

November 16, 2011

Action Required

Date Due: June 1, 2012

RESOLUTION ANNOUNCEMENT – TIME SENSITIVE

TO: Chief School District Administrators
Local School Boards

FROM: Ben Rarick, Executive Director
State Board of Education

RE: Graduation Requirements Extension Resolution

On November 11, the Washington State Board of Education (SBE) approved revised high school graduation requirements effective for the class of 2016, with a two-year extension available for districts not already meeting certain credit requirements. This extension provides school districts additional time to plan for and implement the required changes. SBE also approved several rule changes which provide districts with greater flexibility in helping students meet graduation credit requirements.

We are writing to you because our records show you will need to make a change to either the English or social studies credit requirements.

Students in the graduating class of 2016 will be required to complete 20 credits. The requirements will be contained in new WAC 180-51-067, and will include the following credit and policy changes:

- Increase English from 3 credits to 4 credits.
- Increase social studies from 2.5 credits to 3 credits; require .5 credit of civics, per RCW 28A.230.093.
- Decrease electives from 5.5 to 4 credits.
- Make successful completion of Washington State History and Government a non-credit requirement.
- Clarify that the 2 credits of health and fitness includes .5 credits of health and 1.5 credits of fitness.
- Create a “two for one” policy that would enable students taking a CTE-equivalent course to satisfy two graduation requirements while earning one credit.

In addition, revisions to WAC 180-51-050 will substitute a non time-based definition of a credit for the prior, time-based 150 instructional hours credit definition.

Based on extensive feedback received by the Board, both during the November 9-10 meeting and in the months prior, the Board modified the requirements to allow school districts to extend implementation of the new social studies, English, and elective credit requirements for two years.

In order to be eligible for the extension, districts electing to delay implementation of the increased English and/or social studies requirements must submit a resolution from the local board to maintain their current English, social studies, and/or elective credit requirements through the graduating class of 2017. These requirements may be greater than, but no less than, the requirements contained in WAC 180-51-066 during the period of the extension.

The resolution must be signed by the local school board members, and received by the State Board of Education no later than June 1, 2012. The resolution should state the district's reasons for maintaining the English, social studies and elective requirements contained in WAC 180-51-066 through the graduating class of 2017.

Districts that do not submit a resolution will be required to meet the revised state high school graduation requirements contained in WAC 180-51-067, beginning with the graduating class of 2016; all districts will be required to meet the graduation requirements of WAC 180-51-067 beginning with the graduating class of 2018.

Resolutions should be sent electronically to sbe@k12.wa.us.

For questions, please contact:

Washington State Board of Education

Phone: (360) 725-6025

Fax: (360) 586-2357

sbe@k12.wa.us