

2019 SBE Legislative Platform



SBE Request Legislation: Flexibility in Graduation Requirements

To increase flexibility for districts to offer a career and college ready diploma and to increase personalization for students to find the path to a diploma that works best for them, SBE proposes legislation to:

- Revise the meaning of “circumstances” by which local school districts can grant two-credit waivers of non-core courses (from “unusual” to “individual student” circumstances).
- Automatically grant students high school credit for high school level courses passed in middle school, except by student request, and allow students to select credit by a grade or pass for transcript.
- Reinstate the “expedited appeal” for students not meeting assessment requirements.
- Create and fund a workgroup led by SBE to coordinate development of a framework for a competency-based pathway to a diploma.

SBE Priorities:

Educational Equity

The Board urges the Legislature to dismantle policies, programs, and practices that contribute to disparate and statistically predictable educational outcomes based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and other factors. Specifically, the Board supports repealing anti-affirmative action statutes i.e., I-200 (RCW 49.60.400-401), increasing access to high quality expanded learning opportunities for historically underserved students, and revising the prototypical school funding model to ensure the diverse needs of students are met.

School Safety

Safe schools foster academic achievement and a healthy K-12 system. SBE urges the state to:

- Create a state-wide framework for mental health support, social emotional learning, and trauma-informed instructional models in the K-12 system.
- Expand and sustain comprehensive statewide school safety and mental health systems via regional coordination.
- Create and fund a workgroup to coordinate a state-wide school culture and climate survey.

Early Learning

SBE urges the Legislature to expand access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education for all of Washington’s children, particularly children of color and children in poverty, as a means to mitigate opportunity and achievement gaps.

Special Education Funding

Special Education funding remains inadequate. SBE urges the Legislature to increase funding for students who have Individualized Education Plans, for students qualifying for the Safety Net, and to support inclusionary practices.

SBE Position:

Relationship between State Assessments and High School Graduation

If the Legislature reconsiders policies related to mandatory state assessments linked to graduation, the State Board of Education supports legislation that delinks the passing of statewide assessments from graduation requirements, provided that: 1) State standards in math, English Language Arts, and science are not diminished; 2) State assessment results are still used as part of the Washington School Improvement Framework; 3) Assessment participation rates remain a focus of emphasis consistent with the expectations of ESSA; and 4) Student-level assessment results will be used to inform student course taking in subsequent terms to focus on growth and progress to achieve high school proficiency and career and college readiness.



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Vision

The Washington State Board of Education envisions an education system where students are engaged in personalized education pathways that prepare them for civic engagement, careers, postsecondary education, and lifelong learning.

Mission

Provide transparent leadership in K-12 education policy-making; effective oversight of schools serving Washington K-12 students; and, assertive advocacy for student personal growth and success. These three areas of responsibility will support a system that personalizes learning for each student and values diverse cultures, abilities, and learning styles.

About the Board

The State Board of Education (SBE) is charged with advocacy and oversight of Washington's education system, provides leadership for a system that personalizes education based on each student's needs, develops policies and structures designed to create an accountability system to improve student achievement, and promotes the achievement of state goals for basic education. Specific responsibilities of the SBE include:

- **Advocacy and strategic oversight of public education:** The Board provides a public forum to develop policies and provide advocacy to support a system of education that responds to individual student goals and community needs.
- **Basic Education Compliance:** The Board adopts rules and monitors compliance with a standards-based program of basic education, approves private schools operating in Washington, and approves and monitors districts wishing to authorize charter schools.
- **High School Graduation Requirements:** The Board establishes credit and non-credit requirements for high school graduation, determines threshold scores for assessments, and alternatives to meet graduation requirements.
- **Accountability and Improvement:** The Board adopts goals for the system, consults with OSPI to develop, maintain, and report on the state assessment system, establishes the index for system accountability and metrics for system health, and identifies criteria and approves districts for recognition and improvement.

Strategic Plan

The SBE recently approved its [2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#). The priorities, initiatives, and efforts outlined in the strategic plan further inform SBE's legislative activities.

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If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Kaaren Heikes, SBE's Director of Policy and Partnerships, at 360.725.6029 or Kaaren.Heikes@k12.wa.us.