Quality Education Council

Report to the 2014 Legislature

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WWW.K12.WA.US/QEC
January 10, 2014

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

The Honorable Brad Owen  
Lieutenant Governor of Washington  
P.O. Box 40400  
Olympia, WA 98504-0400

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

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

In recent years the Washington State Legislature has adopted several historic education reforms that will significantly improve educational outcomes for students in Washington State. Many of these reforms were initiated by the passage of Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 (2009), which in part, redefined the program of basic education and created the Quality Education Council. As part of its responsibilities, the QEC is charged with making recommendations to the Legislature with regard to the ongoing implementation of an evolving program of basic education.

This report reflects the ongoing work of the QEC to inform implementation by the Legislature of this redefined program of basic education. This report reaffirms the Council’s commitment to encouraging the Legislature to amply fund the program of basic education, to expand early learning opportunities for low-income at-risk 3 and 4 year old children, and to support high quality professional learning for educators. In addition, the report includes four specific recommendations for consideration by the 2014 Legislature related to:

- Education system goals and metrics
- 24 credit graduation requirement framework
- Summer learning loss
- Ongoing work of the QEC

The recommendations in this report are presented with the unanimous support of Council members, and we hope they help to inform the decisions of policy makers in the 2014 Legislative Session.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Senator Andy Hill  
Co-Chair, Quality Education Council

Representative Kristine Lytton  
Co-Chair, Quality Education Council
# Quality Education Council Report

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Acknowledgments

The Quality Education Council would like to thank all of the staff and members from the following agencies, work groups, and committees who contribute to the Council’s work.

Department of Early Learning

Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee

House Office of Program Research

Legislative Caucus Staff

Office of Financial Management

Office of the Governor

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Professional Educator Standards Board

Senate Committee Services

State Board of Education

Washington State Institute for Public Policy
Executive Summary

The Quality Education Council (QEC) was created to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the Legislature of an evolving program of basic education and the financing necessary to support such program. In an effort to enable the continued implementation of an evolving program of basic education the QEC is specifically charged with:

- Identifying measurable goals and priorities for the K-12 system for a 10-year time period, including:
  - Basic education goals
  - Ongoing strategies for coordination of statewide efforts to eliminate the achievement gap and reduce dropout rates
  - Strategies to increase learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics that are aligned with the STEM framework for action and accountability developed by the STEM Education Innovative Alliance, and
- Establishing strategic recommendations on the Program of Basic Education every four years, to inform policy and funding decisions of the Legislature and Governor.

In the process of developing its recommendations the QEC is to take into consideration the capacity of the K-12 system as reported by OSPI, the availability of data, and progress of implementing data systems.

This report reaffirms the Council’s commitment to encouraging the Legislature to amply fund the program of basic education, to expand early learning opportunities for low-income at-risk 3 and 4 year old children, and to support high quality professional learning for educators. In addition, the report includes four specific recommendations for consideration by the 2014 Legislature. These recommendations include:

1. Continue the work that has begun with the passage of ESSB 5491 (2013) to develop common statewide performance goals and indicators
2. Adopt the 24-Credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirement Framework for the class of 2019 (Appendix A)
3. Support efforts to reduce summer learning loss and close educational opportunity gaps for low-income students and English language learners
4. Modify the QEC’s authorizing statute to facilitate the ongoing work of the Council.

In preparation for the 2015 legislative session the QEC intends to focus its efforts on developing a plan to amply fund the program of basic education that will enable the Legislature to meet its constitutional duty under Article IX.

Introduction

Background to Washington State’s Recent Education Reform

Several historic K-12 education bills have been passed by the Washington State Legislature since 2009 which have set the stage for the current education reform underway. These bills include Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 (2009) which outlined a bold new system for state funding of basic education

1 RCW 28A.290.010
and created the Quality Education Council (QEC); Substitute House Bill 2776 (2010); Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6696 (2010); and Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5895 (2012).

**ESHB 2261 (2009)**
Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 was passed by the 2009 Legislature as the next step in an education reform effort that began in 2005 with the Washington Learns Steering Committee and was followed in 2007 by the Joint Taskforce on Basic Education Finance. ESHB 2261 redefines the state’s Program of Basic Education and requires full implementation of this program by 2018. The legislation outlined a new finance structure that is based on prototypical schools. The goal of this new structure was to increase transparency with regard to state funding for both certificated and classified staff and for materials, supplies and operating costs.

The bill also makes provision to increase instructional hours, provide the opportunity for enhanced high school diploma requirements, adds full-day kindergarten and highly capable education to the state’s definition of basic education, and requires a new transportation funding formula.

In order to effectively implement and accomplish the goals of the legislation, several different working groups were created and existing entities tapped. The legislation created the Funding Formula Technical Working Group, the Data Governance and K-12 Financial Data Group, the Levies and Local Funds Work Group, and the Compensation Technical Working Group to develop and help implement details of the bill. These four groups are temporary working groups which report to both the Legislature and the QEC.

An Early Learning Technical Working Group was also created at the request of the Governor to develop a program of early learning for all children birth to five. Additionally, the State Board of Education was directed to continue their role in designing an accountability framework and the Professional Educator Standards Board was tapped to develop and adopt teacher performance standards.

The bill states that the purpose of the QEC is “to recommend and inform the ongoing implementation by the Legislature of an evolving program of basic education and the financing necessary to support such program.” Statewide strategic recommendations are to be updated by the council every four years, with the intent of informing the Legislature and Governor’s educational policy and funding decisions, identifying measurable goals and priorities for the state’s educational system for a ten-year period, and enabling the state to continue to implement an evolving “Program of Basic Education.”

**SHB 2776 (2010)**
Substitute House Bill 2776 (2010) authorized in statute the first steps of implementation for the new funding system created by ESHB 2261. SHB 2776 provided baseline values for the prototypical school model which translated as closely as possible the funding levels of the 2009-2010 school year (adjusted for typical inflationary measures) in the new prototypical school categories. These baseline values were informed by the work of the Funding Formula Technical Working Group and recommended by the QEC.

This legislation also set specific implementation goals for full-day kindergarten; the reduction of class size for kindergarten through third grade; maintenance, supplies and operating costs; and pupil transportation.
ESSB 6696 (2010) and ESSB 5895 (2012)

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6696 (2010) set in motion transformative change in four areas:

1. More rigorous academic standards;
2. Improvements in teacher effectiveness and equity in teacher distribution;
3. Better use of data to drive improvement in student learning; and
4. Intervention in schools with persistently low student learning and graduation rates.

The bill created the Joint Select Committee on Education Accountability to examine options and models for significant state action for school districts that have demonstrated a persistent lack of improvement after being identified as a required action district. ESSB 6696 established the state’s responsibility to create a coherent and effective accountability framework for school and district improvement regardless of their federal Title I eligibility status.

This bill assigned, in statute, to the State Board of Education (SBE) the responsibility and oversight for creating an accountability framework which provides a unified system of support for challenged schools that aligns with basic education, increases the level of support based on the level of need, and uses data for decisions.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5895 (2012) further established a more specific framework for the full implementation of the teacher and principal evaluation system with statewide adoption in the 2013-14 school year and full implementation by school year 2015-16.

Recommendations to the 2014 Legislature

This report reaffirms the Council’s commitment to encouraging the Legislature to amply fund the program of basic education, to expand early learning opportunities for low-income at-risk 3 and 4 year old children, and to support high quality professional learning for educators. In addition, the report includes four specific recommendations for consideration by the 2014 Legislature. These recommendations include:

1. Continue the work that has begun with the passage of ESSB 5491 (2013) to develop common statewide performance goals and indicators
2. Adopt the 24-Credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirement Framework for the class of 2019 (Appendix A)
3. Support efforts to reduce summer learning loss and close educational opportunity gaps for low-income students and English language learners
4. Modify the QEC’s authorizing statute to facilitate the ongoing work of the Council.

In preparation for the 2015 legislative session the QEC intends to focus its efforts on developing a plan to amply fund the program of basic education that will enable the Legislature to meet its constitutional duty under Article IX.

Ample Funding for Basic Education

The QEC remains firmly committed to and strongly encourages the Legislature to continue making steady progress to meet the State's constitutional duty to amply fund basic education.
Expanded Early Learning Opportunities
The QEC remains firmly committed to supporting expanding early learning opportunities for low income at risk 3 and 4 year old children. The QEC sees early learning as a core opportunity gap closing strategy.

Professional Learning
Should additional education funding be available in 2014, the QEC urges the Legislature to provide for additional professional development to be used for implementing adopted Common Core Standards and the Teacher Principal Evaluation Program. This additional training funding should be used to replace lost instructional time.

Statewide reforms such as the Teacher and Principal Evaluation system, implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and increased statewide accountability create a greater need for coordinated, focused and aligned professional learning. The QEC recognizes the need for professional learning for all educational staff to implement these statewide reforms and improve student achievement.

Education System Goals and Metrics
The QEC recommends continued improvement in the coordination among state education agencies to develop common statewide indicators and performance goals that measure the health of the overall education system and progress toward improving student outcomes.

Specifically, revise ESSB 5491 as follows:
- Add the following to the list of state education agencies that must collaborate with the SBE: Governor’s Office, Education Research & Data Center in OMF, PESB, SBCTC, and DEL.
- Specify that if any state education agency uses one of the statewide indicators for strategic planning or other purposes, they must also use a common performance goal. In other words, there should not be different goals for high school graduation rates or reading performance.

The QEC's statutory responsibility to "identify measurable goals" for the educational system in Washington state should be delegated to the State Board of Education and carried out under the provisions of ESSB 5491.

The QEC recommends fine-tuning the statewide indicators and some other provisions of the law based on the State Board of Education's ESSB 5491 Report to the Legislature.

Specifically, add the following indicators:
- Percentage of high school graduates attaining certificates, degrees, credentials, and completing apprenticeships before age 26.
- Percentage of students meeting the college and career readiness standard on the high school English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments (SBAC).
- Five-year cohort high school graduation rate.
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- Percentage of students achieving English language proficiency on the state language proficiency assessment in grades K-8, and also separately measured for grades K-3.
- Percentage decrease in the student growth gap on state reading and mathematics assessments.
- Percentage of schools at or above the "Good" tier of the Washington Achievement Index.

Revise the following indicators:
- Clarify that the remedial course indicator is measured for students within four years of high school graduation.
- Change the 4th grade reading indicator to 3rd grade.
- Add student performance in English Language Arts and science to the 8th grade indicator (currently only measuring mathematics).

Make the following additional adjustments:
- Change the date to February 1st of each even-numbered year for the biennial report, rather than December 1st to assure the most up-to-date data.
- Remove the requirement that a performance goal may only be adjusted upward, to acknowledge the need to readjust when the new SBAC assessments are implemented.

24-Credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirement Framework (Appendix A)
The QEC recommends that the Legislature authorize implementation of the twenty-four credit graduation requirement framework established in ESHB 2261 (2009), beginning with the class of 2019.

The QEC recognizes that preparing students to be successful in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship requires increased rigor and achievement, including attaining a meaningful high school diploma with the opportunity to earn twenty-four credits. Additionally, the Legislature made investments for the 2014-15 school year to support the instruction and guidance that provides students the opportunity to complete twenty-four credits.

Summer Learning Loss
The QEC recommends that school districts be encouraged to deliver instructional programs in high-poverty and/or high ELL schools that are specifically designed to help close the education opportunity gap by preventing summer learning loss.

Specifically, amend the laws pertaining to the Learning Assistance Program as follows:
- School districts may use LAP funds to develop and deliver instructional programs specifically designed to help close the education opportunity gap by preventing summer learning loss.
- Districts must apply to OSPI and:
  - Describe the specific program (consistent with current law, beginning in 2016-17, the program must be from the state menu of evidence-based practices or proven to be effective);
  - Specify the school and target population to be served;
  - Specify the amount of LAP funds to be expended for the program;
o Identify the expected outcomes;
o Report student outcomes (as required under current law) separately for these programs.
• This initiative is for schools with enrollment of low-income and/or ELL students that is higher than the statewide average.

Ongoing Work of the QEC
The QEC recommends modifications to our authorizing statute to facilitate the continued work of the QEC.

Specifically:
• Repeal the limit of meeting four days per year.
• Authorize the QEC to convene subcommittees if necessary to complete its work, which could include both QEC members and additional nonmembers with particular expertise.

In addition, the QEC requests additional participation and staff support from Senate Committee Services and the House Office of Program Research, particularly during Council meetings, in order to assist staff from OSPI.

More information regarding the Quality Education Council, including past reports, work groups and meeting documents are available at: www.k12.wa.us/qec.
Appendix A – State Board of Education’s Proposed Career & College Ready Graduation Requirement Framework

ESHB 2261 (2009) affirmed in statute that the program of basic education included the opportunity for students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet graduation requirements that are intended to prepare them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship. To accomplish these outcomes, the bill provided an increase in instructional hours for Grades 7 through 12 and the opportunity for high school students to complete 24 credits, only if formally authorized and funded by the Legislature.

The SBE has worked with stakeholders to develop College and Career Ready Graduation Requirements, shown in the table below as the proposed state requirement. The SBE has adopted the graduation requirements that were determined to have no fiscal impact for the graduation class of 2016: an additional one credit of English and half a credit of Social Studies. Most recently, the SBE has worked with a variety of stakeholders in the career and technical education community to propose modifications to the 24-credit framework to ensure that it does not present obstacles for students pursuing coursework at Skill Centers or through career pathways that utilize CTE programs of study.

Students begin planning for the College and Career Ready Graduation Requirement at the end of 8th grade by exploring their interests and options with the creation of their High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP). All students are expected to make course-taking decisions that align with a pathway that prepares them for post-secondary education and/or training, and living wage employment opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Requirements for the Class of 2016 and Beyond</th>
<th>Proposed Career &amp; College Ready Graduation Requirements*</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (1 lab)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 (2 labs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career &amp; Technical Education</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Fitness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
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<td>2 (1 can be PPR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Electives</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language (or) Personalized Pathway Requirement (PPR)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (Both can be PPR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personalized Pathway Requirement:** Credits required to pursue a postsecondary pathway, including completing a CTE program of study, an industry certification, or 2 or 4-year college preparatory coursework. Personalized Pathway Requirements are identified in a student’s High School and Beyond Plan, and are locally determined.

*Shading indicates a change from the previous requirements.

2 Up to 2 credits can be waived locally for students who have attempted 24 credits.