE 24 and seek input on implementation issues from stakeholders. The SBE will work with OSPI, legislative staff, and the Governor’s staff to keep them informed of the work and share progress with key stakeholders, including the Legislature.

## Staff Project Manager

Kathe Taylor, Policy Director

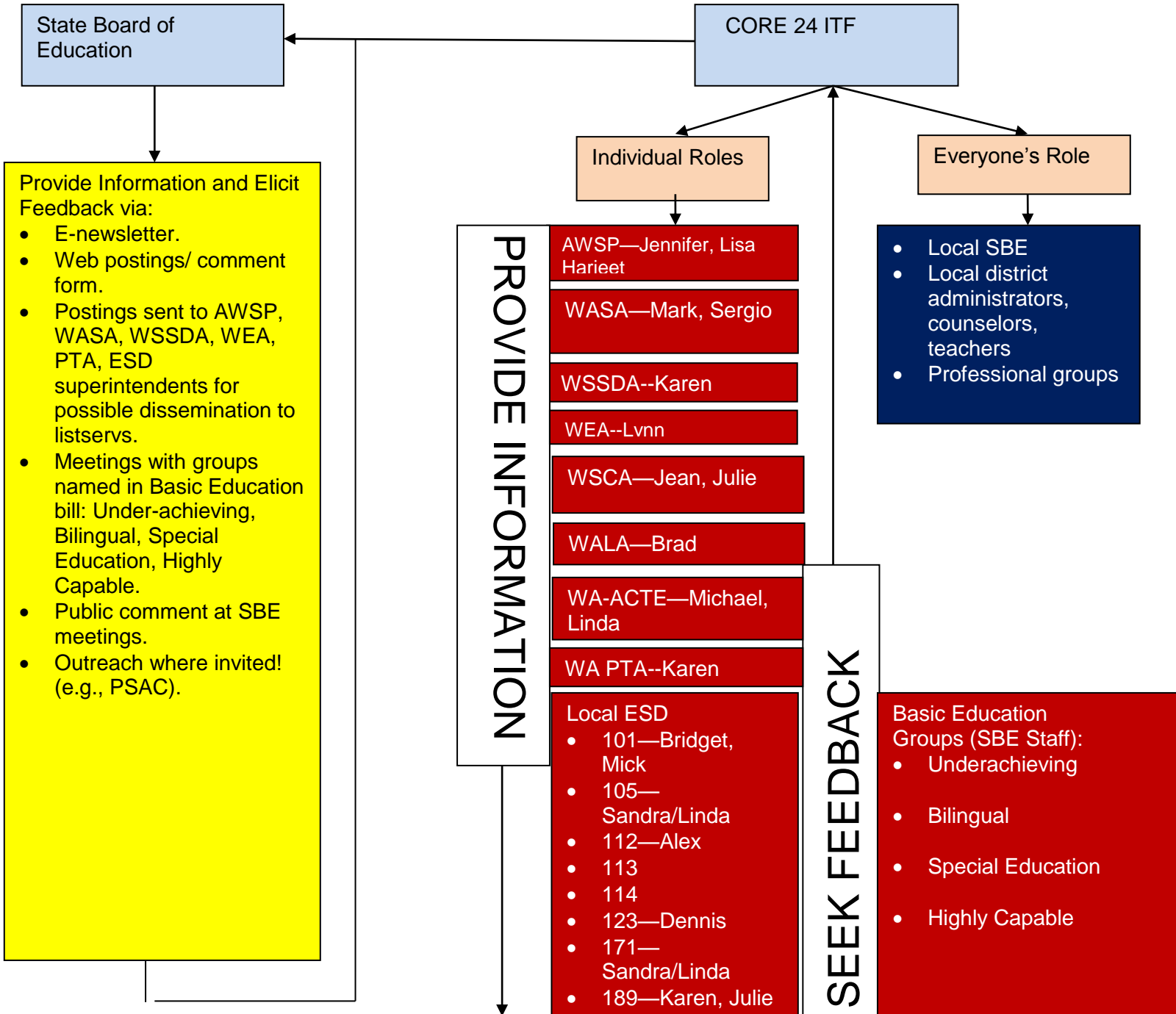
## **EXPECTED ACTION**

Motion to approve the charter for the Implementation Task Force and extend the timeline from June 2009 to the suggested schedule outlined above.

**CORE 24 Communication Flow Chart**

**ITF Members' Responsibilities:**

- Share preliminary considerations approved by the ITF with assigned constituent groups. Use Talking Points and Work Plan to convey purpose and timetable of ITF and status of CORE 24.
- Elicit feedback on preliminary considerations; use feedback form to summarize in writing and send what you have to SBE by September 21 and October 26 (each date is one week prior to ITF meetings on Sept. 28 and Nov. 2.)



## Update on CORE 24 and MHSD-related Research Projects.

Staff is working on several research projects, using Gates funding to support them.

1. **World Languages Competency-based Credit.** The intent of this project is to determine if sample procedures can be drafted to award credit for proficiency in world languages. SBE policy already enables districts to award competency-based credit; specific guidance might assist districts to put policies in place.

Staff convened a second meeting of the World Languages Advisory Group, including representatives from both higher education and K-12, on August 26, 2009, to review the national and local data collected on the proficiency of students completing two years of high school study or two terms of college study of a language—experiences which are intended to be roughly equivalent. During this one-hour webinar, OSPI World Languages Program Supervisor, Michele Aoki, walked the group through the data collected from Washington students in five languages: Spanish, French, German, Japanese, and Chinese.

The Advisory Group will meet again on September 21<sup>2</sup> to draft recommendations concerning, at a minimum: 1) the level of competency (i.e. language proficiency) students would need to attain in order to earn credit; 2) the manner of assessment that would be appropriate; and 3) the areas (e.g., speaking, reading, writing, and/or listening) in which competency may be expected. The Higher Education Coordinating Board, the SBE, and Washington State School Directors' Association staff have been invited to the meeting. After the recommendations have been vetted in an outreach process, staff will bring them to the SBE for consideration.

2. **Transcript Study Follow-Up.** SBE has contracted with the BERC Group to conduct a second follow-up transcript study, which is now underway. This study will track the postsecondary choices made by 2008 graduates in the original study. It will match data with those attending Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs) and possibly the public four-year institutions<sup>3</sup> to determine the performance and curriculum of students in their first year of postsecondary study, i.e., what courses (particularly in math) did they take, and how well did they do? The BERC Group will present to the SBE in January 2010 on all of the follow-up information collected.
3. **Algebra II-based Career and Technical Education (CTE) Course.** SBE, OSPI, and Transition Math Project (TMP) staff convened a meeting August 12-14 in Yakima to explore the feasibility of developing a mathematics class that would demonstrate the practical application of Algebra II concepts in different CTE career clusters. Twenty-five practitioners, representing CTE and math perspectives, attended the meeting. The group's challenge is to create a model that does not yet exist in the country. *Algebra II Applications* is the working title for the class, and the intent is to develop a class that would ultimately provide students sufficient math to enter a trade school, apprenticeship program, two year college or four year baccalaureate program. The group will meet once again this fall. If progress continues to look promising, funding possibilities will be explored to develop the work.

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<sup>2</sup> Originally scheduled for October 1, but now scheduled at the Puget Sound ESD from 3:00-7:00 p.m. on September 21, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> The SBE is working with the Council of Presidents to request data-sharing agreements with the four-year institutions.