



## 2011 PROPOSED STATEMENT: **ACHIEVEMENT GAPS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that eliminate the state's achievement gaps and create equitable opportunities for all students. Steps can include, but are not limited to, efforts to foster:

Effective, culturally competent educators who have high expectations for every child

- Ongoing collaboration that helps teachers maximize instructional time, align materials and fill in gaps with challenging and engaging curricula for all students
- A positive school climate that factors in the needs of all learners
- Student-focused practices that encompass intervention and leadership strategies for each child and every classroom with positive academic and behavioral intervention systems
- Strong leadership at every school; transformational leadership at high-needs schools
- Widespread, statewide use of longitudinal data and formative assessments, such as WaKids, that inventory academic and social-emotional benchmarks to determine which students will need additional support, so families and schools can provide appropriate intense, targeted intervention in a timely manner
- Consistently effective home-school communications and family engagement that assists in the instructional development of children
- A funding formula that ensures children with more need get adequate support to meet standards

We believe great educational outcomes are possible for all students, including students of color, students of diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, lower income status and students with special needs.

### **Context:**

Washington has entrenched racial and income disparities for all subjects tested, at all grades. This gap extends into who is enrolled in highly capable programs, who is placed into special education, and who is disciplined and in what manner. Ultimately it is reflected in who drops out, who goes to college and who goes to prison.

According to state analysis, the black/white and Hispanic/non-Hispanic white gaps in 10<sup>th</sup> grade math won't close for another 54 and 46 years, respectively. And while our white and Asian students are internationally competitive in math and science, our black and Hispanic eighth-graders perform at the level of students from developing nations <sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the populations most at risk are also the ones growing the most rapidly. The number of Hispanic students grew by 73 percent over the past decade; non-Hispanic white students, in contrast,

declined by 13 percent. As student demographics change, we need to make sure the services and supports that schools offer stay current.

**Why now?**

Nearly 33,900 students did not graduate from Washington’s high schools in 2009; the lost lifetime earnings in Washington for that class of dropouts alone totals more than \$8.8 billion. <sup>2</sup> That same year, the state passed landmark basic education reform; but it won’t be implemented until 2017-18 – and it might be pushed back later if funding is delayed.

**Here’s the outlook for the class of 2017-18.** These kids were fourth-graders in 2009-10. Here is who took the state’s standardized MSP – and who did **NOT** meet standard:

**2009-10/ Fourth-graders who did NOT meet standard**

Category	Number who took MSP (rounded)	Percentage of WA state students <u>not</u> meeting 4 <sup>th</sup> grade MSP state standards		
		Reading	Writing	Math
African-American	4,200	49.1%	51.8%	67.3%
Hispanic	12,800	56.3%	55.1%	67.0%
American Indian	1,900	49.6%	57.3%	65.5%
Pacific Islander	830	48.2%	44.1%	56.9%
Special Education	11,200	61.0%	68.8%	74.8%
Foster Care	430	52.5%	62.3%	72.6%
White	48,100	25.8%	34.3%	39.8%
All	77,000	32.8%	38.9%	46.3%

Source: <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/WASLCurrent.aspx?schoold=1&reportLevel=State&year=2009-10&gradeLevelId=4&groupLevel=District&waslCategory=6&chartType=1>

**Why is this issue important?**

**Cost to society:**

Students unable to meet standards are more likely to drop out. Dropouts are costly to our nation in both wasted tax dollars and human capital.

**As the Center for Labor Market Studies summarizes:**

- “Over a working lifetime, high school dropouts are estimated to earn \$400,000 less than those who graduated from high school. For males, the lifetime earnings loss is nearly \$485,000. The mean annual earnings of all adults ages 16-64 (including zero earners/jobless all year) over the 2006-2007 time period follow:
  - No high school diploma: \$11,031 per year
  - High School diploma: \$23,059 per year

- Bachelor's degree: \$50,863 per year
- Advanced degree: \$76,091 per year

“Due to their lower lifetime earnings and other sources of market incomes, dropouts will contribute far less in federal, state, and local taxes than they will receive in cash benefits, in-kind transfers, and correctional costs. Over their lifetimes, this will impose a net fiscal burden on the rest of society.

“By contrast, adults with high school diplomas contribute major fiscal benefits to the country over their lifetime. The combined lifetime fiscal benefits—including the payment of payroll, federal, and state income taxes—could amount to more than \$250,000 per graduated student.”<sup>3</sup>

- “In 2007, an astounding 16 percent of persons between 16 and 24 years of age (nearly 6.2 million people) were high school dropouts. Among these dropouts, 60.1 percent were men, 18.8 percent were Black, and 30.1 percent were Hispanic. In addition:
  - Nearly one in five U.S. men between the ages of 16-24 (18.9 percent) were dropouts in 2007.
  - Nearly three out of 10 Hispanics were dropouts (27.5 percent), including recent immigrants.
  - More than one of five Blacks had dropped out of school (21 percent) versus a dropout rate for Whites of 12.2%.”<sup>4</sup>

#### **Loss of human capital:**

- The incidence of institutionalization problems among young high school dropouts was more than 63 times higher than among young four-year college graduates.<sup>5</sup>
- The nation's young high school dropouts in 2006-2007 were nearly four times as likely as their peers with a bachelor's or higher academic degree to be living in a family with an annual income below 125% of the poverty line. Many of these families were dependent on cash income transfers and in-kind benefits from federal and state government (food stamps, rental subsidies, Medicaid benefits, federal and state EITC credits) to support themselves.<sup>6</sup>
- The incarceration rates of these young males are found to vary considerably with their educational attainment. Nearly 1 of every 10 young male high school dropouts was institutionalized on a given day in 2006-2007 versus fewer than 1 of 33 high school graduates, 1 of 100 of those out-of-school young men who completed 1-3 years of post-secondary schooling, and only 1 of 500 men who held a bachelor's or higher degree.<sup>7</sup>
- Slightly less than 46 percent of the nation's young high school dropouts were employed on average during 2008.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Loss of educational opportunities**

Washington state has several gaps – racial, income, English language learner. The gaps also affect children in foster care and special education. Children in special education, in particular:

- Are less likely to receive access to rigorous and full curriculum<sup>9</sup>
- Have limited academic and post-secondary opportunities<sup>10</sup>
- Have limited interaction with “abled” or academically mainstreamed peers and increased sense of social stigmatization<sup>11</sup>

## Why PTA/PTSA?

Washington State PTA's vision is making every child's potential a reality.

This issue falls under our Public Education Policies and Funding Legislative Principle, which calls for reducing the achievement gap. It also falls under resolutions:

- 4.3 Excellence in Our Education System;
- 4.7 Public School Dropout Prevention/Retrieval;
- 4.12 Parent and Community Involvement in Education;
- 19.3 Support for Children with Economic Disadvantages.

**Recommended WSPTA board action:** Do pass

**Issue submitted by:** Deb Blakeslee, of Stewart MS PTA 10.9.280 and Tacoma Council 10.9; Janet Stewart, of Tacoma Council 10.9; John Stokes of Interlake High School PTSA 2.3.150; Sebrena Burr of Seattle Council PTSA 6.15 and South Shore School PreK-8 PTSA 6.15.329; Stephan Blanford, of Beacon Hill International School, 6.15.42; Karen Campbell, of Interlake High School PTSA 2.3.150; Elizabeth Piekarczyk, of Mount Si High School PTSA 2.18.60 and Snoqualmie Valley SD Council 2.18

## Resources:

- Asa Mercer Middle School, study for success:  
<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/Mercer%20Middle%20School%20Case%20Study.pdf>
- Closing Opportunity Gaps in Washington's Public Education System, 2011:  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/AchievementGap/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2011.pdf>
- Closing Opportunity Gaps in Washington's Public Education System, 2010:  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/Cisl/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2010.pdf>
- Synthesis of state's 2008 recommendations  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/cisl/pubdocs/Synthesis2008Recommendations.pdf>
- Compilation of studies and resources (basis of state findings and recommendations):  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/AchievementGap/Studies.aspx>

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<sup>1</sup> OSPI's Trends in Mathematics and Science Study, as cited in 2010 Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Report, page 5, <http://www.k12.wa.us/Cisl/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2010.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education; and cited in OSPI's 2011 Achievement Gap and Accountability Report, page 5, <http://www.k12.wa.us/AchievementGap/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2011.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, Boston, "Left Behind in America: The Nation's Dropout Crisis," [http://www.clms.neu.edu/publication/documents/CLMS\\_2009\\_Dropout\\_Report.pdf](http://www.clms.neu.edu/publication/documents/CLMS_2009_Dropout_Report.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, Boston, Consequences for Dropping Out," [http://www.clms.neu.edu/publication/documents/The\\_Consequences\\_of\\_Dropping\\_Out\\_of\\_High\\_School.pdf](http://www.clms.neu.edu/publication/documents/The_Consequences_of_Dropping_Out_of_High_School.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies, Consequences for Dropping Out,"

<sup>6</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies, Consequences for Dropping Out,"

<sup>7</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies, Consequences for Dropping Out,"

<sup>8</sup> The Center for Labor Market Studies, Consequences for Dropping Out,"

<sup>9</sup> (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Fierros & Conroy, 2002);

<sup>10</sup> (Harry & Klingner, 2006)

<sup>11</sup> (Gartner & Lipskey, 1999; National Research Council, 2002)