

Quality Education Council

Report to the Legislature



January 15, 2011

Council Members:

Superintended Randy Dorn
Senator Eric Oemig
Senator Rosemary McAuliffe
Senator Curtis King
Senator Joseph Zarelli

Senator Tracy Eide (alt.)
Rep. Marcy Maxwell
Rep. Pat Sullivan
Rep. Skip Priest
Rep. Bruce Dammeier
Speaker Frank Chopp (alt.)

Dr. Bette Hyde
Mary Jean Ryan
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January 15, 2010

The Honorable Christine O. Gregoire
Governor of Washington
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

The Honorable Brad Owen
Lieutenant Governor of Washington
P.O. Box 40482
Olympia, WA 98504-0482

The Honorable Frank Chopp
Speaker of the House
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Governor Gregoire, Lieutenant Governor Owen, and Speaker Chopp:

As required by Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 and Substitute House Bill 2776, I'm submitting the Quality Education Council's (QEC) annual report.

The QEC has made 17 recommendations as part of the next phase in the process of education finance reform. Such reform is critical to both the maintenance of our quality education system and the financial solvency of our school districts. Reform is no longer an option in order to improve educational outcomes. School districts use most of their local revenues (largely levy and equalization) to hire extra staff and make up for shortfalls in transportation, operating costs, supplies, special education services, and state salary allocations. Most of these costs are clearly a state responsibility; the remaining costs require research and analysis by the Council to quantify the level of basic education support that is necessary to enjoy a quality education system.

Although the Council understands the economic reality of the times, their first recommendation is to support funding for full-day kindergarten, K-3 class size, transportation, and material supplies and operating costs. Their second recommendation like last year is that K-12 funding not experience any further cuts. The quality of education programs offered for Washington students will be negatively impacted by further cuts to the system. The Council does not consider a reduction in education quality as an acceptable outcome of the 2011 Session, especially given our state's unique constitutional mandate to provide ample funding for an equitable education for each and every student in the state.

I'd like to thank each of the Council members for all of the hard work, commitment, and thoughtfulness throughout each step of the process. Their diligence and dedication has enabled us to put forth the 17 recommendations as a way to keep the momentum going in educational finance reform. I'm honored to have served as the Chair for the Council for a second year and look forward to continuing the work on behalf of the current and future K-12 students of Washington.

Sincerely,



Randy I. Dorn
Chair, Quality Education Council
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Acknowledgments

The Quality Education Council would like to thank all of the staff from the following agencies, working groups, and committees who contributed to the Council's work.

Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee

Building Bridges Committee

Learning Assistance Technical Working Group

Transitional Bilingual Technical Working Group

Highly Capable Technical Working Group

Classified Staff Technical Working Groups

Funding Formula Technical Working Group

House Office of Program Research Legislative

Caucus Staff

Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program Committee

Office of Financial Management

Office of the Governor

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Bilingual Education Advisory Committee

Professional Educators Standards Board

Senate Committee Services

State Board of Education

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Introduction

The 2009 and 2010 sessions of the Washington state Legislature passed three historic K-12 education bills. Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 (2009) outlined a bold new system for state funding of basic education, and created the Quality Education Council to develop and implement it. Substitute House Bill 2776 (2010) authorized the first steps for implementation of the new funding system. Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6696 (2010) set in motion transformative change in four areas: more rigorous academic standards, improvements in teacher effectiveness and equity in teacher distribution, better use of data to drive improvement in student learning, and intervention in schools with persistently low student learning and graduation rates.

Under the terms of SHB 2776, this QEC report to the 2011 Legislature and Governor is to include:

- Recommendations for specific strategies, programs and funding, including funding allocations that are designed to close the achievement gap and increase the high school graduation rate in Washington public schools;
- Recommendations for assuring adequate levels of state-funded classified staff to support essential school and district services;
- Recommendations regarding the State Board of Education's proposed changes to high school graduation requirements; and
- Recommendations for a schedule for implementing the increased instructional hours identified in ESHB 2261.

The QEC has an ongoing responsibility to identify measurable goals and priorities for the education system, including the goals of basic education, and strategies for coordinating statewide efforts to eliminate the achievement gap and reduce student dropout rates.

The QEC received information from the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee and the Building Bridges Work Group, as required by law, as well as a number of technical working groups. In addition, the education agencies provided a draft education reform plan outlining their priorities to support the basic education goals.

Based on the information received, the QEC makes the following recommendations in support of the current basic education goals in six major priority areas. The education agencies, in collaboration with the Governor's office, should continue their work to identify specific outcomes and measurements in the priority areas two through six identified in this report.

More information regarding the Quality Education Council, including past reports, workgroups and meeting documents are available at www.k12.wa.us/qec.

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Recommendations by Priority Area

Priority Area 1: Make Progress Toward Ample Funding for Basic Education

1. The 2011 Legislature should continue to support the phase-in of new funding for K-12 education, as provided under SHB 2776, including:
 - a. Continued phase in of full-day kindergarten based on school poverty factors;
 - b. Phase in funding for additional teachers to support smaller class sizes in grades K through 3 based on school poverty factors;
 - c. Transition to the new pupil transportation funding formula and begin to phase in funding enhancements to districts as described in SHB 2776; and
 - d. Increase allocations for maintenance, supplies and operating costs (MSOC).

The QEC considers these four elements to be essential parts of an equitable school funding system, and the Legislature is encouraged to make investments sufficient to meet the legislative intent of SHB 2776.

The QEC recommends that the Legislature and education stakeholders educate and engage the public to build support for full funding of basic education, including these elements from SHB 2776.

SHB 2776 can be found online at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2009-10/pdf/bills/session%20law%202010/2776-S.SL.pdf>

2. The 2011 Legislature is urged not to reduce funding for Washington State public schools. While elements within the K-12 system have historically been referred to as basic or non-basic education, the QEC considers many “non-basic” education programs to be essential for providing critical services to students – particularly funds for levy equalization, K-3 class size reduction, the Highly Capable Program, and full-day kindergarten.

Priority Area 2: Provide Students the Opportunity to Graduate Prepared for Postsecondary Education, Employment and Citizenship

3. The Legislature should endorse the OSPI adoption and implementation of the nationally developed Common Core State Standards. OSPI should ensure that a review for fairness and bias is performed prior to implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

National academic standards for English language arts and mathematics have been crafted by the National Governors Association and state education leaders from across the U. S. The new standards are based on the most effective standards from U. S. states and from countries around the world. The goal of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is to foster success beyond high school as students enter college, skills training or the workforce. The new national standards will also provide economies of scale for the development of assessments, curriculum and professional development. This will result in the availability of more tools for teachers and schools to help student meet the intended outcomes.

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State adoption of the CCSS standards in English language arts and mathematics is needed by the end of 2011 for Washington to maintain full participation in the standards-setting consortium. If adopted, the standards will be phased in during the 2011-2014 school years. Assessments based on the standards will begin in the 2015-16 school year.

Information on the Common Core State Standards can be found online at <http://www.k12.wa.us/corestandards/default.aspx>.

4. The Legislature should support the State Board of Education (SBE) new career and college-ready graduation requirements as an important step towards meeting the Basic Education Act's intent to prepare students for postsecondary education, employment, and citizenship.

In its future work, the QEC will recommend a phase-in schedule of the SBE proposal that includes consideration of appropriate levels of state funding and support for effective implementation.

The Legislature should support the State Board of Education's removal of the 150 hour definition of a credit. Further, the State Board of Education should require all districts to certify that a policy defining a credit has been adopted.

Information on the SBE proposed career and college-ready graduation requirements can be found online at www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/graduation%20requirements%20details%20flyer.pdf.

5. The Legislature should direct OSPI to provide technical assistance to districts and schools to help them develop strategies to reduce dropouts and increase their extended graduation rates. This assistance may be provided by OSPI's District and School Improvement Programs where allowed by funding sources.

Information on OSPI's District and School Improvement Program and supports currently provided to school districts can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/improvement/default.aspx.

Priority Area 3: Close the Opportunity Gap for Disadvantaged Students and Students of Color

6. The Legislature should support the strengthening of the Highly Capable Program to ensure that all students have equal access to it, consistent with the recommendations of the Highly Capable Program Technical Working Group:
 - a. The Legislature should adopt a new and uniform definition of Highly Capable Program students, as provided in the Technical Working Group report to the Legislature.
 - b. The Legislature should direct OSPI to create a common and consistent identification process for Highly Capable Program students.

The Highly Capable Workgroup report can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/legisgov/reports.aspx.

7. The Legislature should support the strengthening of the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) based on recommendations of the LAP Working Group:
 - a. The Legislature should direct the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to work with OSPI to design and conduct a research study to measure the impact of LAP programs on student achievement. This research study should be designed to determine what programs

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and strategies are most effective and efficient in assisting struggling students in the areas of math, literacy, and science, as well as outcome measures for use by policy makers in evaluating program success.

- b. The Legislature should allow LAP funds to be used for assistance to students in science, and to extend credit retrieval from grades 11-12 to grades 9 through 12.

The LAP Workgroup report can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/qec/adhocworkgroups.aspx.

8. The Legislature and OSPI should support the strengthening of the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP) based on recommendations of the TBIP Working Group:
 - a. OSPI should report TBIP student performance data through the online school report card.
 - b. The Legislature should support the use of a multi-state assessment system for measuring student success in the TBIP.
 - c. The Legislature should direct OSPI to develop a system for monitoring program quality, and providing technical assistance, performance incentives and/or sanctions based on student achievement outcome measures and best practices.

The TBIP Workgroup report can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/qec/adhocworkgroups.aspx.

9. The Legislature should support the recruitment, development, placement, and retention of educators who are culturally competent and possess skills and competencies in language acquisition:
 - a. The Legislature should restore and provide continued support for programs that encourage diverse populations to become teachers.
 - b. The Legislature should direct the Compensation Working Group to utilize educator professional development needs data, including cultural competency and competency in language acquisition for the following purposes:
 - i. to identify strategies and incentives to recruit and retain diverse teachers;
 - ii. to examine data from other states regarding certification options and requirements that support competency in language acquisition and cultural competency;
 - iii. to identify professional development requirements for continuing teachers regarding cultural competency and language acquisition; and
 - iv. to identify current policies that make it difficult to recruit and retain diverse teachers.
10. The Legislature should continue its support the development of strong partnerships between schools, students, families and communities to deliver personal and differentiated instruction.

In SHB 2776, the Legislature established a staffing category entitled the Parent Involvement Coordinator. While no funding was identified for this position in the prototypical school model, the Legislature recognized that parent and family involvement is a key element in the basic education of students, and used this category as a placeholder for future investments.

The Legislature should replace the staffing category “Parent Involvement Coordinator” with “Family Engagement Coordinator” in the prototypical school model to more accurately reflect the intended role and activities of this position. The family engagement coordinator is intended be an integral part of the guidance and counseling team and play a leadership role in the school improvement planning process to ensure that families’ voices are represented in the strategic planning process.

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Priority Area 4: Support and Strengthen Education Professionals

11. The Legislature should maintain support for implementation of revised teacher and principal evaluation systems. E2SB 6696 established dramatic changes to the teacher/principal evaluation system, and initiated the development, pilot testing, and implementation of a new evaluation system during the next three years, with statewide adoption in the 2013-14 school year. The bill requires the following:
- Implementation of the pilot with grant recipient school districts in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years;
 - Development of a four-tiered rating system based on the eight classroom teacher and nine principal competencies outlined in 6696;
 - Adoption of new evaluation systems by all school districts in the 2013-14 school year;
 - Extension of provisional status for new teachers; and
 - Requirement that schools districts report educator data based on the current evaluation criteria starting in the 2010-11 school year.

Information on Teacher/Principal Evaluation Pilot can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/Edleg/TPEP/default.aspx.

12. The Legislature should direct the Compensation Working Group to include the professional development needs of principals, teachers and classified staff in its work, including mentoring programs for all education employees.

Based on the recommendations from the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, the Building Bridges Work Group and the various technical working group reports, the QEC recognizes the importance of supporting education professionals by providing high quality training and mentoring.

The compensation working group is not currently required to consider the professional development needs of principals, teachers and classified staff in its examination. The QEC recommends the 2011 Legislature direct the Compensation Working Group to include the professional development needs of principals, teachers and classified staff in its examination including, but not limited to, mentoring programs for all education employees.

13. The QEC provisionally adopts the recommendations of the Classified Staffing Adequacy Working Group for essential staffing levels, but does not recommend a phase-in of these recommendations. The Legislature should delay consideration of these recommendations until completion of the Compensation Working Group and a recommendation from the QEC on phasing in any additional staffing. The QEC will consider the Compensation Working Group report and the Classified Staffing Adequacy Working Group reports together when determining a proposed phase-in schedule.

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The recommendations from the Working Group are:

Classified Staff:	SHB 2776			Recommended		
School Based	Elem.	Mid.	High	Elem.	Mid.	High
Students per Prototype	400	432	600	400	432	600
Teaching Assistance	0.936	0.7	0.652	1.195	1.295	1.121
Office Support/ Noninstructional Aides	2.012	2.325	3.269	3.22	3.029	3.382
Custodians	1.657	1.942	2.965	3.524	3.454	4.412
Student and Staff Safety	0.079	0.092	0.141	0.099	0.506	0.723
Parent Involvement Coordinators	0	0	0	0.676	0.676	0.676
Districtwide Support						
Students per Prototype	1,000			1,000		
Technology	0.628			2.01		
Facilities, Maintenance, Grounds	1.813			4.719		
Warehouse/Laborers/Mechanics/ Facility Security	0.332			0.571		

The full report from the Classified Staffing Adequacy Working Group can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/qec/adhocworkgroups.aspx.

Priority Area 5: Support Improvements in Math and Science

14. The Legislature should ensure excellence in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by adopting the following recommendations of the STEM Working Group:
- a. Direct the Compensation Working Group to include the possible need for STEM-related professional development in its examination of Educator Professional Development needs, and examine strategies and incentives to recruit and retain STEM teachers.
 - b. Maintain support for innovative middle school CTE programs focused on STEM and professional development support for math, science, engineering and technology educators.
 - c. Encourage and support partnerships with the business community to develop and continue innovative STEM programs.

The STEM Working Group report can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/legisgov/reports.aspx.

Priority Area 6: Invest in Early Learning

15. The Legislature should continue the incremental phase in of new funding to K-12 education, as provided under SHB 2776, including continued phase in of full-day kindergarten based on school poverty factors.

In 2007, the Washington State Legislature responded to the recommendations of the Washington Learns Commission by passing SB 5841, which funds voluntary full-day kindergarten. Funding

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appropriated was sufficient to support full-day kindergarten to reach 10% of schools each year with the goal of all schools being funded in ten years.

Since that time, funding has been appropriated by the Legislature sufficient to support full-day kindergarten in 20% of the state's schools. The highest poverty schools in the state are eligible for the funding. The 2010 passage of SHB 2776 called for phasing in enhancements to the baseline funding levels of 2009-10 in the 2011-13 biennium, with all schools receiving funding by 2018. The phase in of funding is based on student poverty within schools, so that schools with the highest percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced lunches are eligible for the funding first.

Information regarding State funded full-day kindergarten and current schools funded can be found online at www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/fulldaykindergartenresearch.aspx.

16. The Legislature should continue investments in early learning, specifically through its commitment to enhance and expand the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) for at risk 3 and 4 year olds. These investments will allow all students to enter kindergarten "healthy, capable, and confident and ready to succeed in school and life."

In addition, the Department of Early learning and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction should continue to partner with higher education, utilizing federal funds to create a P-20 longitudinal data system.

Information regarding the Department of Early Learning Programs including ECEAP can be found online at www.del.wa.gov/

17. The Legislature should support the implementation of the kindergarten readiness assessment, and direct OSPI to require its use in all state-funded full-day kindergarten programs and in schools that are designated as Required Action Schools under federal and state law.

The Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WAKids) is not a test for entry into kindergarten. Instead, it provides a measure to assess the effectiveness of early learning programs and establishes a baseline for children as they enter the K-12 system. For example, this assessment can provide information on whether ECEAP is effective, and which kinds of children benefit most from the current program model. WAKids also will help inform a teacher's understanding of what individual students bring to the kindergarten classroom, and what they need to succeed.

Information regarding the Washington Kindergarten Readiness Pilot can be found online at <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/pilot.aspx>.

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APPENDIX A

Costs to Implement QEC Report Recommendations

#	Recommendation	First Year	Second Year
1	Continue Phase-in of Funding for SHB 2776* (not including full-day K)	\$195,187,722	\$172,212,789
2	Overall K-12 Funding	-	-
3	Common Core Standards	-	-
4	Phase-in Proposed Graduation Requirements and Hours of Instruction	\$ 3,844,220	\$38,470,225
5	Graduation Improvement Technical Assistance	-	-
6	Highly Capable Program	\$101,129	\$96,297
7	Learning Assistance Program	\$ 141,398	\$130,398
8	Transitional Bilingual Program	\$1,141,378	\$1,186,170
9	Cultural Competency	\$23,333	-
10	Family Engagement Coordinator	-	-
11	Teacher and Principal Evaluation System	\$2,029,639	\$3,956,639
12	Professional Development for all Education Employees	\$23,333	-
13	Classified Staffing Adequacy	-	-
14	STEM Education	\$23,333	-
15	Phase-in Full-Day Kindergarten Programs*	\$17,007,807	\$39,982,740
16	Early Intervention Support for Early Learning	-	-
17	Kindergarten Students Assessment	\$1,519,727	\$1,291,866
Total		\$221,043,020	\$257,327,124

*Costs already included in maintenance level of 2011-13 Biennial Budget

The QEC recognizes that our State is facing the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression. Therefore, in drafting these recommendations and identifying the associated costs, we have not recommended a specific phase-in schedule to the Legislature.

However, we also recognize that it is the QEC's charge to continue the momentum in education finance reform. The recommendations in this report and the body of work that supports them will serve as a road map for this and future legislatures to improve educational opportunities for all students in our State.