Urban School Turnaround Initiative

2013

Authorizing legislation: 3ESHB 2127 Sec. 501(2)(c)(vii) (2012 Supplemental Operating Budget)

Student and School Success
Andrew Kelly, Assistant Superintendent

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Executive Summary

The Urban School Turnaround Initiative (USTI) is the first investment of targeted state funding and technical assistance in urban schools dramatically affected by poverty and the opportunity gap. The hope is that these resources will dramatically affect the performance of these schools in a positive way.

The grants must be awarded to schools in the largest urban school district in the state. Washington’s largest urban district is Seattle Public Schools.

Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School, located in the same community, were selected to receive USTI grants in 2012. They are among the state’s lowest performing schools and have significant opportunity gaps. These schools are receiving a combined total of $2 million to make change happen.

These two schools went through a comprehensive needs assessment with input from parents, students, and school community, as well as the community at-large. Once the needs of the students were identified, they built a three-year action plan that includes support, intervention, and annual targets.

To track the success of the USTI grants and the action plans, they are using student achievement data collected from the past three years. Not only are they comparing their own data, they are also comparing themselves to schools with similar demographics that did not receive grants.

The USTI grants awarded to Aki Kurose Middle School and Rainier Beach High School will continue through the 2014–15 school year.
Introduction

The Urban School Turnaround Initiative (USTI) grants are available to two schools from the largest urban school district in the state. These schools are selected in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The purpose of this initiative is to increase student achievement and decrease the opportunity gap by:

a) Implementing and monitoring research-based models of instruction and services that have proven to be successful in closing the educational opportunity gap and improving student learning in low-performing schools.

b) Implementing and monitoring research-based models of professional development proven to be successful in building an educator workforce with the knowledge, skills, and backgrounds that align with the characteristics and needs of students in low-performing schools.

c) Maintaining the conditions necessary to support this work, including additional staff, services, materials and partnerships/agreements aligned with the needs of the teachers and students as well as the overall improvement process.

Each of the two schools is given budgetary discretion. They are held accountable for showing increased student achievement in core content areas, reducing the achievement gap, and, where applicable, increasing the graduation rate. In collaboration with the district as the fiscal agent, identified USTI schools are receiving funding for up to a combined total of $2 million.

In the 2013 Legislative session, Senate House Bill 1812 extended the time that districts could use these funds from August 1, 2014, to August 1, 2015.

Selected Schools

Seattle Public Schools (SPS) is the largest urban school district in the state. OSPI selected schools in collaboration with the district. Grants were awarded to Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School. The schools are located in the same community. Preference was given to the high school/middle school feeder pattern associated with the lowest performing schools in the district. These schools were also selected because they have significant educational achievement gaps.

Designation Process

The identification of Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School as USTI grant recipients is consistent with their identification in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Request as a Priority School and Emerging-Priority School. Priority schools include the lowest 5 percent of Title I-eligible and Title I-participating schools in the state. Priority schools are identified by achievement on statewide assessments in reading and math (combined) for three years, or by consistent graduation rates of less than 60 percent for three years. Emerging-Priority schools include the next 5 percent of Title I schools from the bottom of the list used to identify Priority schools, based on three years of data.
For the 2012–13 school year, Rainier Beach High School was designated as a Priority school based on their graduation rate of less than 60 percent. Aki Kurose Middle School was designated as an Emerging-Priority school based on reading and math (combined) statewide assessments. Both designations were based on three consecutive years of data. More information on the definitions and calculations used to identify priority and emerging schools can be found in Appendix A.

**Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

Each school arranged to have an external Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment helps each school identify the appropriate intervention strategies. The Comprehensive Needs Assessments for Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School were conducted during September 2012. This process was completed by the Center for Education Effectiveness based on the preference of the schools and district, in consultation with OSPI.

The school-level Comprehensive Needs Assessment uses disaggregated data. It includes a thorough evaluation of student needs, including those needs identified by the parents of the students served by the school, as well as the levels of support within the school community and in the external community at-large for students’ academic and social emotional needs. This external Comprehensive Needs Assessment process includes the following: classroom observation study focusing on instructional practices within the school; analysis of the alignment of school structures and practices with Student and School Success seven turnaround principles; and analysis of data around student performance, student demographics, mobility patterns, school feeder patterns, strategic allocation of resources, and as applicable, alternative school best practices, along with any additional elements included in the Academic Performance Audit under RCW 28A.657.040.

**Student and School Success Action Plan**

Based on their concurrent status as Priority and Emerging-Priority, Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School follow the school planning expectations from the Office of Student and School Success within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School have built a three-year plan addressing district-level capacity to support school improvement, implementation of school-wide interventions related to Needs Assessment and turnaround principles, and annual targets to meet the exit criteria. The schools use the online planning tool, Indistar, to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities as they develop their Student and School Success Action Plan. Indistar is an interactive tool centered on the seven turnaround principles:

- **Principle 1**: Provide strong leadership
- **Principle 2**: Ensure teachers are effective and able to improve instruction
- **Principle 3**: Expand time for student learning and teacher collaboration
- **Principle 4**: Strengthen the school’s instructional program
- **Principle 5**: Use data to inform instruction
- **Principle 6**: Establish a safe and supportive school environment
- **Principle 7**: Engage families and community
School-level leadership teams use data from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment to assess the current level of development on applicable indicators. Teams use selected indicators to create goals, tasks, and timelines to implement their plans. Schools continue to monitor progress on their plans over the three-year implementation process.

Comparisons of Student Achievement

The following analysis compares student achievement in the USTI schools to non-USTI schools with similar demographics. Please note, however, the schools selected for comparison have received other state-level support before the 2012–13 school year.

The visuals provide focus on the change in assessment data from the 2011–12 and 2012–13 school years. Student achievement percentages are used from the three years that designated the USTI schools as Priority and Emerging. These data are compared to the data after their first year of services and implementation.

Table 1: High School Comparison — Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rainier Beach HS</th>
<th>Renton Sr HS</th>
<th>Foster Sr HS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Count</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>1,284</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>1.0 %</td>
<td>0.6 %</td>
<td>0.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>19.8 %</td>
<td>31.4 %</td>
<td>31.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>52.0 %</td>
<td>34.1 %</td>
<td>19.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>14.1 %</td>
<td>16.6 %</td>
<td>22.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4.7 %</td>
<td>15.0 %</td>
<td>19.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free or Reduced-Price Meals</td>
<td>83.8 %</td>
<td>63.4 %</td>
<td>72.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>15.7 %</td>
<td>14.8 %</td>
<td>8.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Bilingual</td>
<td>22.8 %</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
<td>29.4 %</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chart A: High School Comparison — Percentage of Students Meeting Standard in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rainier Beach</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>64.8%</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Senior</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton Senior</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart B: High School Comparison — Percentage of Students Meeting Standard in Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rainier Beach</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Senior</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton Senior</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RAINIER BEACH HIGH SCHOOL
FOSTER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
RENTON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
### Table 2: Middle School Comparison — Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aki Kurose Middle School</th>
<th>Mercer Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Count</strong></td>
<td>742</td>
<td>982</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or</td>
<td>1.6 %</td>
<td>0.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaskan Native</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific</td>
<td>40.8 %</td>
<td>50.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islander</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>38.1 %</td>
<td>23.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>12.3 %</td>
<td>14.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3.1 %</td>
<td>6.2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free or Reduced-</td>
<td>86.4 %</td>
<td>73.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Meals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>16.8 %</td>
<td>11.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Bilingual</td>
<td>17.8 %</td>
<td>11.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart C: Middle School Comparison — Percentage of Students Meeting Standard in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AKI KUROSE MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
<td>62.6%</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
<td>74.6%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCER MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart D: Middle School Comparison — Percentage of Students Meeting Standard in Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AKI KUROSE MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
<td>78.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCER MIDDLE SCHOOL</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion and Next Steps

Guidance for the 2013–14 school year further emphasizes that accountability for implementing the Student and School Success Principles extends to the districts. Unlike school-level indicators, district-level indicators focus largely on system-wide policies, practices, and procedures that support identified schools. District indicators are also categorized within the seven turnaround principles. In addition, 2013–14 planning at the school level requires specific indicator selection. Seventeen expected indicators directly aligned to the seven turnaround principles will be incorporated into plans over the next year, if not currently addressed. A timeline of district and school expectations for the 2013–14 school year can be found in Appendix B on page 13.

The Urban School Turnaround Initiative grants awarded to Aki Kurose Middle School and Rainier Beach High School will be continued through the 2014–15 school year. Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School are participating in a three year implementation process as Priority and Emerging-Priority designated schools. It is too early to determine the overall effectiveness of this initiative. The most current assessment data is pulled from the same school year that the schools applied for the grant. Rainier Beach High School and Aki Kurose Middle School will be in their first year of implementation in 2013–14. Although student achievement improvement is seen with reading and math between 2011–12 and 2012–13, it cannot yet be linked as result of the three year implementation process of Priority and Emerging schools.

References


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Definitions and Calculations Used to Identify Reward, Priority, Focus, and Emerging Schools

The following definitions align with federal guidance. Calculations were approved as part of Washington State’s ESEA Flexibility Request.

**Reward Schools**

*Title I-participating school at least one of three years (2009–10, 2010–11, or 2011–12)*

Schools identified as Reward schools cannot have subgroups in the same performance band as schools on lists generated to identify Priority, Focus, or Emerging schools.

**Highest Performing:**

- Met Adequate Yearly Progress (2009–10, 2010–11) or Annual Measurable Objectives (2011–12) in both reading and math for three years in “all students” group and all subgroups;
- Sufficient N for all three years for Low Income subgroup for Reading and Math (N is at least 30 for 2009–10 and 2010–11, and N is at least 20 for 2011–12);
- At least 50 percent of students met standard on reading/math (combined) over the three-year period; and
- No negative trend in reading or math achievement over the three-year period.

**High-Progress:**

- In top 10 percent of Title I schools in reading/math (combined) for three years. OSPI used 1:1 ratio of achievement to change to create the rank-ordered list of schools.

**Priority Schools**

*Title I-participating schools and Title I-eligible secondary schools that graduate students*

N is at least 46 schools (at least 5 percent of total number of Title I schools in Washington State)

**Continuing Priority schools:**

- 27 SIG Schools (i.e., schools receiving federal School Improvement Grants [SIGs] over three years to implement one of four federal intervention models; the goal is to turn around performance, close persistent achievement gaps, and substantially improve student learning and outcomes.
- 19 lowest achieving schools from the list of “Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools” (PLAs) developed in fall 2011 to satisfy federal requirements in Washington State’s School
Improvement Grant Application and state statute (E2SSB 6696). The 19 schools include seven high schools with graduation rates less than 60 percent and the 12 lowest achieving schools in reading and math (combined) for three years.

**Newly Identified Priority schools:**

- The 18 lowest achieving schools in bottom 5 percent of Title I schools in reading and math (combined) for three years (2009–10, 2010–11, and 2011–12); does not include schools already designated as Priority or Focus for 2012–13.
- One Title I-eligible high school with graduation rates less than 60 percent for three years (2009–10, 2010–11, and 2011–12)

**Focus Schools**

*Title I-participating schools*

N is at least 92 schools (at least 10 percent of total number of Title I Schools in Washington State)

Selected from bottom of ranked list based on subgroup performance for reading/math (combined) for three years and/or for graduation rates for three years; schools are ranked based on difference between all students meeting standard (100 percent) and the performance of each subgroup.

**Continuing Focus schools:**


**Newly Identified Focus schools:**

- 15 schools from the bottom 10 percent of the ranked list of schools based on subgroup performance for reading/math (combined) for three years (2009–10, 2010–11, and 2011-12). These schools are the only schools in the bottom 10 percent of the ranked list that are not already designated as Continuing Priority or Continuing Focus schools.
Emerging Schools
Title I-participating schools

N is at least 138 schools (next 5 percent up from the bottom of the Priority list and next 10 percent up from the bottom of the Focus list.)

Continuing Emerging schools:

- Emerging schools in 2012–13 that were not re-classified as Priority or Focus schools for 2013–14.

Newly Identified Emerging schools:

- The 28 schools in next 5 percent of the list used to identify Priority schools and schools in the next 10 percent of the list used to identify Focus schools. These newly identified Emerging schools are the only schools in either list that are not already designated as Priority, Focus, or Emerging schools.
- 6 Title I-participating high schools with subgroups having graduation rates less than 60 percent over three years.

Appendix B: Timeline of 2013–14 Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 30, 2013</td>
<td>iGrants continuation for Urban Schools Initiative available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30, 2013</td>
<td>School plan submitted on Indistar; District Evidence of Principle 1 (Provide Strong Leadership)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28, 2014</td>
<td>School plan submitted on Indistar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 30, 2014</td>
<td>School End of Year Plan submitted on Indistar; District End of Year Plan showing implementation of all Expected indicators submitted to Indistar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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