

# Chewelah Schools – *Where Dreams Begin*

*Our Mission: Ensuring learning for all students*

CHEWELAH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 36  
STEVENS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

## NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Board of Directors of Chewelah School District No. 36, Stevens County, Washington will hold a Special Meeting on January 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM. Due to COVID restrictions, the meeting will be remote via internet connection. The meeting is called for the purpose of considering and acting upon the following agenda items:

1. Call meeting to order
2. Flag salute
3. Smart goals
  - Student achievement
  - Board communication
4. Review/update of Visioning Process
5. Mastery based learning
6. WSSDA December 2020 *Policy and Legal News*
7. Adjourn

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CHEWELAH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 36  
STEVENS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

/s/ Richard McFarland

Secretary to the Board of Directors

Persons with disabilities who would like to request assistance, services, or accommodations to attend school district functions are asked to call 685-6800, extension 1002.

## What are SMART goals?

SMART is an acronym that stands for **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant/Results Oriented** and **Time-based**.

SMART is an acronym that you can use to guide your goal setting.

Its criteria are commonly attributed to Peter Drucker's **Management by Objectives** concept. The first known use of the term occurs in the November 1981 issue of *Management Review* by George T. Doran. Since then, Professor **Robert S. Rubin** (Saint Louis University) wrote about SMART in an article for The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. He stated that SMART has come to mean different things to different people, as shown below.

To make sure your goals are clear and reachable, each one should be:

- **Specific (simple, sensible, significant).**
- **Measurable (meaningful, motivating).**
- **Achievable (agreed, attainable).**
- **Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).**
- **Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).**

Professor Rubin also notes that the definition of the SMART acronym may need updating to reflect the importance of efficacy and feedback. However, some authors have expanded it to include extra focus areas; SMARTER, for example, includes **Evaluated** and **Review**.

### Example:

By June 2022, 75% of all students will achieve proficiency in core subject areas as measured by SBA or common district level assessments.

By April 2021, Chewelah School District has a written, board adopted Communication policy and a written Board Communication Plan which includes stakeholders – staff, community, students.

## KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

Acting on behalf of the people of each community, the school board will fulfill the following functions:

**Vision:** The board, with participation by the community, shall envision the future of the school district's educational program and formulate goals, define outcomes and set the course for the school district. This will be done within the context of racial, ethnic and religious diversity and with a commitment to education excellence and equity for all students.

**Structure:** To achieve the vision, the board will establish a structure which reflects local circumstances and creates an environment designed to ensure all students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework. This includes employing a superintendent, developing and approving policies, formulating budgets, setting high instructional and learning goals for staff and students, and nurturing a climate conducive to continuous improvement.

**Accountability:** The board's accountability to the community will include adopting a system of continuous assessment of all conditions affecting education, including assessments for measuring staff and student progress towards goals. The public will be kept informed about programs and progress. Staff and board training will be provided to ensure continuous improvement of student achievement.

**Advocacy:** The board shall serve as education's key advocate on behalf of students and their schools. The board shall work to advance the community's vision for its schools, pursue the district's goals, encourage progress and energize systemic change and ensure that students are treated as whole persons in a diversified society.

Cross References:	Board Policy 0100	Commitment to Strategic Planning
	Board Policy 0300	Planning Process
	Board Policy 0700	Strategic Plan Evaluation
	Board Policy 1310	Policy Adoption, Manuals and Administrative Procedures
	Board Policy 1810	Annual Goals and Objectives
	Board Policy 1820	Evaluation of the Board

**Adoption Date:** 04.01.97  
**Chewelah School District #36**  
**Revised:** 12.18.08  
**Classification:** Priority

## ACCOUNTABILITY GOALS

### A. ~~High School Graduation Rate Goals~~

~~The board shall annually adopt district-wide graduation goals and direct each high school to annually establish goals, subject to board approval, to increase the percentage of on-time graduates receiving a high school diploma beginning with the class of 2004.~~

~~The minimum graduation rate goals through 2013 shall be as defined in WAC 180-105-060. Graduation rate goals in 2014 and each year thereafter for each group of students, identified in Federal requirements, shall not be less than 85 percent.~~

### B. ~~District and School Reading and Mathematics Improvement Goals~~

~~The board shall adopt district-wide performance improvement goals for reading and mathematics in grades four, seven, and ten; and direct each school in the district that administers the Washington Assessment of Student Learning to adopt performance improvement goals to increase the percentage of students meeting the standard in fourth, seventh and tenth grade reading and mathematics.~~

~~The following goals and calculation methodologies shall be established to measure and improve student achievement in reading and mathematics in fourth, seventh and tenth grades as measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning administered in the spring of 2003 through and including the spring of 2013.~~

- ~~1. The baseline of achievement for the district and schools on the fourth, seventh, and tenth grade reading and mathematics assessments are the starting points established using the federal requirements in the Washington State No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Accountability Plan.~~
- ~~2. The goal for the district and for each school is to increase the percentage of students in the following categories in meeting or exceeding the reading and mathematics improvement goals on the state uniform bar as established using the federal requirements in the Washington State No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Accountability Plan:~~
  - ~~a. All students;~~
  - ~~b. Students of each major racial and ethnic group;~~
  - ~~c. Economically disadvantaged students;~~
  - ~~d. Students with disabilities; and~~
  - ~~e. Students with limited English proficiency.~~
- ~~3. The district and all schools shall demonstrate satisfactory progress toward the performance improvement goals by meeting the federal requirements or by showing improvements using the alternative "Safe Harbor" calculation.~~

~~Once a year the board shall issue a report to parents and present it in a public meeting. The report shall include the following:~~

- ~~A. The district's and buildings' improvement goals.~~
- ~~B. Student performance relative to the goals.~~
- ~~C. District and building plans to achieve the goals, including curriculum and instruction, parent and guardian involvement, and resources available to parents and guardians to assist students in meeting the state standards.~~

Annually the district will report in a news release the district's progress toward meeting the district and building goals. The report shall also be included in each school's annual school report.

### **Adopting Performance Improvement Goals**

Annually, the board will do the following:

1. Adopt district-wide performance improvement goals for the measures included in the Washington school improvement framework.
2. Direct each school in the district that enrolls students in grades three through eight and/or high school to establish goals to increase the measures included in the Washington school improvement framework consistent with state and district goals.

The district and each school in the district will establish English language arts and mathematics improvement goals using the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (the "ESEA") to determine the increase in requirements described above for all students and for each of the groups required by the ESEA.

The district and each school will establish annual performance improvement goals in accordance with the following:

1. As a starting point for determining annual performance improvement goals, the district and each school will use the most recently available results of the school improvement framework.
2. The performance improvement goals for assessments administered in the spring of 2027 must be consistent with the goals outlined in the state consolidated plan. At a minimum, the district and each school must adopt the following goals:
  - a. Ninety percent of students eligible to be assessed will meet standard on the required state assessments.
  - b. The graduation rate for all students and each of the groups required by the ESEA will not be less than ninety percent.

- c. Performance improvement goals using the requirements of the ESEA to determine the increase in the percentage of students making progress toward English language proficiency included in the Washington school improvement framework. [The language in 2.c. is only necessary if the district administers the English language proficiency assessment described in the Washington accountability plan approved by the U.S. Department of Education.]
3. The district and each school must establish goals for each of the Washington school improvement framework indicators for all students and for each of the groups required by the ESEA.

### **Reporting Progress**

Annually, the board will report the following information at a public meeting and in writing:

1. The district's performance improvement goals;
2. Student performance relative to the goals; and
3. District and building plans to achieve the goals, including curriculum and instruction, parent and guardian involvement, and resources available to parents and guardians to assist students in meeting the state standards.

Annually, the district will report the district's progress toward meeting the district and building goals in a news release to local media.

In each school's annual performance report, the district will include school-level goals, student performance relative to the goals, and a summary of school-

Legal References:	RCW 28A.655.100	Performance goals – Reporting
	WAC 180-105-020	Reading and Mathematics Goals
	WAC 180-105-060	High School Graduation Goals
	RCW 28A.655.110	Annual school performance report—
		Model report form
	WAC 180-105-040	Definitions

Management Resources:

2020 - May May Issue

2010 - June Issue

Policy News, December 2005

Policy News, October 2003

*Policy News, June 1999*

*Policy News, June 1998*

*Policy News, August 1998*

Requirements Revised

A+ Commission's Revised Performance  
Improvement Goals

Accountability Bill Includes Policy  
Implications

Boards must set reading goals

CORRECTION: Reading goals policy

**Adoption Date: 12.17.03**

**Chewelah School District #36**

**Revised: 12.03; 04.19.06, 05.20.09**

**Classification: Required**

## ANNUAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Each year the board will formulate goals and objectives. The goals and objectives may include but are not limited to the board functions of vision, structure, accountability and advocacy.

At the conclusion of the year the board shall reflect on the degree to which the goals and objectives have been accomplished by conducting a board self-evaluation and engaging in board development activities where needed.

### Focus Goals for 2004-05

District Motto: "Where Dreams Begin"

Vision: The Chewelah School District, in partnership with parents and the community, strives to provide a safe environment where all students learn and practice the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to be responsible citizens, productive members of society, and successful lifelong learners.

District Mission: Provide academic success for students through quality teaching, curriculum resources, and extra-curricular academic and athletic experiences.

### PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Clear and Shared Vision and Process - Everybody knows where they are going and why. That vision is shared--everybody is involved. The vision is developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistency of purpose.
2. High Standards and Expectations - Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and that they can teach all students. There is recognition of barriers for some students to overcome, but the barriers are not insurmountable. Students become engaged in an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

The Board recognizes that standards and expectations are only as meaningful as the people responsible to implement the adopted guidelines. Therefore, the Board supports the selection and retention of employees with a history of setting and achieving high standards for themselves, and those they serve.

Goal 1 - Hire employees with a personal and professional history of high achievement.

#### Objectives

- a. Include expectation for individuals with high expectations and standards in all employee advertisements.
- b. Recognized expectations and standards in the employee evaluation process.

Adoption Date: 01.16.02  
Chewelah School District #36  
Revised: 07.16.04  
Classification: Priority



HELPING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TRANSLATE LAW INTO ACTION

# Tribal Regalia: WELCOME AT SCHOOL

Data Sharing Between  
Tribes and Schools

Mastery-Based  
Learning and Equity

WAPATO HIGH SCHOOL

WASDA

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL  
DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

#### ESSENTIAL

- Policy is required by state or federal law; or
- A specific program requires a policy in order to receive special funding.

#### ENCOURAGED

- While not required by law, policy is intended to reflect the spirit of existing state or federal law thus inuring districts to potential litigation;
- While not required by law, policy has potential to benefit the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, employees, directors, and/or the local community.

#### DISCRETIONARY

- Policy addresses an action likely deemed important by the board; or
- Policy would likely be deemed appropriate due to special circumstances of the board; or
- Policy communicates district philosophy that a board may want to promote to employees and/or the community.

## When Winston Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940

(after generally being considered a has-been and a peculiar fellow) he told his desperate countrymen and women that he had nothing to offer them "but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." What he really had to offer was the tenacity to "never, never, never give up," even when faced with victorious and vicious Nazis. The situation went from bad to worse when the Germans began "the Blitz," shifting their attack away from battling the Royal Air Force in the skies to bombing London and southern England instead. As those he led sheltered in basements, suffering civilian casualties and mass destruction and enduring blackout regulations, Churchill told them, "If you're going through hell—keep going."

Many of us are looking forward to saying farewell to 2020. Somehow, we equate the calendar year with the challenges that emerged within it. We're more than ready for a fresh start in a new year. Plus, the year 2021 holds the hope that a vaccine is on the way. But even with that hope, we know we must first confront the dark winter ahead. As reported in the [New York Times](#), epidemiologists predict that the next three months will include a death toll that "will be just horrible."

During 2020, school board directors have kept going. There have been no easy answers as you've faced the critique and criticism of your distressed community. Nevertheless, your district's leadership has found new ways to teach and care for your students and community. We've learned that innovation and collaboration solve problems. Let's keep going. This issue of *Policy & Legal News* hopes to support you in the continued evolution of innovation and collaboration. Please see "Mastery-Based Learning and Equity" on page 6 for support in developing and expanding this timely and equitable approach to learning. Please see "Government to Government" on page 3 to find more about fostering cultural responsivity and collaborating with local tribes to close the tribal student opportunity and achievement gap.

Please know that your ongoing leadership, on your board, in your community, and in our state is making a positive difference for students. Thank you, school board directors, for what you do. Keep going.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and tenacity for 2021.



Best,  
Abigail Westbrook, J.D., Editor

## HELPING SCHOOL DISTRICTS TRANSLATE LAW INTO ACTION

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The following WSSDA model policies and procedures have been revised. For your convenience, updated market-up documents are included with this issue of *Policy & Legal News*.

### ESSENTIAL

- 2410/2410P - High School Graduation Requirements
- 2413 - Equivalency Credit
- 3255/3255P - School-Based Threat Assessment\*
- 6220 - Bid or Request for Proposal Requirements

### ENCOURAGED

- 2402/2402P - English Language Arts Mastery-Based Credit
- 2403/2403P - Math Mastery-Based Credit
- 2404/2404P - Science Mastery-Based Credit
- 2405/2405P - Social Studies Mastery-Based Credit
- 2406/2406P - The Arts Mastery-Based Credit
- 2407/2407P - Health and Physical Education Mastery-Based Credit
- 2408/2408P - Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Education Mastery-Based Credit (NEW Procedure)
- 2409/2409P - World Language Mastery-Based Credit
- 4050/4050F - Data Sharing Agreement Between the District and Local Tribe (NEW)
- 4300 - Limiting Immigration Enforcement in Schools\*

### DISCRETIONARY

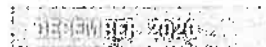
- 6230 - Relations with Vendors

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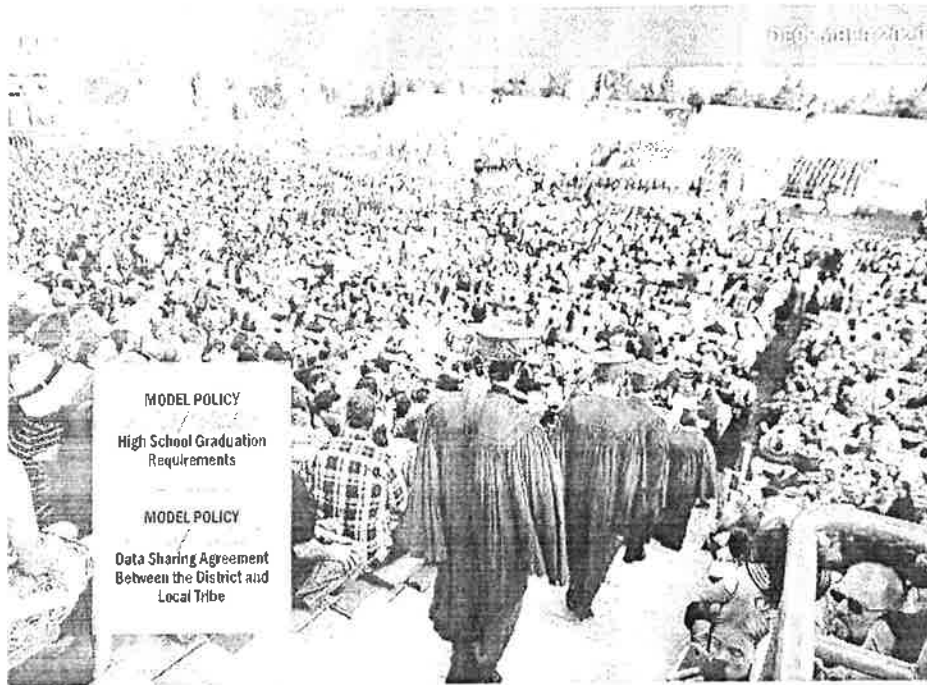
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- 6000 Series

*\*This is a non-substantive revision. As stated in WSSDA Policy 1310, "Non-substantive editorial revisions and changes in administrative, legal, and/or cross-references need not be approved by the board."*

**WSSDA**



WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL  
DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION



MODEL POLICY  
High School Graduation  
Requirements

MODEL POLICY  
Data Sharing Agreement  
Between the District and  
Local Tribe

# School districts and local tribes

By Cindy Kelly WSSDA Tribal Ambassador,  
Port Angeles School Board Director, and  
former member of WSSDA's Board of Directors

In 2018, WSSDA's Board of Directors established the WSSDA Government-to-Government Task Force. The focus of our task force was to create a reference guide outlining all state and federal requirements of school districts with regard to working with tribal partners, including tribal consultation pertaining to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), government-to-government memorandums of understanding, Since Time Immemorial curriculum, and tribal compact schools. In 2020, the Government-to-Government Task Force supported two legislative bills that became law.

## Tribal Regalia

The first legislative bill was House Bill (HB) 2551—Graduation Ceremonies/Tribal Regalia, which specifically permits students who are members of a federally recognized tribe to wear traditional tribal regalia and objects of cultural significance at graduation ceremonies and related events. The history of wearing a mortarboard cap and gown at graduation is believed to date back to twelfth-century Europe, when many teachers wore clerical clothing (hoods and gowns) and

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students adopted the same look. Some historians think that the gowns were especially necessary to stay warm in the unheated buildings where graduations took place. This academic dress from Europe started to gain popularity in America around the time of independence. There was a decline in such dress after the Civil War, but in 1894, the American Intercollegiate Commission met at Columbia University and standardized the style and color for caps and robes. Although Washington State never adopted an official standard for graduation attire, this Eurocentric practice of wearing the robe and mortarboard cap has generally been the expectation.

High School Graduation is a joyous time. As school board directors, it is a time for celebrating student achievement alongside of our district's students, their families, and communities. Sadly, some students who are members of local tribes have been prohibited from wearing their tribe's traditional regalia or objects of Native American cultural significance along with or attached to a gown at graduation ceremonies. This prohibition was hurtful because many tribal nations view the wearing of traditional regalia and items of cultural significance as sacred to cultural traditions. Allowing tribal students to wear tribal regalia at graduation not only honors the student, it builds community relationships and cultural understanding that help improve the success of tribal families and communities.

Prior to the passage of the bill, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) issued a letter calling upon school district leaders and staff to foster inclusivity and cultural responsiveness within commencement and to develop policies underscoring the sovereign and singular rights of first peoples. The letter stated, "This is a tremendous opportunity for schools to acknowledge this important honor and legal right of Native students and tribal nations and also recognize the diversity in our shared community." After nearly unanimous passage in the House and Senate, the Governor signed HB 2551 into law on March 18, 2020. After the passage of HB 2551, OSPI issued Bulletin 045-20, encouraging school district leaders and staff to consult with tribal nations and collaborate with Native American parent advisory committees and Native American education leaders to resolve any potential issues associated with implementing the law prior to commencement.

The passage of HB 2551 affirms inherent rights assured through tribal sovereignty. Beginning with the 2020 graduating classes, school districts, public schools, and institutions of higher education may not prohibit students who are members of a federally recognized tribe from wearing

traditional regalia or objects of Native American cultural significance at graduation ceremonies or related school events. We're excited that WSSDA has revised Model Policy 2410/2410P-High School Graduation Requirements, an Essential policy, to reflect cultural inclusivity and the passage of this legislation.

#### Data Sharing Between School Districts and Tribes

The second bill that the Government-to-Government Task Force supported was Senate Bill (SB) 6263- Educational Data Sharing Agreements - School Districts and Tribes. This legislation addressed the barriers to data sharing between districts and tribes. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and its implementing regulations govern access to the "student education records" of children attending a school that receives federally administered funds, including public schools. FERPA generally provides federal, state, and local education agencies access to student records, including personally identifiable information kept by school districts without the advance consent of parents/guardian or students. However, FERPA does not include tribes as among the governmental entities eligible to obtain student data without advance parental/guardian consent.

This omission of tribes from access to student education records under FERPA has long hampered tribal efforts under ESSA to evaluate and improve the academic progress of Native students attending public school and work to close tribal student achievement gaps. This is a significant loss because student data analysis is a central tool in



OSPI/OSPI - 2020

educational practices, tracking students' academic performance, and developing school improvement plans and support services. Tribes need access to the education records of Native students so that they

#### MODEL POLICY

#### MODEL POLICY

can monitor and analyze the needs and progress of their students and develop data-driven decisions to improve student achievement of Native students.

Additionally, tribes are in the best position to track and interpret Native student data. Without input from tribes to ensure comprehensive and meaningful data on Native students is collected, many districts report graduation rates and test scores for Native students due to their small numbers. Further, the state and local education agencies that track Native students in public schools are not able to identify some of the most at-risk Native students who attend schools other than public schools. Tribes and school districts are encouraged to take full advantage of this opportunity to establish a data-sharing agreement with the state and local education agencies to ensure the best possible outcome for our Native American students.

SB 6263 required WSSDA to develop a model policy by January 1, 2013 for test sharing, data sharing agreements between school districts and local tribes. The legislation specifies that the model agreement would comply with FERPA and state privacy laws, personally identifiable information would not be used, and it would be able to support the creation of data sharing agreements between school districts and tribes helping to create a climate to work together. Importantly, in developing the new model documents, SB 6263 specified that WSSDA "shall coordinate and consult with the Office of Public Information and Policy, the Office of Education Information and Data, and the Office of Indian Education and Cultural Data." Additionally, WSSDA considers model agreements developed by the Education of Indian Education and Cultural Data sharing agreements and practices developed by tribal state educational organizations.

With this guidance, and input from WSSDA, we developed Model Policy 4050/4050F-Data Sharing Agreement Between the District and Local Tribe. This is a model policy regarding the district's commitment to the benefits of data sharing. It is a statement of intent and commitment policy. Model form 4050F is the actual model agreement. Districts are not required to adopt the model policy in order to enter into a data sharing agreement with tribes.

Others can be contacted at [stefkay@collethe.com](mailto:stefkay@collethe.com).

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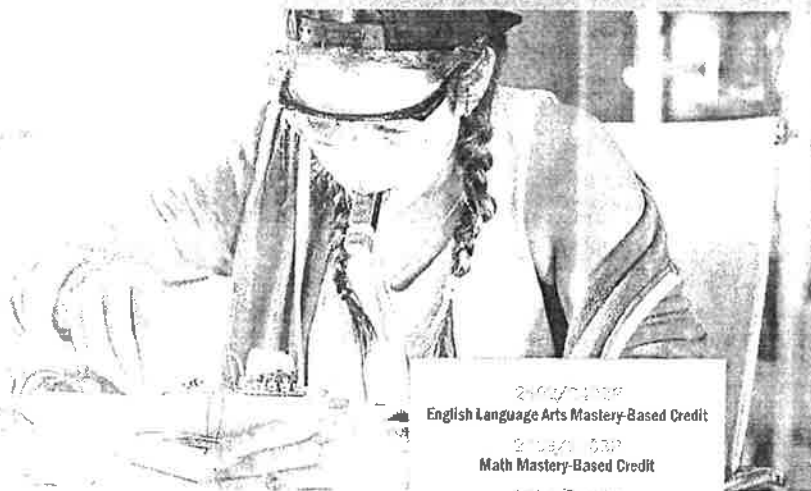
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CONTACT [j.collette@wssda.org](mailto:j.collette@wssda.org)

WSSDA's Journal, The Native

Quick links to top news  
in education: ed policy,  
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## DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING AND EQUITY

# Engaging with each and every student

What is mastery-based learning? House Bill (HB) 1599 from the 2019 legislative

session identified mastery-based learning as:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content;
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students;
- Assessments are meaningful and a positive learning experience for students;
- Students receive rapid, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs; and
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Mastery-based learning is immensely valuable because it is both innovative and practical. It values the knowledge and skills that students already

have while allowing them to learn and progress at an individual pace. Additionally, mastery-based learning embraces the whole student, allowing the freedom to explore learning that comes from both success and failure. Further, by offering meaningful choices in learning to meet their own needs, students are more engaged and experience a greater sense of the relevancy of learning.

Despite these powerfully positive aspects, many districts have not felt prepared to implement a mastery-based program, at least not a robust program. For more than a decade, WSSDA offered a model policy to support districts in providing mastery-based credit to students who demonstrate ability in world languages. That model policy noted that districts could expand their board policy to address mastery-based crediting in multiple subjects. However, last spring we realized that

2407/2407  
English Language Arts Mastery-Based Credit

2408/2408  
Math Mastery-Based Credit

2409/2409  
Science Mastery-Based Credit

2405/2405  
Social Studies Mastery-Based Credit

2406/2406  
The Arts  
Mastery-Based Credit

2407/2407  
Health and Physical  
Education Mastery-Based Credit

2408/2408  
Integrated Environmental and Sustainability  
Education Mastery-Based Credit

2409/2409  
World Language Mastery-Based Credit

2410/2410  
High School Graduation Requirements

2411  
Equivalency Credit.

districts rarely developed policies for other subject matter areas. The feedback was that districts needed more support to expand their mastery-based learning options.

Also last spring, school districts were under enormous pressure trying to teach students in the context of a global pandemic. The timing was right to help districts grow their mastery-based learning programs, and WSSDA

DECEMBER 2020

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developed several new subject-specific mastery-based model policies. This expansion of subject-specific model policies was important because WAC 180-51-050 requires local school boards to adopt an authorizing policy before awarding mastery-based credit.

Among the issues brought into focus by the pandemic is the structural racism present in the education system, including the opportunity and resulting achievement gap between student subgroups. This fall, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted new rules for granting students mastery-based credits that acknowledge these educational opportunity gaps. The new rules include that school board policy for awarding of mastery-based learning must include a provision for ensuring cultural responsiveness and equity. Specifically, SBE's new rules require districts to maintain disaggregated student data regarding the subgroups of students receiving mastery-based credit and periodically review that data for disproportionality. If a district discovers disproportionality among student groups receiving mastery-based credit, the district should be prepared to take appropriate actions to ensure equitable access to mastery-based credit opportunities.

Taking action to ensure equitable access to mastery-based learning might require focused and sustained efforts on the part of your district. But tracking and responding to disproportionality in mastery-based learning has the potential to be particularly impactful because mastery-based learning has inherent qualities that promote equity. For example, mastery-based learning recognizes that learning happens differently for each student and for different subjects for each

student. It thereby embraces and promotes inclusivity—compassion and belonging for students. Because mastery-based learning offers student-driven engagement regarding how to learn, it promotes a culturally responsive approach to education. As a result, based learning can remove labels and create a system that closes the opportunity gap.

HB 1599 also established a mastery-based learning workgroup that has been tasked with identifying the barriers and opportunities for increasing the use of mastery-based learning. Please see the workgroup's [October 2022 Summary](#), as well as the [Fall 2022 Report](#) for more information about overcoming barriers to mastery-based learning.

Based on the SBE's new rules and the report of the mastery-based workgroup, WSSDA has revised the mastery-based model policies. Revisions include aligning terminology. There are several terms for mastery-based learning, which can generate confusion. For example, some states use the term "competency-based education" to mean the equivalent of mastery-based learning. WSSDA previously used the term "competency-based" credit interchangeably with mastery-based credit. However, because HB 1599 and SBE have chosen the term mastery-based learning, we are revising our policies, including their titles, to reflect this nomenclature. Other terms, such as personalized learning and project-based learning are strategies that can be used in mastery-based learning, but are not interchangeable terms with mastery-based learning. Other revisions include clarifying that mastery-based credit is not only for credit recovery purposes; it can and

should also be used either for awarding credit in place of a traditional course.

These revisions affect several model policies, including 2402/2402P—English Language Arts Mastery-Based Credit; 2403/2403P—Math Mastery-Based Credit; 2404/2404P—Science Mastery-Based Credit; 2405/2405P—Social Studies-Based Credit; 2406/2406P—The Arts Mastery-Based Credit; 2407/2407P—Health and Physical Education Mastery-Based Credit; 2408/2408P—Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Education Mastery-Based Credit; 2409/2409P—World Language Mastery Based Credit. These are all Encouraged policies. The revisions also affect 2410P—High School Graduation Requirements and 2413—Equivalency Credit. These are both Essential policies.

To be clear, districts do not need to have multiple board policies for mastery-based learning. Your board can adopt one policy that includes multiple sections authorizing multiple subject matter areas. Keep in mind, however, that the procedures for demonstrating mastery for different subject matter areas differ. Additionally, another benefit of having separate board policies for different subject matter areas is that it more clearly communicates to students and their families that there are multiple opportunities for mastery-based learning. Given that better communication and more authentic engagement with families is central to increasing the use of mastery-based learning, districts that do not adopt multiple policies may want to identify alternative ways to communicate the opportunities for mastery-based learning the district offers.

**“The timing was right to help districts grow their mastery-based learning programs, and WSSDA developed several new subject-specific mastery-based model policies.”**

District fiscal staff describe scenarios where administrators initiate contracts that do not have proper internal controls. This puts the fiscal staff at risk. There are different categories or levels of service from commercial vendors for receiving services. Regardless of the category, your district and the commercial ticketing vendor must have a

Before your district enters a third-party receipting contract, your board must adopt language in a board policy that permits crowdfunding and third-party receipting. To support you, WSSDA has revised Model Policy 6230-Relations with Vendors, to include this language. Although Model Policy 6230 is a Discretionary policy, the new language is required if your board wishes to contract for third-party receipting services.



## **Mastery-based Learning** in Washington State



*Students from Avanti High School (Olympia)*

**2020**

## **Report Summary**

*Prepared by  
the Washington State Board of Education*

Imagine a classroom you've been in, either as a student or visitor, where all the students were engaged and excited about what they were learning. Now imagine every Washington student could experience that feeling, in every class.

The Mastery-based Learning (MBL) Work Group looked for ways to increase student access to relevant and robust mastery-based academic pathways aligned to personal career goals and postsecondary education. The Work Group also reviewed the role of the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) in supporting mastery-based learning.

School looks very different today than it did when the MBL Work Group began our journey—due to COVID-19 and the reckoning our country is undergoing as we grapple with our historical and present-day structural racism. The Work Group members believe that Washington has both an opportunity and an imperative to respond to this dual pandemic of COVID-19 and the structural racism that our school system has never effectively addressed. Our collective “why” calls for a transformation of our education system to close both the opportunity gap and resulting achievement gap. The recommendations of the Work Group are described in a report to the Washington State Legislature, and summarized in this brief.

**To every student who has ever felt invisible—we dedicate this work to you. We will not stop fighting until school becomes a safe place to explore, be accepted and appreciated, and to practice thinking critically—the place where you discover yourself and learn all you need to reach your dreams.**

#### **What is Mastery-based Learning?**

A student's learning happens differently for each subject and that learning does not need to happen only in a classroom. Mastery-based learning shifts the focus to the educational needs and interests of each individual student. Through an MBL approach, the education system values the knowledge and skills students already have and engages students through their diverse cultures and communities; students are also supported through authentic relationships with educators to experience rigorous and personally relevant coursework. In MBL:

- Students advance upon demonstrated mastery of content;
- Competencies include explicit, measurable, transferable learning objectives that empower students;
- Assessments are meaningful and a positive learning experience for students;
- Students receive rapid, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs; and
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Find charges to the Work Group from ESSHB 1599 Sec. 301 on SBE's [web page](#).



Avanti, Discovery, Gibson Ek High School students present to the MBL Work Group (Olympia)

#### **Work Group Membership**

**Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos,**  
Chair of House Education  
Committee

**Rep. Chris Corry,**  
House Education Committee  
Member

**Sen. Lisa Wellman,**  
Chair of the Senate Early  
Learning & K-12 Education  
Committee

**Ashley Lin,**  
Senior at Union High School  
(Camas School District), AWSL

**Frieda Takamura,**  
Renton Technical College Board  
of Trustees, EOGOAC Member

**Dr. Kory Kalahar,**  
Principal, WestSide High School,  
Wenatchee Public Schools

**Miguel A. Saldaña,**  
Teacher, Pasco High School,  
Pasco School District

**Jenny Morgan,**  
Counselor, Capital High School,  
Olympia School District

**Aurora Flores,**  
Academic Counselor at Omak  
School District, Manson  
School District Board Member,  
Immediate Past President of  
WSSDA

**Krestin Bahr,**  
Eatonville School District  
Superintendent, Immediate Past  
President of WASA

**Dr. Kathe Taylor,**  
Assistant Superintendent,  
Learning and Teaching, OSPI

**Dr. Paul Pitre,**  
State Board of Education, WSU  
Everett Chancellor

## Why do we need Mastery-based Learning in Washington State?

Schools are experiencing unprecedented disruption, forcing educators to think differently about how they engage with their students and forcing changes to longstanding systems that have been established to deliver education. This presents an opportunity to not only discover ways to address education during the coronavirus pandemic, but also to address the much longer standing pandemic of racism that has plagued our society and our school system.

Our collective “why” calls for a transformation from a traditional system to an MBL approach because this enables:

- A focus on meeting the needs of each individual student.
- Students to enjoy relevancy, engagement, and choice in their learning.
- Contextualized learning environments that recognize learning does not just happen in a classroom, but is happening all the time.
- Actively embracing inclusivity—compassion and belonging for students.
- Freedom for both students and educators to develop and try different ways of doing things and embracing the innovation and learning that comes from both successes and mistakes.
- Valuing knowledge and skills that students already have.
- Each student’s learning progresses at their own pace.
- Transformation of our education system to close the opportunity gap and resulting achievement gap, and recognize that each student’s learning happens differently for each subject.

Through mastery learning, we are able to meet our students where they are when they enter our school and then coach our students through their learning to move from being a learner who is just discovering their strengths and talents to being a learner who is driving their learning and completely thriving when they graduate.

-Julia Bamba  
Gibson Ek High School  
Principal



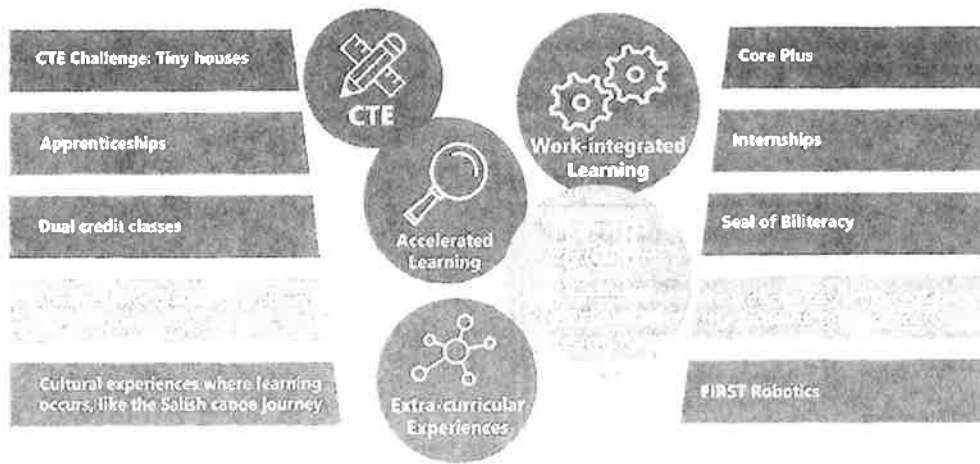
## Work Group recommendations

Because of the dual pandemics experienced in our state, nation, and the world, our schools cannot and should not go back to business as usual. The coronavirus has further exposed the inequities of our system, and with the multiple recent incidents of racism and violence against people of color—the need for a shift to a MBL system has been accelerated and is even more urgent than when the legislation passed to create this Work Group. Now is the time to wholeheartedly focus our collective efforts on addressing the systemic opportunity gap that has been fostered by the current structure of our education system for far too long. If a mastery-based learning (MBL) education system simply recreates the status quo—all of the efforts of this Work Group will have been for naught. Rather, a MBL system must be evaluated and sustained primarily based on its progress in reducing both the opportunity and achievement gap.

The following MBL Work Group recommendations are grouped into five sections, based on the applicable component of the five statutory charges from ESSHB 1599.



## **Mastery-based Learning aspects and examples:**



### **1. Barriers to Mastery-based Learning**

One of the biggest barriers identified is that, although we recognize many of the practices in MBL in what we might observe through "good teaching," mastery-based learning is not a concept that is well understood, neither within the education community, nor by the public. Various initiatives around the state already fit within the framework of MBL, including work-integrated learning, project-based learning, and extra-curricular experiences.

#### **A. Engage families (report page 12)**

Any shift in education, whether it be instructional practices, assessment and grading practices, school day schedules, a shift in school culture, etc., will fail if students and their families are not meaningfully engaged from the beginning. MBL will include a change in all those things and more; it is imperative that any school that begins a journey toward MBL simultaneously brings students' families along with them, through authentic family engagement efforts.

#### **B. Review the state accountability system for alignment with MBL (report page 13)**

#### **C. Engage education partners regarding barriers to MBL (report page 14)**

MBL is already taking place in other countries and our parents want to know why it is taking so long in U.S. Pre-COVID, our families either had their kids totally bored in school or totally ignored in school. We need to get away from seat time requirements where a student learns for nine months and then all students are expected to be in the same place academically at the end of the school year.

This is an industrial view of education that isn't equitable. I think if we were able to engage our families and say this is what we're doing with MBL... if they knew MBL is the end goal of where we're going, they would be so excited. Families want to be involved in anything that makes the system better for their kids, and I believe MBL could do that.

-Sharonne Navas, Co-Founder & Executive Director of the Equity in Education Coalition



## 2. Improvements in the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) as an essential tool for MBL

As Washington moves toward a mastery-based education system, the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) has a critical role to play.

### A. Support students through additional school counselors (report page 17)

The Work Group recommends the Legislature fund certificated counselors at the middle school level in line with the ASCA ratio, to support beginning the HSBP process in a more robust way that sets students up for success as they enter high school. The Work Group recommends that districts be required to allow counselors to spend a certain percentage of their time in direct support of students' learning goals.

### B. Provide professional development for educators to support MBL and the HSBP (report page 18)

The High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) should not just focus on the student's goals for after high school but should help students take ownership over their learning during high school while exploring their values, strengths, passions, and long-term goals.

### C. Make the HSBP more meaningful and useful for students (report page 19)

Advice to the state from a local school about how to support MBL capacity...

As our state studies MBL and how to support and foster high quality MBL, being intentional about ways to do that should include recommended professional learning - not only for the teachers but for those in leadership positions at the district level.

- Henderson Bay High School  
Peninsula School District



## 3. Development of Mastery-based pathways to the earning of a high school diploma

In Washington, our high school diploma represents completion of three broad sets of requirements that together are intended to represent that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner: the subject area (credit) requirements, the High School and Beyond Plan, and the graduation pathway options.

### A. Develop a Profile of a Graduate (report page 22)

To help families and schools embrace the purpose of a high school diploma, the Work Group recommends the development

### Bright Spot: Fife School District's High School and Beyond Plan Process

In junior high and high school, students take an advisory course, called a "family group." Twice a month, family advisors receive a lesson plan from the Career and College Specialist that connects the daily lesson to career guidance themes. In grades 9-12, students get a .25 credit each year for their advisory course, and it is where all HSBP activities, along with SEL and financial literacy activities, take place. All of the activities in high school are building toward the district's required Senior Project, based on the student's HSBP. During each student's presentation, they talk about their career exploration and interests, how they will pay for any needed education or training for their career, and show evidence of what they have done (both academically and outside of school activities) to prepare for their one year after graduation plan.

of a state "Profile of a Graduate." Many states and districts throughout the country have developed such a profile that includes cross-curricular skills a student should have developed by the time they complete high school: such as being creative, empathetic, self-directed, collaborative, and a global citizen.

### ***B. Develop supports for Mastery-based Learning implementation (report page 23)***

The transition to a Mastery-Based Learning (MBL) model requires a sustained effort over time to ensure state and local policies support implementation and schools and districts have access to resources to support their learning as they transform their systems.

#### ***State and regional structure***

To that end, the State Board of Education (SBE) should be tasked with providing statewide coordination through capacity-building support and technical assistance, including communications and advocacy around the shared goals of MBL. One possible strategy for creating a regional support structure could be leaning on partner organizations. These organizations could focus on providing professional development as well as sharing best practices for improving student learning outcomes by acting at the system and organization levels.

I chose Discovery after touring it—there was a difference in school structure and a difference in approach. I didn't struggle academically, but I struggled keeping a purpose to my work. This school has really helped me feel a purpose.

-Washington Student



#### ***Continuing the MBL Work Group***

The Work Group should be extended with the primary charge of developing the state Profile of a Graduate. A final report would be provided to the Legislature on the Profile of the Graduate, as well as an update on how implementation of MBL in the state is going, by December 10, 2021.

### ***C. Engage higher education (report page 25)***

As this work moves forward, a more explicit role for higher education to engage in this work may be



Delta high school students pose for group photo after job shadow experience (Pasco)

helpful to ensure students who take advantage of these programs are not placed at a disadvantage in the admission process.

#### ***D. Create state policy framework for MBL diploma (report page 26)***

Washington's state policy framework for a MBL diploma is not creating a separate high school diploma. Rather students who embark on the MBL pathway to earning their diploma would have different opportunities for demonstrating what they know and can do—but would still be meeting the same learning standards as students in the credit-based framework. A MBL route to a diploma would have different characteristics than a credit-based route, as a MBL diploma is designed around the individual student's interests through their engagement in personally relevant, contextualized learning experiences, such as project- or work-based learning, interdisciplinary coursework, and extra-curricular experiences.

#### **4. Results of the competency-based pathways previously approved by the State Board as a learning resource**

These schools have been leading the way in competency-based education for the rest of the state and based on the mastery-based pathway described above, Washington is ready to expand MBL for the rest of schools in the state.



**Delta high school student at mock interview (Pasco)**

#### ***What can be learned from schools using the waiver of credit-based graduation requirements? (report page 28)***

1. An advisory structure that fosters relationships between students and an advisor that they stay with their entire high school career facilitates a sense of belonging.
2. Use the High School and Beyond Plan, along with the Big Picture Learning Plan, as a guide for each individual student's learning journey.
3. Facilitate student ownership over their own learning process.
4. Importance of resources to support educator collaboration, a regional support structure, and professional development.

#### ***What can be learned from other Washington schools doing some form of MBL? (report page 30)***

Several schools in our state already embody some of the characteristics of the Work Group's vision for MBL. Delta High School and Avanti High School are both small choice schools that students opt into based on interest in a different education experience than is provided at the local comprehensive high school. Because of each school's development of a relationship-based community-centered culture, they have been able to create robust advisory programs for their students. Both schools' advisories meet regularly to offer academic and social/emotional support, as well as offer a safe place to bond with other students and build community.

### **Delta High School (Pasco, Washington)**

In Delta's STEM-focused program, students receive a variety of CCL experiences including interaction with career guest speakers, industry tours, job shadows, resume reviews, mock interviews, internship fairs, and more. Delta also hosts a variety of on and off-site events throughout the year, based on student interest identified in their HSBP and market trends.

"Each year we offer multiple career exploration events for all grades. Typically, 9th & 10th grade attend career exploration events in October and March such as Health Science Day, Nuke Tech Day, and STEMCon.

At these events, I bring in industry professionals to lead hands-on workshops which give students a glimpse into real-world STEM careers in action.

Juniors and seniors attend college and trade tours across the state based on personal interests and pathways," said Community Engagement Manager for Delta High School, Heather Hoppe.

### **Avanti High School (Olympia, Washington)**

Avanti High School's individualized learning plan approach allows students to learn at their own pace. Classes consist of mixed age and grade levels and students are not held to finishing course content within a defined term. Students who demonstrate mastery before the academic term is complete, may receive credit and begin a new course.

Likewise, if a student has not demonstrated mastery of the content on a specific course by the end of the academic term, they have the option of extending that learning plan until they reach mastery, indicated by a letter grade of B or above, as well as self-evaluations and learning reflections completed by the student.

Students do not receive Cs, Ds, or Fs at Avanti. Rather, they continue to learn content until they reach mastery, which translates into academic credit.

I think the most important piece for me is that it takes a lot of work to set it up at first, but I find the pay off to be totally worth it. The work is really in front-loading the structure of the class, but once the students start to take more ownership of their learning, a lot of the work of a teacher in a more traditional classroom gets transferred to the students. When students monitor their own learning, the teacher's role becomes more of a coach or facilitator, and a lot of the busy work of grading and record keeping becomes more manageable and more meaningful to both students and teachers.

-Cecily Schmidt,  
NBCT-Visual Art  
Avanti High School



Students at Avanti High School create a garden (Olympia)

## 5. Expansion of Mastery-based credits to meet graduation requirements

Mastery-based (or competency-based) crediting is an option for students to earn high school credit for demonstration of learning on assessments that are clearly aligned to learning standards.

### *State Board developed new rule on mastery crediting (report page 34)*

Due to the coronavirus and related school building closures and ongoing disruptions of our educational system, the Work Group felt it was important to accelerate expansion of mastery-based crediting policies where possible. The Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) released [model policies in six additional subject areas](#) and SBE adopted a new section of [rule](#) to detail the process for granting students mastery-based (MB) credit.

### *Culturally responsive example of mastery crediting (report page 36)*

Enumclaw School District developed a [sample model](#) for how to provide credit through Indigenous pedagogical courses. One such story is about Enumclaw student, Adam Miller, who would spend part of each season learning from elders and cultural practitioners while on canoe journeys and in the local environments. The policy allowed Adam to utilize these cultural experiences for graduation requirements, aligning the cultural learning to core learning standards. Because Enumclaw acknowledges these important partnerships with the Local Tribal Community (Muckleshoot), he was able to graduate on time, and is the youngest person hired right out of high school by an environmental agency. The student now works to serve the community through environmental restoration.



## Conclusion

Washington State faces both an opportunity and a moral imperative to respond to the dual pandemic of COVID-19 and structural racism that has been ignored for too long in our education system. Mastery-based learning is not the latest education trend. It is a proven strategy that has the potential to eliminate the achievement gap by providing access to equitable educational opportunities and thereby closing the opportunity gap.

Through MBL, Washington can actively decolonize our education system by ensuring the curriculum reflects multiple cultures and not just the dominant narrative, facilitating students' connections to place and community, and ensuring student ownership over their own learning experience. When each and every student can direct their own path and experience the joy of learning, then and only then will our world become a healthier, more equitable place.



Adam Miller's canoe journey

Find the full report on the [MBL Work Group web page](#).