

## Questions from Oversight Work Session

*The following are some of the questions asked on notecards and during discussion at the April 21, 2016, CAI Oversight Work Session – and answers.*

### 1. Can we provide more context and information about the data showing Highly Capable and Advanced Learning performance and growth on Smarter Balanced?

Attached please find “2015 SBA Results...” providing this data. A student growth percentile (SGP) is calculated by OSPI for state assessments such as the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA). An SGP describes a student’s growth compared to other students with similar prior test scores (their academic peers). Although the calculations for SGPs are complex, information can be shared in percentile terms that are familiar to most educators and parents. Specifically, an SGP is a number between 1 and 99. If a student has an SGP of 85, we can say that she showed more growth than 85 percent of her academic peers. A student with a low score on a state assessment can show high growth and a student with a high score can demonstrate low growth.

Can high scoring students still demonstrate growth? Yes. Students that typically have high scores on state assessments will be compared to all other students in the state that also have high scores. The data show that even students that score at the top of the scale will have varied performance the next year, so the model allows us to identify growth for students at the upper end of the scale.

OSPI classifies SGPs as follows:

- SGP between 1 and 33 equals “Low Growth”
- SGP between 34 and 66 equals “Average Growth”
- SGP between 67 and 99 equals “High Growth”

For more detailed information about SGPs, please visit the OSPI website here:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StudentGrowth.aspx>

### 2. Ethnicity breakdowns for Advanced Learning: Do we have numbers of students who have tested versus those who have been deemed eligible?

Students eligible for Spectrum and HCC COMBINED, by ethnicity and year

<b>Fed 7 Ethnic Category</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Asian	1045	926	921	943	1106
Black	252	189	193	187	214
Hispanic	241	261	285	327	402
Native American	38	26	20	19	18
Multi-racial		464	545	673	921

<b>Pacific Islander</b>	8	2	1	2	3
<b>White</b>	4023	4411	4745	5087	6091
<b>Total</b>	5607	6279	6710	7238	8755

**TOTAL of Underrepresented Students (Black, Hispanic, Native American, Multi-racial + Pacific Islander)**

539	942	1044	1208	1558
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### Students who became HC eligible by year and by ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2010-11	102	15	24	28	503	685
2011-12	89	12	20	61	469	675
2012-13	70	21	22	51	500	670
2013-14	139	11	43	105	630	959
2014-15	101	14	46	98	529	863

### Total number of students who were HC eligible in grades 1-8 SY 2015-16

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2015-16	378	38	114	383	2303	3218

### Total of eligible students who participated in HCC: Grades 1-8 SY 2015-16

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2015-16	323	30	75	294	1679	2403

### Percentage of eligible students (within each category) who participated in HCC: Grades 1-8 SY 2015-16

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2015-16	85	67	66	77	73	75

### Total number of students who were referred (nominated) by year and ethnicity

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Total
2010-11	907	284	235	117	3341	5107
2011-12	898	311	272	444	3470	5637
2012-13	763	247	283	454	3149	4985

2013-14	630	218	311	494	3011	4826
2014-15	637	249	307	630	3486	5341

Please note: Data for Native American and Pacific Islander students not included due to confidentiality concerns (P.I.I.)

**3. Director Blanford requested access to the study from Whitworth referenced by Director Patu.**

The study was actually performed by the University of Virginia team headed by Dr. Carolyn Callahan in 2007. It is attached. Key recommendations are in direct conflict with those of the 2014 Advanced Learning Task Force, most notably doing away with the self-contained model in grades K-8.

**4. Please provide a description and rationale for the 1:1 approach for digital materials.**

Currently we purchase instructional materials in both print and digital formats. With the advent of free or lower-cost online educational materials (OERs) and the increasing trend of producing instructional materials in digital formats, there is a commensurate need to increase access to technology so the district can leverage those materials for student learning. As a district there are several options open to us in the future. Low cost devices may make 1:1 programs more economically feasible, bring-your-own-device programs may also be possible, or perhaps a blending of the two is the answer. At this point we want to make sure that the School Board knows that we are thinking about options as the instructional materials landscape changes.

**5. Please provide more information on the “computer science for all” plan.**

With grant support from OSPI, Seattle Public Schools is launching initial efforts to provide equitable access to computer science education from elementary through high school. Computer science is not just writing code or programming—it includes problem-solving, human-centered design, logical reasoning, and collaboration to create or adapt digital technology. “Computational Thinking” is a problem-solving process that can be integrated in science, math, social studies, art, and other subjects. Fluency with these skills and knowledge is increasingly important to close growing opportunity gaps based on race, ethnicity, and gender.

Starting this summer, approximately 75 teachers and librarians from elementary through high school will participate in professional development and contribute to an articulated vision for K-12 computer science education in Seattle Schools. Participants will learn to apply the Computer Science Standards and the K12 CS Framework, integrating with Common Core, ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), and NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). Additionally, participants will gain curricular resources and develop action plans for their classrooms and schools.

Principals plan to use participating staff to improve equitable access to computer science education across their schools. The following are a few examples of comments shared from principals: “They can share their learning and help build capacity for computer science education within our diverse learning community which is underserved in this area.” “It would be great to increase the systematic and intentional teaching of computer science standards and work with teachers on integrating this in the classrooms.” “We have a strong equity focus. We are looking to bring more technology opportunities to our students, particularly our students who are less likely to have access to computers and technology instruction at home.”

Teachers are excited to learn and contribute to this work, as shown in the following sample comments: “I hope to make computer science less intimidating, available to more teachers and students.” “The population served at my school is severely underrepresented in the tech industry. I’d like to change that fact. Our students and our community deserve it.” “We’ll be taking what we learn back to our staff.” “As a library media specialist, I believe it is my job to take on technology so our students can keep up with the rest of the world.” “I hope to foster students building their own identities as creative, thoughtful, and accomplished students.” “I would like to empower girls by exposing them to computer science teaching.”

**6. What percentage of MTSS interventions are currently aimed at struggling students vs. students working beyond standards? Estimate please.**

This is difficult to quantify because Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction teams do not approve and cannot require interventions at the building level. Our teams are able to offer suggested academic interventions and support/training for them, but their implementation is a building-level decision. Most buildings do have interventions in place for both struggling students and those who require more challenge.

For example, for struggling students, buildings may purchase products and packages designed to support struggling learners, or they may use funding to increase staff size so that extra teachers can work with students. For those working beyond standards, they may alter schedules so that students can work a year ahead, they may hire a teacher for enrichment, they may provide in-class differentiation, or they may offer other interventions to serve those students.

**7. What is “lack of access to data” (identified as a threat in slide 8)? Is that a tech problem or sharing between departments or what?**

Both the size of the district and autonomy at the building level pose challenges for data collection, as indicated in the intervention response above (#6). Measuring the effectiveness of our strategies can be difficult for this reason.

**8. What is “out-of-sync information and messages from higher leadership and site-based school leaders hinders the quality of services” (identified as a threat in slide 8)? What, in specific, does this mean?**

Our district's culture of autonomy at the building level means that information and messages coming from schools sometimes differ from our understandings within central office. Our CAI staff work to provide curricular support to buildings but cannot create accountability structures.

**9. Slide 33: "Elimination of pre-qualifications for participation in eligibility evaluation" is identified as an accomplishment. Don't you have to take Smarter Balanced to be in HCC?**

This refers to pre-qualifications (these used to be based on a required "cut score" on MAPs) to be tested and evaluated for eligibility. Any SPS student can now apply to be evaluated for eligibility. Achievement test data is required for eligibility, but the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee has used all available data in their consideration process. The intent of the new language in procedures is to require Smarter Balanced scores for all students applying for eligibility to Advanced Learning programs in the district.

**10. Why were Spectrum/ALOs not discussed?**

These were not part of the work session. This was a Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction and Highly Capable work session.

**11. What is the reference to "misinformation disseminated throughout the community" referenced in Slide 32? Who is this? Do you reach out to correct this? Does the HC webpage have some responsibility for this?**

When the AL office has had errors on the webpage or other communications, we have addressed those errors immediately. We have not only taken responsibility for and corrected our mistakes, we have also worked closely with communications to help us reach out to as many people as possible and in as many ways as possible.

Slide 32 is specifically in reference to multiple blog posts and emails sent either directly to us or to us via Teaching and Learning leadership, School Board members, Ombudsman, or parent groups with which we meet. This information can be inaccurate or misleading. For example, an issue we have had to address multiple times is the claim that "they [AL and district] have done away with Spectrum." This is simply false. Schools are moving away from a self-contained model, but the Spectrum program very much exists. Too often, we are asked multiple times to respond to the same question from the same person. Each time we are asked to respond to these assertions, not only are we put in a position of defense instead of support, but also our time, focus, and resources are diverted from supporting instruction in our schools.

**12. Where is the curriculum for APP (sic)?**

Highly Capable Cohort sites have been involved in curriculum alignment work for two years now. Although there is some consensus about aligning Highly Capable curriculum with scope and sequence and/or learning standards at higher grade levels, each site has

autonomy in the decision-making process. The Advanced Learning Office continues to provide a role as supporting the staff at these sites. These alignment sessions have been the initial work at creating a more standardized curriculum.

**13. How do you suggest to schools that they create SMART goals for CSIP, using data, to serve the HCC population? Can you provide meaningful data and relevant analysis?**

The work that has been done this year has revolved around assisting principals in constructing the language for their CSIP in terms of crafting an Advanced Learning Opportunities plan. Highly Capable Cohort sites have already developed these goals, but other sites will need to do so for their Highly Capable students. The Advanced Learning office will support principals in this process.

**14. Looking at HCC SBA data at Hamilton, it appears that a significant number of students are “topping out,” especially in math. Will you factor this into your growth analysis?**

Can high scoring students still demonstrate growth? Yes. Students that typically have high scores on state assessments will be compared to all other students in the state that also have high scores. The data show that even students that score at the top of the scale will have varied performance the next year, so the model allows us to identify growth for students at the upper end of the scale.

**15. Provide example of what is NOT a “strategic impact” contract.**

N/A. This language is from the Oversight Work Session PPT template.

**16. Director Blanford asked for information regarding the collaboration between Department of Equity and Race Relations (DERR) and Advanced Learning.**

In the fall of 2015, DERR’s Noah Prince and Advanced Learning’s Matt Okun embarked on a collaborative effort to create PD that could be presented jointly. As this collaboration developed, the rest of the members from both teams joined in the refining of this training presentation, which Noah and Matt then offered to and implemented at several elementary schools. This collaboration continues in 2015-16 with numerous meetings between Matt and Fran Partridge, Anita Morales and Abraham Rodriguez-Hernandez focusing on further defining, creating, and facilitating professional development for SPS employees of all levels/positions. Advanced Learning’s commitment to equity is similarly exhibited through Matt’s participation and representation in Equity and Race Advisory Committee and his attendance of Southeast Seattle Education Coalition meetings.

Building upon the successful ongoing collaboration between these two departments that began in 2015-16, DERR got involved in the planning and eventual implementation of the seven-hour Racial Identity and Micro-aggressions training that was recently required of all CAI staff at central office. Advanced Learning’s staff members have been trained on the use of the “Racial Equity Analysis Tool” and employ it as part of all of Advanced Learning decision-making processes. The Advanced Learning office has come to recognize DERR as its role model for commitment to racial equity in our programs,

but also in the district as a whole. Each and every member of the AL office is truly committed to all efforts to ensure racially equitable access to Advanced Learning programs and services.

**17. Director Blanford also discussed concerns about the reported hostile environment at HCC sites.**

The most recent initiative to address this problem is currently occurring at Thurgood Marshall Elementary. The parent group, in close collaboration with the Advanced Learning office, is planning an informational night designed to invite parents and students who were recently identified as Highly Capable to opt in to HCC at Thurgood Marshall.

**18. Director Pinkham expressed his desire to see a closer relationship with Native Ed to address underrepresentation in Advanced Learning programs.**

Universal second-grade testing is definitely one step in this process; specifically, all second-grade students at all Title One schools (including Licton Springs) will receive the Cognitive Abilities Test screening tool. Another step was initiated by Supervisor Martin as he approached Dr. Hertzog at UW regarding embedding Native Ed in gifted training/endorsement classes.