

Re-Linking Washington's Graduation Requirements

Two thirds of the jobs Washington's current K-12 students will work in their lifetimes do not yet exist. Over 70% of these future jobs will require some sort of post-secondary education/training. In our current system, only 32% of Washington's students go on to complete either a 2-year or 4-year degree. 42% are prepared only for entry level jobs that don't provide a living wage or include health care benefits. Our current system is perfectly aligned to get these results. To prepare students for their future, we must change.

Not all students are ready, willing or financially able to start college immediately following high school. To support these students, Washington's graduation system must recognize and reward the value of career pathway options that lead directly to living-wage jobs with the possibility of future education and advancement.

We Believe:

- K-12 education should prepare all students for a variety of post-high school options that at a minimum lead to a living wage job,
- Assessment systems should support student learning and inform student decisions, and
- The current Washington State graduation testing requirements act as a barrier to graduation and are not well aligned with the needs of students, colleges, or businesses.

We therefore support legislation that:

- Removes testing as an exit barrier for student graduation,
- Reestablishes graduation requirements based upon credit/competency completion,
- Re-Links testing and/or proficiency verification options with viable college and/or career pathways which inform students of their post-high school pathway entry readiness,
- Supports district-granted credit for students who demonstrate career pathway readiness,
- Tracks and highlights any cultural and racial disproportionality in student college/career pathway outcomes,
- Provides avenues for students in poverty to surmount institutional and societal barriers to admission and degree or certificate persistence, and
- Eliminates the need for graduation appeals to OSPI for individual students.