

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HEARING TYPE: X INFORMATION/NO ACTION

DATE: JANUARY 25–26, 2007

SUBJECT: **NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REAUTHORIZATION**

SERVICE UNIT: State Board of Education
 Edie, Harding, Executive Director

PRESENTER: Edie Harding, Executive Director
 State Board of Education

BACKGROUND:

The new Congress may take up the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (formerly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) that was passed in 2001. Since the State Board is responsible for developing the statewide accountability system, you will want to review the current provisions of NCLB and may want to provide recommendations to our Congressional Delegation on policy issues you think they should address.

I am providing you with a very short background on NCLB. I am also providing you with a piece that Shirley McCune from OSPI has drafted on changes needed for NCLB. The Washington Education Association and members of the Legislature are preparing a memorial on NCLB to send to Congress and will ask the State Board for support. Our Chair, Mary Jean Ryan, is also interested in the Board sending a letter to our Congressional delegation.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 9, 2007
TO: Board Members
FROM: Edie Harding
RE: No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act Reauthorization

Background on NCLB

The NCLB was passed in Congress five years ago with bipartisan support. The purpose of the law was to make sure that “all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and assessments.”

- Establish clear and consistent standards of learning for all students.
- Measure progress of students to reach those standards and provide information to the public.
- Ensure that students had highly qualified teachers in every classroom.
- Provide teachers with training and hold schools accountable for raising student achievement.

The key provisions of the law are as follows:

- **Standards:** States must adopt and define standards in reading and math.
- **Testing:** States must test their students each year in grades 3–8 and once in high school (Washington uses the 10th grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL)) beginning in 2005–06. States’ tests (or assessments) must be aligned to their standards.
- **Public Reporting/Data:** States must report student data for individual groups of students by race, poverty level, disability, English language learners and show how each group is making progress in meeting the standards. States must also report on the qualifications of teachers by school.
- **Adequate Yearly Progress¹:** States must use a formula to show how they will determine the progress of each category of students with the goal of having all categories of students “proficient” at state standards in reading and math by 2014. There is a “state uniform bar” for the 9 groups in Washington: five racial and ethnic groups; students with disabilities; students with limited English; students from low income families. Washington must also increase its graduation

¹ For more details on Washington’s AYP you may want to refer to your OSPI briefing materials from the September 2006 meeting.

rate from a baseline of 66 percent to 85 percent by 2014 in high schools and reduced unexcused absences grades 1–8.

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- **School Improvement:** Schools that do not meet adequate yearly progress for two years in a row with one or more groups of students, will need to develop a school improvement plan. If schools have not made progress for two years, parents may choose to send their students to higher performing schools or obtain outside tutoring for free (paid from federal money).
- **Highly-Qualified Teachers:** States must define highly qualified teachers and ensure that low income and students of color are not taught disproportionately by unqualified teachers

Changes Needed Under Reauthorization:

Some of the major concerns that states and education groups have are outlined in the attached paper from Shirley McCune at OSPI. A quick summary of those issues is:

- **Change the State Average Bar for progress.** The goal of reform is to institute processes to support continuous improvement of school programs. Currently the one-size fits all required use of the state average on assessments as the primary measure of accountability is unfair and decreases the motivations of both schools achieving at low levels and those schools already scoring above the state average.
- **Provide separate accountability systems for English language learners (ELL) and special education students.** Currently, ELL and special education students are assessed and included as groups held to the same levels of performance as other students. An analysis of schools identified as “in improvement” indicates that a majority of these schools are in this status as a result of the performance of ELL or special education students.
- **Provide meaningful choice for parents and support for school program interventions without weakening programs for students who are succeeding.** The choice provision should be limited to those students who have not succeeded to gain proficiency. This would eliminate problems of the overcrowding of successful schools which, in the long run decreases their chances of success if large numbers transfer, to their school. Requests for supplemental services should be limited to students who are unsuccessful in meeting proficiency requirements.
- **Obtain more Highly-Qualified Teachers.** Form federal-state partnerships with states to find effective ways of providing and retaining highly qualified teachers for all students.