



# THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

August, 31, 2016

Board Members:

I'm pleased to present our annual review of progress on the Board's strategic plan. As many of you know, over the years we have experimented with various formats for this document. We first started with a structure that created individual progress metrics, trying to represent that we were a particular percent away from full implementation at various points throughout the year (e.g. we're 85% finished with objective 1.2.b). Ultimately, we found that structure to be technically burdensome, and also found that it conveyed a degree of technical precision in how the plan is implemented and measured that could not be supported in most cases, particularly those heavy on process. When we are reporting on student outcome measures – as reflected in our [Educational System Health indicators](#) – we are able to achieve that degree of quantification, and we look forward to producing a [set of related data presentations for you in the fall](#).

What we have ultimately landed upon is a report that members find most useful – a chart that provides brief narratives and hyperlinks to the writings, presentations, and collaborations that are most salient to that strategic objective. Our progress report is basically a web-based tool. Our primary challenge with this structure is that there is seemingly no end to the documents that we can link to, so we have held ourselves to the standard of providing a fair representation of the most important work, not necessarily a comprehensive portal to all the work that is conceivably relevant.

As an ED, I have come to rely upon this report as a mechanism to track the relationship of our work to the many individual items in the strategic plan, helping us both track successes and identify areas where our progress is underdeveloped. It's a helpful compendium of significant reports, projects, videos and other materials we've created to the relevant areas of the strategic plan. As staff, we review the document multiple times in a year and incorporate it into our deliberations. Most recently, we briefed Board Chair Isabel Muñoz-Colón on its status at a staff mini-Retreat in Renton in March.

We invite you to review the document and submit any questions you have. The annual review is provided for your reference only. Because of the Board's choice to focus on three particular topics, we will not necessarily be relying heavily on this document during the September Retreat segment, but you may find it helpful as a reference.

## **What's next?**

At the retreat, we hope to receive a set of guiding principles from the Board. We will use those principles to revise the strategic plan between the September and November Board meetings. In addition, we will review the plan for antiquated items – issues that have been altered by changes in law or have been effectively addressed and are no longer relevant. In November, we will present to you our proposed revisions to the strategic plan.



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## Highlights of the past year's work

Our review of progress showed we had some particularly strong areas over the past year.

Goal 3. Ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet career and college ready standards.

- Invested time and conducted outreach with 24-credit workshops.
- Developed the set of communication tools and materials with OSPI.
- Spurred the development and advanced the use of an online high school and beyond tool with OSPI and [WSIPC](#)

We also made progress on Goal 1: Develop and support policies to close the achievement and opportunity gaps:

- 1.A.1: Developed a draft of the Opportunity to Learn Index. Presented a data spotlight on 5491 indicators and deeper disaggregation of racial and ethnic groups.
- 1.A.6: The Accountability System Workgroup studied metrics for measuring progress by English Language Learners.
- 1.A.7: Held community forums across the state, and reached out to diverse communities. Held regional panels with superintendents.

In Goal 2, Develop comprehensive accountability, recognition, and support for students, schools, and districts, we saw strong work related to ESSA:

- 2.A.3: Released the 2015 Achievement Index with clear information on participation in assessments.
- 2.A.4: Held an ESSA panel discussion shortly after enactment of the new law. Co-sponsored five Accountability System Workgroup meetings with OSPI. Advocated to USED on ESSA rules.
- 2.B.7: Co-sponsored the 2015 Washington Achievement Awards ceremony in Yakima.

## Where more work is needed

Part of the value of this annual review of effort is to identify areas that are not being fully leveraged. This year, some subsections of the strategic plan were rendered inoperative over the past year by judicial decisions or changes in law, such as:

- 4.C: Implement a high-quality process for review and approval of charter authorizer applications and execution of authorizing contracts with approved school districts.
- 4.D: Perform ongoing oversight of the performance of school districts approved by SBE as authorizers of charter schools.

Other areas simply warrant a greater investment of time and resources. Those include:

- 1.A.5: Advocate for expanded learning opportunities.
- 1.C.2: Research data capacity to inform student transitions at key points in the P-13 pipeline. (It is noteworthy that this is an identified focus area for the 2016 Retreat.)



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- 2.A.5: Establish adequate growth targets in the accountability system as an enhancement to year-to-year proficiency level targets (a potential focus point in our response to ESSA requirements).

### **Takeaways**

I believe the Board can be proud of the significant work it undertook over the past 12 months. It is important to maintain a focus not only on the quality and timeliness of our process-oriented work as a policy board, but most importantly, on the student achievement outcomes for our students in the system. Given that we are not meeting our student achievement outcome goals, it is appropriate for the Board's work to avoid a sense of complacency, and maintain an overall sense of urgency. The improved experience of students in our system should be the ultimate barometer of our success as educational leaders.

As always, more remains to be done to ensure our educational system meets the expectations of the public. However, I believe this report demonstrates that the State Board of Education makes the most of its time and effort, targeting the areas that have the greatest impact for our students and following through on its goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Rauch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" and "R".