The Washington State Board of Education

Governance | Achievement | High School and College Preparation | Math & Science | Effective Workforce

Title:	**Developing Performance Improvement Goals for Washington State** *Washington ForWArd Project*

As Related To:	☒ Goal One: Advocacy for an effective, accountable governance structure for public education ☐ Goal Two: Policy leadership for closing the academic achievement gap. ☐ Goal Three: Policy leadership to increase Washington's student enrollment and success in secondary and postsecondary education	☐ Goal Four: Effective strategies to make Washington's students nationally and internationally competitive in math and science ☐ Goal Five: Advocacy for policies to develop the most highly effective K-12 teacher and leader workforce in the nation ☐ Other
Relevant To Board Roles:	☐ Policy Leadership ☒ System Oversight ☐ Advocacy	☐ Communication ☐ Convening and Facilitating
Policy Considerations / Key Questions:	What lead system indicators should the State Board of Education use in setting goals for the P-13 system?	
Possible Board Action:	☐ Review ☐ Adopt ☐ Approve ☐ Other	
Materials Included in Packet:	☒ Memo ☐ Graphs / Graphics ☐ Third-Party Materials ☐ PowerPoint	
Synopsis:	The purpose of this presentation is to establish a stakeholder engagement process timeline and also discuss the structure of Lead System Indicators for our goals-setting work. A committee structure will also be proposed to engage the work of this project between meetings.	

Background:

Building upon the materials presented at the February special meeting, the State Board of Education will now:

- Discuss a timeline and structure for pursuing its goals-setting work.
- Adopt a committee structure to provide continuity of guidance between Board meetings on this project.
- Review an initial set of Lead System Indicators (LSI) to serve as the basis for stakeholder engagement in April and May, with an anticipated adoption of the LSIs in May.

Proposed Timeline:

Staff is proposing the following timeline of stakeholder engagement and Board action leading to final adoption of a complete set of indicators and goals in November, 2012. This timeline is consistent with, but more detailed than, the higher-level timeline discussed in prior Board meetings.

Timeline	Action/Topic
March Board Meeting	- Propose/Adopt timeline for engagement of stakeholders. - Propose/Adopt committee of the Board to work the project in between meetings. - Propose Initial set of Lead System Indicators (no adoption).
Between March and May Meeting	- Two stakeholder engagement meetings. - One to two sub-committee discussions.
May Board Meeting	- Adopt LSIs as foundation of goals-setting structure. - Propose goals on LSIs. - Propose initial set of Foundation Indicators (FI). - Discuss link between Achievement Index, AMO's required for ESEA, and the Board's goals.
Between May and July Meeting	- Two stakeholder engagement meetings - One to two sub-committee discussions
July Board Meeting	- Adopt LSI goals (ten year). - Adopt FIs.
Between July and September Meeting	Seek stakeholder input on initial package of goals, website construction, usability, etc.
September Board Meeting	Board reviews product in its entirety; makes suggestions and modifications to reflect last wave of feedback.
Between September and November Board Meeting	- Raise awareness among key stakeholders. - Communications plan/publicity.
November Board Meeting	- Final adoption of set of goals. - Initiate discussion on policy implications and best practices that help the state achieve the goals.

<u>Proposed Lead System Indicators:</u>

1. **Third Grade Reading**

   Staff is recommending this for consideration as a Lead System Indicator because of the strong research suggesting third grade reading as a key "gateway" skill. According to the 2010 Casey Foundation study by Joy Lesnik *et al.* entitled *Reading on Grade Level in Third Grade: How Is It Related to High School Performance and College* Enrollment*?*, students who are not reading at level by third grade have a difficult time making up that deficit later on in their academic career, and, therefore, have difficulty acquiring proficiency in other subject areas, given that literacy is a building block of knowledge in all academic subjects (ibid). The report indicates that this is the transition point during which students switch from *learning to read*, to *reading to learn* (ibid). Furthermore, a study by Donald J. Hernandez at Hunter College (2011) demonstrates that third grade reading is statistically predictive of secondary success. Students who struggled with reading in third grade comprised 88 percent of those that ultimately did not receive a high school diploma.

   In setting the goal linked to this indicator, the Board will need to integrate the new method for determining Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO's) and the updated Washington Achievement Index contained in the state's ESEA waiver application.

2. **High School Graduation**

   Staff is recommending this for initial consideration as a Lead System Indicator because of its close alignment with Superintendent Dorn's priorities, as well as a wealth of research indicating that possessing a diploma is a significant determinant of future economic well-being. A household supported by a high school graduate accumulates ten times more wealth than those supported by a drop-out (Gouskova & Stafford, 2005). Additionally, in Washington State there is a clear, inverse relationship between level of education and unemployment. Data from the 2010 American Community Survey suggests that the unemployment rate for drop-outs in Washington State is at least 50 percent higher than those with at least one year of post-secondary education or training.

   In terms of methodology, staff agree with the OSPI position that extended graduation rates are preferable to "on time" rates, and that tracking both drop-out rates and graduation rates may be necessary, as each metric captures something the other may miss.

3. **Postsecondary Attainment Rates of Credentials, Certificates, or Degrees**

   Staff is recommending this for initial consideration as a Lead System Indicator because it places a focus on students developing and pursuing plans beyond high school, but does not necessarily value baccalaureate degrees at the exclusion of apprenticeships, vocational training, or other non-baccalaureate pathways. The implicit policy statement underlying this Lead System Indicator would be that students need some form of postsecondary training or education to succeed in the modern economy. Data from the Workforce Board's 2011 report, *A Skilled and Educated Workforce,* suggests that the earning power of a worker with at least one year of post-secondary education is nearly double that of a high school dropout.

Other Lead System Indicators considered but not initially recommended:

The achievement gap
> Staff believes that while the achievement gap is clearly of utmost importance, a Lead System Indicator that spans across the other indicators is not structurally consistent with our concept of the data roadmap, which follows key transition points for a student's journey through the system. Staff had discussed perhaps creating an Achievement Gap Index as a separate project, which incorporates data on various key indicators and attempts to generate one number that gauges progress against the gap from year-to-year.

A "whole child" indicator
> Initial feedback from some stakeholders suggested including one Lead System Indicator dedicated solely to the non-academic needs of children; including health indicators, social/emotional needs, etc. Staff believes this is vital to the effort, but believes that these may be best suited as Foundation Indicators rather than Lead System Indicators, with the view being that attending to the non-academic needs of children are necessary to support students' academic and postsecondary success.

Kindergarten Readiness
> If robust data existed, staff would probably recommend building another LSI around Kindergarten readiness. Unfortunately, statewide data is generally not yet available. WaKIDS is a promising initiative still in the pilot stages. Additionally, our ability as a state to collect and report a full set of meaningful Foundation Indicators for students ages three to five is a challenge. As a result, we are suggesting that K-readiness be heavily represented in the Foundation Indicators for third grade reading, but not its own Lead System Indicator.

Middle school math performance
> According to a policy brief entitled *Muddle in the Middle: Improving Math Instruction at the Middle School Level* by Debbie Ritenour, produced by the SEDL (The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), multiple studies show that "U.S. students begin to fall behind in math once they reach middle school (Beaton et al., 1996; Schmidt, McKnight, and Raizen, 1997). Additionally, evidence suggests the gender divide in math and science begins in middle school (ibid). While very important, the ability to focus on fewer than four Lead System Indicators required some priority-setting. Middle school math, therefore, would be a good foundation indicator for high school graduation.

Action Requested:
- Approve the timeline and stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Approve committee of the Board to work this issue in between Board meetings.
- Discussion of initial Lead System Indicators.