

# The Washington State Board of Education

Governance | Achievement | High School and College Preparation | Math & Science | Effective Teaching

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## **Guiding Question:** How will proposed policy changes affect opportunities for the tribal sovereignty curriculum?

### **What is the current Washington State History Graduation Requirement?**

“Under the provisions of RCW [28A.230.170](#) and [28A.230.090](#), one half credit shall be required in WA state history and government which shall include study of the Constitution of the state of WA and is encouraged to include information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian people who were the first inhabitants of the state.” [WAC 180-51-066](#)



### **What is the Proposed Change to the Requirement?**

- Remove the .5 credit from the requirement.
- Retain WA State History as a non-credit graduation requirement.
- Require districts to note on a student’s transcript that the student has met the WA State History requirement.

### **Why Change Washington State History to a Non-Credit Requirement?**

- Many schools/districts are teaching WA State History at a 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, to 7<sup>th</sup> grade standards and grade level expectations.
- Technically, districts cannot award high school credit for classes taught to 7<sup>th</sup> grade standards and grade level expectations.

### **Following the Policy Trail...**

- OSPI policy: Washington State History is a one-semester course or its equivalent taught in grades 7-12 ([WAC 392-410-120](#))
- State law: Students may earn credit in courses taken in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high school credit ([RCW 28A.230.090](#))
- Common practice: Schools often teach WA State History in 7<sup>th</sup> grade; [State Grade Level Expectations \(GLE\)](#) for WA State History are in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - **Sample 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Civics GLE:** *Understands how key ideals set forth in fundamental documents, including the Washington State Constitution and tribal treaties, define the goals of our state.*
  - **The SBE Transcript Study:** In a study of almost 15,000 2008 graduates, approximately 39.9% of students completed Washington State History in middle school, receiving the designation on their high school transcript. Approximately half of the students received credit for taking this course in middle school, and the other half received a notation of course completion.

### **What is the Intended Result of the Proposed Change?**

Students can satisfy WA State History requirement at middle or high school level; districts can teach the course to the relevant grade level standards and award credit if taught to high school level standards.

### **What is the Civics Requirement?**

- New law in 2009: If the state board of education increases the number of courses credits in social studies that are required for high school graduation, the board shall also require that at least one-half credit of that requirement be coursework in civics. ([RCW 28A.230.093](#))