

### **Small Schools Commitment Procedures**

The Board of Directors commits resources of time and energy to the creation of small schools. Small personalized learning communities (SPLCs) have been shown through research to have a positive impact on students, including improved attendance rates, improved behavior, greater satisfaction with school, greater self-esteem, and increased educational achievement and attainment. This organizational pattern contributes to a greater sense of student well being, a sense of student community, and higher student achievement. Research indicates that this reorganization into SPLCs benefits disadvantaged students by supporting them in scheduling and in their relationships with teachers and fellow students.

Yakima SPLCs will include:

1. Limitation/regulation in the numbers of students in a small school or team.
2. Commitment to prepare students to meet district and state requirements:
  - 2.1 Ability of all students to apply state essential learnings and to meet and exceed the requirements of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).
  - 2.2 Ability of tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) grade students to obtain Certificate of Mastery and to meet all state and district minimum graduation requirements, to develop an educational and post-graduation plan, and to complete a culminating project(s).
3. Completion by all students of graduation requirements, including the 4-P's Framework, to enable them to apply for and be accepted at college, community college, technical school, or other post-high school graduation career endeavors.
4. Structured autonomy within small schools:

Structured autonomy enhances a school's separate and symbolic identity within the larger school. This freedom to act is within the limitations of existing Washington State laws, Yakima School District policies and procedures, and graduation requirements and curriculum guidelines. Small schools are accountable to the principal, superintendent, and Board of Directors. The superintendent will determine and allocate a discretionary budget to each small school. Each small school may determine instructional methods and the integration of district curriculum with small school themes; however, each school must assure that every student will have access to school programs, such as honors classes, school-wide music and arts and school-wide sports. Once operational, instructional leadership in small schools will be provided by the principal or designee.

5. Commitment to *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools* as identified by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); see exhibit 2017X.
6. Public engagement with staff, students, parents, and community:

Key stakeholders will be engaged in communication and actively encouraged to participate in the process of small school development. Parents, community members, and students will be

afforded opportunity to learn about and to be part of school change process. Stakeholders include parents and students impacted by the redesign, parents and students from feeder schools, administrative staff, and Board of Directors. The superintendent will identify explicit processes, structures, and forums to ensure stakeholder engagement, communication and participation prior to approval of the small schools by the Board of Directors.

7. Planning for clearly defined school and student progress and assessment of positive progress will be based on the following:
  - 7.1 student grades;
  - 7.2 WASL results and other multiple measures of student achievement;
  - 7.3 evidence of progress toward closing the achievement gap;
  - 7.4 staff and student attendance;
  - 7.5 staff retention;
  - 7.6 family and community engagement;
  - 7.7 parent, staff and student satisfaction, such as through surveys;
  - 7.8 safety and discipline incidence reports;
  - 7.9 promotion and graduation rates; and
  - 7.10 college and other educational and career successes after high school.

Date:  
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