

Dear partner in education:

Greetings! I am proud to share with you new updates on the State Board of Education's (SBE) work to improve student achievement and ensure all students are prepared to succeed after high school - in the 21st century workforce, postsecondary education and citizenship.

This month, SBE board members voted unanimously in favor of CORE 24, a revised set of high school graduation requirements that will provide all students with a strong foundation of core subjects and the flexibility to personalize their course work to align with their individual career goals. SBE firmly believes that CORE 24 represents a significant step to ensure greater opportunities for all Washington students after high school. These requirements will not go into effect, except for math, unless the legislative funding is secured and a phased in six year implementation schedule is enacted.

SBE understands that policy changes will have an impact; therefore the Board will create an Implementation Task Force to assist them in the issues identified in public outreach including: ways to assist struggling students, teacher supply and facilities issues, and other key concerns. We will continue to look to our stakeholders for guidance and partnership to move this initiative forward for our kids. We truly appreciate your input throughout this process.

SBE board members also approved the new math rule which will require all students to complete Algebra II, or an alternative math credit to graduate. In 2007, the state legislature mandated an increase in the high school math graduation requirements from two to three credits of high school level math. SBE was tasked with determining the content of the three credits. The decision was to require students to complete Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or alternative third credit (or an Integrated Series or an approved equivalent career and technical education course) This supports SBE's vision for the purpose of the high school diploma: To declare that a student is ready for success after high school.

I want to thank once again all of those who have provided SBE with valuable input as we developed these important initiatives. Your expertise is vital and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Eddie Harding

Learn more about our key initiatives

- [A Meaningful High School Diploma:](#) preparing students for life after high school no matter what path they choose.
- [World-class math:](#) providing students with the math foundation they need to succeed.
- [Exemplary science:](#) fostering science education to expand students' minds and broaden horizons.
- [Accountability:](#) providing assistance to schools and districts so that no student falls through the cracks.

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Executive Director

Spotlight: Board votes in favor of CORE 24

In July, The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) took an important step forward in its goal to improve student achievement statewide by unanimously approving CORE 24 - a new set of requirements for high school graduation that will ensure students receive the preparation they need to succeed after graduation in postsecondary education, work and citizenship.

SBE developed CORE 24 after soliciting feedback from educators, employers, students, parents and administrators to define the skills necessary to create a meaningful high school diploma that addresses the fundamental knowledge and skills a student will need after graduation.

Today, the state requires students to take a minimum of 19 credits, which is low compared to other states. CORE 24 will provide all students with a strong foundation of core subjects that enables them to meet minimum 4-year college entrance requirements in Washington and also allows them the opportunity to personalize course choices for pathways other than college. Once fully implemented, students will be required to complete a minimum of 24 credits to graduate.

"We need to equip all our students with all options after they graduate and give them the flexibility to create purposeful paths that work for them," said board member Eric Liu who heads SBE's Meaningful High School Diploma working group.

Implementation of CORE 24 will be contingent on the legislature providing the necessary funding for a six period day and will be phased-in with the consultation of implementation advisors. The Board will work with an Implementation Task Force to address key issues including: a phase-in of new credits, competencies, struggling students, teacher supply and facility issues. The Board expects the full phase-in to take place with the Class of 2016.

"The approval of the CORE 24 framework is really just the first milestone in the marathon we are running to improve student achievement," Liu added. "We need to be deliberate and diligent in our next steps and we will continue to listen to the public for ideas and feedback."

"The State Board firmly believes that CORE 24 represents a step in the right direction for Washington students," board

president Mary Jean Ryan said. "The new framework will elevate the playing field for our students and ensure that all students are prepared for success in postsecondary education and 21st century careers."

[Learn more](#)>>

Spotlight: World Class Math Education in Washington State

The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) adopted the final rule on a third math credit to include Algebra II. The Algebra II requirement can also be completed through an approved career and technical education (CTE) course that aligns with Algebra II standards. Some students may elect an alternative math credit that leads to a specific career goal identified in their High School and Beyond Plan with parent/guardian and counselor approval.

A 2005 national study indicated that students who take Algebra II are more prepared to enter the workforce or postsecondary education, including community and technical college and apprenticeships. SBE believes that a strong math foundation is a gateway to postsecondary education and family-wage employment. Most importantly, students are not afraid of the challenge. More than 80 percent of high school graduates feel that they would have worked harder if schools had demanded more of them.

SBE is working with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Professional Educator Standards Board and other partners to improve math standards, curricula, teacher recruitment, retention and professional development.

[Learn more](#)>>

Get to know your board members: Kristina L. Mayer, Ed.D., Board Liaison, Port Townsend, Governor Appointed, through January 2011

Kristina Mayer Ed.D. is a specialist in the fields of philanthropy and education. She leads the KLMayer Consulting Group in Port Townsend, providing leadership and management strategies for nonprofit organizations and foundations. Before launching her consulting career, Dr. Mayer was a program officer at the Stuart Foundation and the Washington Mutual Foundation. Prior to

that, she spent twenty years working in education as a school designer, teacher, and principal. Dr. Mayer's background drives her passion for ensuring the state has highly qualified, motivated, and enthusiastic teachers for all students.

"This is an exciting time for the State Board of Education. We are making real progress on our key initiatives and believe we will help every student develop the skills needed to be a lifelong learner and to be successful in the 21st century world of work and citizenship" said Dr. Mayer.

"I look forward to continuing to work with parents, students, educators and all education stakeholders to address our students' needs. We must advocate for our kids and hold all of us accountable for providing all students with the high quality education they deserve. As a Board, we are committed to this goal and are focusing much of our effort to ensuring schools where kids persistently do not meet standards have the resources and tools needed to improve student achievement."

Dr. Mayer's professional accomplishments include developing the Jefferson County Community Foundation, spearheading the Washington Initiative for National Board Certification and creating the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession. Her recent board service includes Grantmakers for Education and Philanthropy Northwest.

We want to hear from you!

E-mail your thoughts and questions to SBE at sbe@k12.wa.us .