



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Education Urges Quick Action on Biology Graduation Requirement

OLYMPIA, Wash. – The State Board of Education adopted a resolution today at its Board meeting in Walla Walla [urging immediate action by the Legislature to eliminate the biology end-of-course test as a graduation requirement.](#)

The State Board of Education endorses removing the biology end-of-course graduation requirement effective immediately to include the high school graduating class of 2017.

Kevin Laverty, Acting Chair of the State Board of Education, stated, “if the legislature has already taken the funding for these tests out of their budget proposals, I hope they would change the law quickly so that impacted students and families can enjoy the graduation ceremony with their friends.”

There are currently over 3,000 seniors who have met all other graduation requirements, except for passing the biology end-of-course exam. This creates anxiety for both students and families concerning earning the diploma, graduation ceremonies, as well as the student’s future after June. Therefore, the Board respectfully asks the Legislature to act immediately, so that schools and districts are able to designate these students from the Class of 2017 as eligible to graduate. Additionally, the K-12 budgets proposed and passed by both legislative chambers presuppose the elimination of the biology end-of-course graduation requirement.

The Board is charged with both advocacy and strategic oversight of public education, as well as to provide direction through its rule-making authority for state subject area graduation requirements and setting the scores that students must meet on statewide assessments.

Laverty also said, “Biology is only one subject, and the Board supports a comprehensive test as the statewide assessment in science.”

The State Board of Education supports multiple pathways to career and college readiness and recognizes the value of flexibility in students’ high school choices. The Board believes in providing multiple alternatives for students to meet assessment requirements.

The full resolution can be viewed on the [SBE website](#).

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About the State Board of Education: The State Board of Education provides advocacy and strategic oversight of public education. The Board comprises 16 members: five are elected by school board directors, seven are appointed by the Governor, two serve as student representatives, and one serves as a private school

representative. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is also a member. For more information on the State Board of Education: www.sbe.wa.gov