

EXHIBIT C

Position Statement on the Accountability System

During the Transition to the Smarter Balanced Assessment

The Washington State Achievement Index incorporates three consecutive years of assessment data to generate ratings for all public schools in the state. Washington's transition to new learning standards and assessments in Math, English Language Arts, and Science poses challenges in maintaining comparable data and making school identifications consistent with state and federal requirements.

During the 2013-14 school year, OSPI offered an opportunity for schools to field test the new Smarter Balanced Assessments based on the Common Core standards. During this year, roughly 35 percent of schools participated in the SBAC Field Test, in lieu of administering the Measurements of Student Progress. Schools that participated in the field test did not receive scores from the Smarter Balanced assessments.

As a result, two sets of schools were created – schools taking the old assessments (MSP, HSPE, and EOCs), which continued to generate three years of comparable assessment data, and those that field tested the SBAC assessments. Because the field test participants were not provided with results, each field test school's prior year's proficiency rates were carried over for 2013-14 accountability decisions (i.e., AYP and Achievement Index). In essence, one year counted for two in the ratings.

During this transition year, consistent with U.S. Department of Education guidance, schools were held harmless to the impact of this "carry over" year of data if it was significant to their identification as a Priority or Focus School. Newly identified Priority or Focus schools who participated in the field test, were removed from these lists. Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all schools moved to the Smarter Balanced assessment system, measuring the new state learning standards in English language arts and math. Beginning with the Index using 2014-15 Smarter Balanced assessment results, schools will no longer have three years of assessment data measuring the same learning standards; however, comparability across schools within the year will be preserved, since everyone will be taking the same assessment in 2014-15.

Accordingly, the State Board and OSPI plan to make the following adjustments pertaining to the use of the Achievement Index and its use in the identification of Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools, Priority schools, and Focus schools during the next several years.

- **The Achievement Index will be published each year following the Board approved methodology.** Content area assessments used for the Proficiency indicator will continue to be equally weighted. The underlying data used for the Index will be made available public as is the current practice, subject to OSPI data suppression rules to protect student privacy.
- **The Achievement Index will continue to utilize norm-referenced tier ratings, until several years of data allows an appropriate determination of a criterion reference.** The tier ratings will continue to reflect normative scaling. This means that while all scores are expected to be lower during the transition, approximately the same number of schools will be placed in the 'underachieving' or 'priority' school categories. The same is true for the 'exemplary' and 'very good' categories.
- **The Index will continue to utilize the 'carry forward' provision for the field test year to make sure all schools continue to be represented in the Index.** This is a continuation of current policy – schools that field tested in 2014 will continue to have their data (proficiency and growth) 'carried forward' from 2013 to maintain an index score.

- **Adjust the Proficiency, Growth, and College- and Career-Readiness (CCR) Indicator weightings for high schools to accommodate the inclusion of Dual Credit Participation beginning with the winter 2016 Index version.** The OSPI will compute the high school Index ratings based on indicator weighting factors of Proficiency (32 percent), Growth (32 percent), and CCR (32 percent Graduation and 4 percent Dual Credit Participation).
- **Student growth model data will continue to be an indicator of student achievement in the Index.** In the event that growth model SGPs are not publicly released by the OSPI for the winter 2016 Index version and for one or more additional years, the Index will utilize the most recent SGPs in place of the missing year(s). The Board is committed to making student academic growth as measured by the Student Growth Percentiles Growth Model a major component of the Index. The SBE will adjust the Growth indicator as needed to align with the public reporting of SGPs by the OSPI.
- **Priority and Focus School identifications will be suspended for two years while the schools newly identified in 2015 are served for 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18. For this three-year period, the total number of served schools will remain roughly constant. Priority or Focus schools identified in previous years would be removed from the PLA list if exit criteria are met.** Following the most recent (March 2015) school identifications, OSPI now is serving approximately 121 Priority Schools and 133 Focus Schools. The service period for these schools is three years. The intent of the Board is to not significantly add to this list until a new group of Priority and Focus schools are identified in spring of 2018, given that the list already maximizes OSPI current service capacity.
- **Three-year Priority and Focus Schools service cycles will be established beginning with the Winter 2018 Index version.** New Priority and Focus Schools will be identified every three years beginning with the 2018 Index version (then again based on the 2021, 2024, 2027 Index versions) and served continuously by the OSPI until the schools meet exit criteria. Since the PLA list will be identified each year as required by law, the OSPI will annually monitor the progress of all schools and may, on a case-by-case basis, require supports for schools failing to progress as expected.
- **OSPI may add schools to the Priority & Focus list in 2015-16 on a limited basis.** While it is the intent of OSPI to not significantly add to the size of the Priority and Focus schools list during this year, some schools may be added if unusual circumstances require intervention.
- **Resumption of the full school identification process for Priority & Focus list restarts in 2018 for service in the 2018-19 school year. The Achievement Awards will continue to be given each year.** Adjustments will be made each year to ensure fairness in the criteria during the transition to new assessments.
- **The annual list of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools will be published in accordance with state law.** This list will be published, even though it may not result in new Priority or Focus school identifications each year. The Index will be used in each year to establish this list as is the current practice.
- **This policy will adjust as our status under ESEA federal regulations evolves.** Changes to our ESEA flexibility waiver status, or ESEA reauthorization, may necessitate changes to this policy.