



Anatomy of Change:

A Systems Approach for Planning the Implementation of ESHB 2261

ESHB 2261 provides for restructuring of virtually all the major elements of the K-12 education system. Although the list is more extensive, there are numerous sections to the bill which will bring about a new:

- a. Funding and student transportation system
- b. Change in school time requirements
- c. Data reporting and accountability system
- d. Change in licensure /evaluation of teachers
- e. Graduation requirements and more

This landmark legislation embraces several vital principles that are critical to successful implementation. ESHB 2261 initiatives are only introduced with assurance that districts have the capacity to implement the changes. Capacity is defined by the time, dollars and appropriately qualified staff it takes to plan and implement change, and that specified initiatives must be fully funded prior to implementation.

OSPI has the essential role of determining the “educational system’s capacity.” ESHB 2261 states that system capacity is further defined as the ability of schools and districts to support and provide:

- a. Capital facilities for instruction
- b. Adequate numbers of qualified staff
- c. Higher education capacity to prepare next generation educators
- d. Data systems capable of allocating resources in a manner consistent with evidence-based practices that are shown to improve student learning

The Quality Education Council created under ESHB 2261 has the primary responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of the new legislation. A critical task of the Council is to provide guidance to the legislature and others on the strategic implementation of the changes required of school districts.

The Anatomy of Change work group’s (ACWG) proposal is that a planning system be installed and funded within OSPI to support the QEC in implementing ESHB 2261 and future state initiatives. The State Superintendent is constitutionally charged with “supervision over all matters pertaining to public schools.” Clearly OSPI needs a planning system and a more robust planning capability to determine initiative feasibility. Absent a planning system, workload at all levels will not be managed. A planning system will also promote predictability, inclusion, and establish a reasonable pace for change. Detailed, inclusive planning will enable our staff, parents and community to embrace rather than reject change.

The primary message of the ACWG is to strengthen the education of students by assuring the work of schools proceeds in a planned, sequential and strategic fashion. There will be a cost to establish a planning system and properly staff OSPI. The costs are minimal in the context of the state’s education budget, and in the long term will save money. This move, more than any other, will assist in prudent management of scarce education related resources. We can expect unprecedented scrutiny of where and how money will be expended for education in the future. Establishing a planning system provides protection against needless duplication and provides the QEC, OSPI and school districts an historic opportunity to better focus scarce resources so that we can continue to enhance student achievement.