

## Small Agency Cabinet Briefing

Academic Achievement and Accountability Commission  
600 South Washington Street  
Olympia, WA 98504  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/accountability>  
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Primary purpose (28A.655.020)

- Provide oversight of the state's educational accountability system

Duties (28A.655.030)

- Adopt performance improvement goals (which may include Washington assessment of student learning, or WASL, score targets; high school graduation rates; and grade 7-12 dropout rates)
- Adopt performance standards ("cut scores") on the WASL – the state's criterion-referenced exams covering reading, writing, math and science
- Establish criteria to identify successful schools and school districts
- Adopt criteria to identify schools and districts in need of assistance to assure student academic success and criteria to identify those in which significant numbers of students persistently fail to meet standards
- Identify schools and school districts in which state intervention measures will be needed and identify a range of appropriate intervention strategies
- Annually report progress, findings and recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Board of Education

### **Agency organization, budget**

The Commission has 3 FTE staff: an executive director, a senior research analyst, and an executive assistant. Most Commission funding comes from a budget proviso granting \$310,000 each fiscal year. Most of the salary and benefits (93%) provided to the executive assistant come from separate budget authority to OSPI for the WASL. In addition, by statute, OSPI is directed to provide most of the technical assistance and logistical support needed by the Commission. (28A.655.030(3))

The Commission is comprised of nine members. Four of the members are appointed by the Governor. Four of the members are selected by the Governor from a list of three nominees submitted by each of the four legislative caucuses. These 8 members are subject to Senate confirmation and serve staggered four-year terms. The state superintendent of public instruction serves as a voting member. The Commission is to be composed of a balance of individuals from within and outside the public education system, and shall include business leaders, educators and parents. The Commission usually meets monthly.

## **Pressing Issues**

### **High school graduation requirement for students in 2008 and beyond**

The 2004 Legislature passed HB 2195 which directed the Commission to review 10<sup>th</sup> grade student performance standards (“cut scores”) and make any necessary adjustments, which are subject to legislative review prior to implementation for the subjects of the 10th grade WASL. This work has been completed. The Commission was also directed to consider a variety of models for determining how well students should have to score on the 10th grade state assessments (WASLs) in order to earn a certificate of academic achievement, a requirement for graduation beginning in 2008. That review is nearing completion, and appears likely to result in a recommendation to modify the statutory timeline for when students must meet the state standard, the proficient level, in each subject area. The Legislature has great interest in this issue and will be reviewing the Commission's work during the 2005 legislative session.

### **State accountability system development**

The Commission’s first responsibility upon its creation in 1999 was to develop a state accountability system proposal. “Accountability” was defined in the original 1993 education reform legislation (House Bill 1209) as including assessment reporting, state assistance for struggling schools, rewards for successful schools, and state intervention in persistently low performing schools. A proposal was made to the 2001 legislature, but no legislation authorizing an accountability system has yet been enacted. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 defines certain accountability measures and conditions for receipt of federal Title I funds. This results in a different accountability system based on whether or not Title I funds are provided to a school or school district. Finally, state law, in effect since 1999, prohibits state intervention measures in persistently low performing schools and districts (28A.655.030(1)(e)), acts NCLB supports. Developing and authorizing a state educational accountability system that includes and is applied consistently in all schools, regardless of Title I funding status, is a complex challenge for policy makers and stakeholders alike.

### **High school graduation rate goals**

The Commission adopted a high school graduation rate goal of 85% in 2014 (both in the aggregate and for subgroups of students). For the intervening years, 2003 through 2013, the target is the statewide average rate for 2002, estimated to be 66%, (unless a school or district’s rate is lower, in which case the target requires the school or district to improve its own rate by one percentage point per year until its rate equals the state average for 2002). From 2003 through 2013, the goal applies only in the aggregate, and not for subgroups of students. The Commission is reviewing up-to-date state graduation rate information and the previously set goals, and may consider revising the goals in the spring of 2005, following consultations with the Legislature during the 2005 session.

## Board Member Listing by Board Position

### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION (ES003)

Agency Authority	350 - Supt of Public Instruction	Senate Conf.	Y	Positions:	Maximum	009
Authoriztn.	RCW 28A.655.020	Public Disc.	N		Minimum	
Rem. Auth.		Term Length	048		Actual	009
		Meetings/Yr.	11			

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
001	Kelly, James 105 14th Ave. Seattle, WA 98122	A	AA	07/01/2003	06/30/2007

Terms Served 01  
Position a member  
Comments

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
002	Esparza, Richard 169302 Hanks Rd. Grandview, WA 98932	A	H	08/20/2004	09/30/2007

Terms Served 01  
Position a member  
Comments

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
003	Schmit, Leonora 1246 Meyers Street Tacoma, WA 98465	A	AP	07/01/2003	06/30/2007

Terms Served 02  
Position a member  
Comments

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
004	St. Peter, Hummingbird 2230 E. 11th Ave. Spokane, WA 99202	A	NA	01/01/2004	06/30/2007

Terms Served 01  
Position a member  
Comments

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
005	Bouse, Shelly 3001 125th SE #1-C Bellevue, WA 98005	A	C	05/13/2002	06/30/2006

Terms Served 01  
Position a member  
Comments Nominated by  
Senate Democrats

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
006	Spady, Jim 4426 Second Avenue NE Seattle, WA 98105	A	C	09/24/2001	06/30/2005

Terms Served 02  
Position a member  
Comments Nominated by  
Senate Republicans

## Board Member Listing by Board Position

### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION (ES003)

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
007	Fisher, Dave 2800 Center Drive MS: DP2-113 Dupont, WA 98327	A	C	01/17/2003	06/30/2006
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	Chair		
		Comments	Nominated by House Democrats		
Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
008	Himmler, Art 510 Chambers Steilacoom, WA 98388	A	C	09/20/2001	06/30/2005
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	Nominated by House Republicans		