



Talking Points: OSPI Legislative Priorities

- Supt. Dorn's top priorities for the 2015 legislative session are the passage of a budget and levy reform. These move us closer to meeting our constitutional obligation to fully fund basic education and to satisfying the existing Supreme Court orders in *McCleary v. Washington*.
- There are additional important educational issues before the Legislature. OSPI has introduced three bills, along with our budget requests, to address the following:
 - Reform and streamline our high school assessment system.
 - Lower the dropout rate and better serve our at-risk students.
 - Increase technological literacy among all our students.

McCleary v. Washington

- The central issue in the *McCleary* case is simple: Using local levies to fund basic education is unconstitutional. It leads to inequality across our state. Washington must transition to a system where the state funds 100 percent of the costs of basic education.
- This new system is more than a "budget" issue and will require more than just additional state funding. It will also require a new way of thinking about how we fund and govern our schools without local revenue. The Legislature needs to address this issue this year.
- The Governor believes that funding the elements of [Substitute House Bill 2776](#) (MSOC, transportation, full-day kindergarten, and lower class sizes in

K–3) will satisfy the court and our duty under the constitution. That is not the case.

- The Governor’s budget does not do anything to reduce class sizes in grades 4–12. The Prototypical School Model, endorsed by the court, and Initiative 1351, passed by the voters, both call for lower class sizes in higher grades. His budget also does not address the fact that thousands of school district staff salaries are being paid with local levy funds — which is the heart of the *McCleary* case.
- The OSPI budget request would fully fund our *McCleary* obligations. The Superintendent has sent the Governor a letter outlining what he believes is the minimum needed during the next two years to satisfy the Court: \$4.5 billion. This would fund the elements of 2776, and begin to assume pay the salaries of staff without using local levies.
- We urge the Legislature to take this issue seriously. The Court certainly will.

Assessments

- Supt. Dorn has developed a proposal that will create a better, fairer way to assess high school students:
 - Students will still take the Smarter Balanced tests as 11th graders for federal accountability. However, if a student does not pass one or both tests on the first attempt, they would be required to take more coursework in the areas in which they need more help. Rather than spending time retesting, we would create a path for students to improve their knowledge and skills.
- This is a commonsense approach intended to help students succeed, not punish them for their failures. Our current system prevents graduation, without providing sufficient help to students.

- The Smarter Balanced tests were created to establish college and career readiness, not as exit exams to test high school proficiency. At least in the early years of Smarter Balanced, many students will not meet the standard of college and career readiness and either will not graduate from high school or be forced to access other costly alternative paths to graduate.
- Our current system is too confusing for school staff, parents, and students to understand, given the constant change in requirements and the variance between different graduating classes.
- Our current system is too costly. Better outcomes for students would be achieved by spending the money on programs to help students.
- We currently give too many tests. These tests take away valuable time for instruction and unduly stress students and their families.

Dropout Prevention

- By the end of the 2012–13 school year, 10,305 students in the Class of 2013 had dropped out. This equates to roughly 2,576 students each year. This number is just too high.
- Supt. Dorn requests legislation and funding to:
 - Provide grants to districts to establish or expand comprehensive guidance and counseling programs.
 - Develop an electronic tool through ESDs to house and modernize student's e-portfolios for their High School and Beyond Plans.
 - Provide grants to districts to establish or expand Jobs for Washington Graduates programs for students at risk of dropping out of high school.
 - Provide ongoing statewide professional development opportunities for staff implementing Career Guidance Washington and Jobs for Washington Graduates programs.

- Establish more sophisticated integrated aggregate data reporting capabilities to support districts efforts to use data to inform their student support and achievement strategies.

Technological Literacy

- In order to ensure that all students have an opportunity to achieve technology literacy and fluency, the Superintendent proposes a three-pronged solution:
 1. Modify state statute to **require** the use of educational technology (EdTech) assessments or other strategies to provide teachers with a measure of a student's level of technology literacy and fluency. Using these assessments is now voluntary.
 2. Increase the MSOC allocation for technology to reflect the level of spending of those districts whose technology infrastructure is more adequately funded by local levies and bonds.
 3. Fund staff support at the state level to update EdTech learning standards to align with the CCSS and to support the ongoing implementation by districts of technology-enabled learning opportunities.