



## THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

November 10, 2016

Mr. Randy Dorn  
State Superintendent  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
600 Washington Street Southeast  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Superintendent Dorn:

On behalf of the Board, I thank you for sharing the highlights of your proposed Consolidated Every Student Succeeds Act plan with the State Board of Education at our November 9 meeting. In your absence, Deputy Superintendent Mendoza and staff made an exemplary presentation of the most important aspects of your plan which we understand is still being finalized and will be made public in the near future.

The Board discussed the proposal and finalization process with particular focus on the areas of policy that intersect with our statutory authorities in the areas of school accountability and recognition. Our review and discussion led us to a number of important considerations, which are detailed in this letter.

First, we want to be clear that we are supportive of the conceptual framework of the plan presented, and are pleased that you gave particular consideration to the [accountability framework principles](#) adopted by the Board. We see clear evidence of an effort to focus on gaps, to move beyond 100 percent proficiency standards and the associated failure letters and to elevate student growth measures in our state accountability framework.

The Board understands your desire to submit the state's plan to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) in a timely manner. We want to honor your tenure as Superintendent with a plan that reflects your values for Washington's students. We appreciate your efforts at broad stakeholder outreach, and we commend your efforts to involve SBE staff in the internal strategic deliberations. We are nevertheless concerned about the submission timeline. With neither the current nor incoming superintendent participating in our meeting, and with the actual plan not yet published, we are uncomfortable taking an affirmative action on these items. We also believe it would be inappropriate for the Board to take action on the plan before members of the public have been given an opportunity to review the plan during the 30-day comment period and the consolidated plan stakeholder review tour.

*Isabel Muñoz-Colón, Chair • Ben Rarick, Executive Director*

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Importantly, we believe the newly elected superintendent should have the opportunity to provide significant input into a plan the superintendent will be expected to implement. We would like an opportunity to publicly dialogue with the new superintendent on these matters at our January 2017 meeting. We believe this will not delay our federal review since the earliest submission review cycle starts in March.

Accordingly, we ask you not to submit the plan to USED on the timeline your office has proposed. In order to allow the State Board time to deliberate with the new superintendent on the details of the plan in advance of the March federal review timeline. In addition, we hope to assure stakeholders that the first Index they review, with the new indicators and framework, will not have consequences attached to those indicators, but rather would serve as a pilot version for review. It would also be important to inform USED that we intend to fully model the results of the new Index to ensure its fairness to schools of all sizes, locations and demographics, and that we reserve the right to make material changes if that process reveals issues. Finally, it is important to convey to our districts that every effort will be made to hold districts harmless from abrupt policy changes associated with unpredictable federal timelines for approval.

Although we have expressed our concerns regarding the timeline of submission for the consolidated plan, we would like to again commend you and your staff for accomplishing so much and positioning our state to move forward in a positive direction under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Thank you for your collaboration during this process.

Sincerely,

  
Isabel Muñoz-Colón  
Chair

cc: Member of the Washington State Board of Education