



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Prepared for the November 2018 Board Meeting

As related to:

- Goal One:** Develop and support policies to close the achievement and opportunity gaps.
- Goal Two:** Develop comprehensive accountability, recognition, and supports for students, schools, and districts.

Goal Three: Ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet career and college ready standards.

Goal Four: Provide effective oversight of the K-12 system.

Other

Relevant to Board roles:

- Policy Leadership
- System Oversight

Advocacy

Communication

Convening and facilitating

Policy considerations/Key questions:

- How does the Board want to communicate about graduation requirements?
- What is the best way to communicate with educators, students, parents and members of the public about the Washington diploma?
- How does the communication fit within the broader set of changes needed to ensure the diploma requirements support multiple pathways to the diploma?

Materials included in packet:

- State Board of Education flier with proposal for the Washington high school diploma

Synopsis

The Board will review and discuss communication pieces being developed by the Board's communication consultant and how those materials fit within the Board's priority around the diploma requirements. The Board will have the opportunity to discuss current flexibilities within the graduation requirements, and the best way to communicate those flexibilities.



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State Board of Education Proposal for the Washington High School Diploma

Washington's graduation requirements were designed to ensure that a student is "ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner" (RCW 28A.230.090). While the graduation requirements adopted in 2015 have led districts to undertake courageous and innovative work to change systems on behalf of students, they have also presented significant challenges. The Board conducted extensive outreach during the spring and summer of 2018 to educators, parents, students and other stakeholders, and heard concerns that the graduation requirements constrain schools from providing a wide range of engaging educational pathways that help students earn a high school diploma and be successful after high school. The Board feels called to action to enable and empower districts to address the challenges and honor individualization and personalization of learning for students.

The Board has identified a suite of actions ranging from improving communication about graduation requirements to amending rules and proposing legislation to make adjustments to the current graduation requirement framework. Actions the Board will undertake will include the following:

A Communication Campaign to:

- Inform districts, students, and parents about flexibilities within the current graduation requirement framework.
- Recognize and value equally all pathways to graduation.

Agency Budget Requests to:

- Support development of a competency-based pathway to the diploma to align with recommendations of Career Connect Washington, expand pathways to apprenticeships, and increase other opportunities for hands-on learning.
- Explore and encourage credit earned through work and extra-curricular activities.
- Consider competency credit for passing state assessments and credit for lower level courses in a sequence by demonstration of success in higher level courses.
- Development of state frameworks for competency credit in multiple subject areas.
- Collaborate to develop a robust, credit-bearing High School and Beyond Plan that includes teaching and learning of financial education standards.
- Study math pathways aligned to specific postsecondary and career pathways, including apprenticeships.

Rule-writing and Agency Request Legislation to:

- Empower districts to use the 2-credit waiver for students whose personal circumstances warrant it, so that more students can stay on-track to earning a diploma.
- Create guidance and more definition on Personalized Pathways, helping districts to enable students to access a variety of pathways.
- Enable students to more easily earn high school credit for any class taken in middle school that was taught to high school learning standards, allowing more students to start high school having already earned high school credit.
- Reinstate the "expedited appeal" option, providing a path to a diploma for students who have met all graduation requirements except an assessment requirement.