

November 13, 2006

To: WACTE Members  
From: Bob Cooper  
re: Washington Learns

### ***Bill Gates says high school obsolete, calls for system change***

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates says schools in Washington need change – not tinkering around the edges, but full system change. That was his message this morning to a crowd of about 1,000 as the keynote speaker for the adoption of the Washington Learns report to the Washington legislature.

Gates says the elements of change that are needed are:

1. High Standards – that ours are “unacceptably low” in areas such as math and science requiring only two years each;
2. High Accountability – that the only consequences now for low performing schools are for the students and not teachers, administrators or policy makers;
3. Flexible Personnel Policies – that, like the private sector, schools should pay more for those with high-demand skills (e.g., math and science); and
4. Innovation – that regulations are so strict that anyone wanting to institute research-based strategies to raise achievement is likely to be prevented from doing so.

“People who cling to the old ways in times of change get left behind,” he said.

Governor Christine Gregoire told the Steering Committee and audience that we have a 20<sup>th</sup> century education system in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that needs to change. She focused on the “need to attract and retain the best and the brightest” to teaching from kindergarten through college, including the higher pay called for by Gates.

Gregoire noted that she does not see much difference between what is happening in most classrooms now and what was happening when she was a student teacher in the 1960’s.

She emphasized the need for attention to readiness to learn, math and science education, and personalizing education. The governor is also pushing for accountability in comparison to the “global challenge states” identified in the report. Comparing to the 49 other states, she said, measures using a mediocre yardstick.

Several Steering Committee members echoed a phrase used earlier by member Eric Liu, saying this is nothing short of a “Manhattan Project” for education, alluding to the crash program that developed the atomic bomb during world war II.

Steering Committee Member Glenn Anderson (R-5) filed a “minority report” and was the lone “no” vote on adoption of the recommendations. It fails, he says, to comply with the single mandate from the legislature: to provide *“recommendations about how the state can best provide stable funding for student learning for young children, students in the public schools and students in public colleges and universities.”*

The committee’s final report is on-line at <http://www.washingtonlearns.wa.gov/FinalReport.pdf>

TVW will broadcast today’s “Education Summit” Wednesday at 7 pm. The presentation should be available at a later date on TVW’s website for viewing or purchase of the DVD/tape.

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Listed below are the recommendations from the report that will or could affect teacher preparation. They are presented here in the same order in which they appear in the report. This list does not include those that will affect higher education generally, nor does it include some substantive changes in school finance and other areas WACTE members do not specifically address in their programs.

Note the bolded section on page 5. It essentially calls for a complete overhaul of teacher education in Washington.

These recommendations come with a lot of context. I encourage you to read the entire, 56 page Washington Learns final report to see them in the big picture. Those that are grouped together are separate elements all addressing a common goal.

Any feedback on any or all of these elements will be useful in the next 30 days or so. Please also circulate to any appropriate faculty for their responses.

I need to formulate comment/ response on all of these, and will work with Frank Kline and others to prioritize WACTE’s efforts.

# Washington Learns

## WORLD-CLASS, LEARNER-FOCUSED, SEAMLESS EDUCATION

### Recommendations (Assignments):

The Department of Early Learning will work with higher education institutions and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop strategies for substantially increasing the availability of early learning teacher training. Among the issues that will be addressed are: credit for community-based training and experience, transfer of credits across institutions, availability of classes in rural communities and during evening and weekend hours, a stronger link between early learning courses in high school and early learning careers, and math and science education for early learning teachers.

By July 2008, the Department of Early Learning will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop math and science curriculum materials. These materials will be used by community organizations and higher education institutions to train and educate child care and early education teachers.

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will adopt **international performance standards for math and science** benchmarked to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) or the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and will adopt high school graduation requirements aligned with those standards.

By July 2008 for math and by July 2009 for science, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education will identify no more than three curricula for elementary, middle and high school, along with diagnostic and other materials that are aligned with the new standards.

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will incorporate into their accountability plan the requirement that schools must use one of the state curricula, with exceptions granted by waiver from the State Board of Education for districts that demonstrate outstanding student performance in math and science.

School districts and colleges and universities will increase access to more math and science courses and tutorials.

By December 2007, the Professional Educator Standards Board will adopt new math and science knowledge requirements for people entering teacher preparation programs, and certification requirements for math teachers in middle and high schools that will prepare them to teach state math and science standards.

Within appropriated funds, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop and provide training programs, or contract with curriculum publishers for training programs, for teachers using the state math and science curriculum.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will provide math and science content training for teachers who need the foundation knowledge to support state instruction in math and science.

The state will continue to partner with the Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) program and other public-private efforts to improve the curriculum and teaching of science.

Subject to appropriations, by June 2008, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will expand the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program for teachers who commit to a period of teaching math or science in Washington.

Subject to appropriations, by June 2008, the Professional Educator Standards Board will expand the Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification Program for business professionals and instructional assistants to be licensed to teach math and science.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will lead a public-private partnership that will pilot math and science pathways that begin in middle school and progress through high school to college and career. These demonstration projects will address the technology and curriculum needs of students and professional development needs of staff.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will implement a regional best practices demonstration project in 2007-2008 that coordinates curriculum, assessment, teacher training, and family involvement (for English Language Learners). By December 2009, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will use the results of this project to recommend changes to state policies and practices on how we educate English language learners

Colleges and universities will use technology to serve more students who are unable to get to a college campus, and to accommodate students who learn better using technology.

Subject to appropriations, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop instructional coach training programs, with an initial focus on math coaching to be offered during the summer of 2007.

By June 2007, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will redesign and implement a novice teacher assistance program based on best practices and proven strategies to improve new teachers' skills and retain them in our schools.

By December 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will review teacher preparation requirements in cultural understanding, will make recommendations for strengthening these standards, and will also recommend strategies to increase educator diversity.

Beginning in 2007, the education ombudsman will assist the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and school districts in implementing professional development activities on cultural competence, individualizing education and using the community to build cultural understanding.

(This one is for Cap Peck in particular)

The Office of Financial Management will coordinate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the four-year institutions of higher education in developing a longitudinal student data system to support the P-20 Council. The P-20 Council will work with the Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) program to establish indicators and a process to track progress toward the ten-year goals established by Washington Learns and included in this report.

By December 2007, the State Board of Education will develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for an accountability system.

**Subject to appropriations, by June 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will set performance standards and develop, pilot and implement a professional teaching level assessment and licensing system based on demonstrated teaching skill.**

**By June 2009, the Professional Educator Standards Board will revise the requirements for college and university teacher preparation programs to match the new knowledge- and skill-based performance system.**

**Subject to appropriations, by June 2009, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will design and pilot a professional development delivery system that focuses on teacher knowledge and skill areas identified by the state.**

Subject to appropriations, beginning in the summer of 2007, schools and school districts will provide educators, including teachers, instructional specialists, support staff and instructional assistants, with time for quality professional development opportunities. The first priority for professional development is math and science content and instruction.

By the 2008-2009 school year, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction will work with civic leaders, the Association of Washington School Principals, the Washington Association of School Administrators and others to establish a public-private partnership to launch a Leadership Academy for principals and other administrative staff.

Again, feedback is appreciated. Please aim to provide your thoughts by mid-December.

Thanks.

°Bob Cooper