

The Washington State Board of Education

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

Title:	<u>Preview of Upcoming Rule Changes</u>	
As related to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal One: Advocacy for an effective, accountable governance structure for public education <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Two: Policy leadership for closing the academic achievement gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Three: Policy leadership to increase Washington's student enrollment and success in secondary and postsecondary education	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal Four: Effective strategies to make Washington's students nationally and internationally competitive in math and science <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Five: Advocacy for policies to develop the most highly effective K-12 teacher and leader workforce in the nation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
Relevant to Board Roles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System Oversight <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Convening and Facilitating
Policy Considerations / Key Questions	In the coming months, SBE will be considering rule changes that will move the state forward on the new graduation requirements approved in November 2010 that were determined to have no state fiscal impact. This memo previews those changes as well as potential changes to other SBE rules that SBE may consider in 2011.	
Possible Board Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Materials Included in packet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Graphs / Graphics <input type="checkbox"/> Third-Party Materials <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint	
Synopsis	<p>This memo previews changes to rules staff will be bringing for consideration by SBE in September 2011 (WACs 180-51-066, 180-51-050, and 180-18-050) or at a later meeting (180-51-115). In September 2011, unless directed otherwise, staff will present draft rules for changes in graduation requirements for the Class of 2016. Only graduation requirements rule changes that have been determined to have no state fiscal impact will be presented, and the total number of credits required (20) will not change. Staff will also bring forward draft rule changes to a waiver WAC; the extent of those changes will be determined by discussion at the July meeting. In addition, staff is working with OSPI on changes to SBE's WAC pertaining to procedures for granting high school graduation credit requirements for students with special educational needs. Changes will be brought to SBE once staff has vetted the changes with stakeholders; there may not be time to do this by September. Any draft rule language approved in September 2011 could be brought forward in November 2011 for public hearing and possible adoption.</p>	

Preview of Upcoming Rule Changes

BACKGROUND

The State Board of Education (SBE) approved changes to graduation requirements in November 2010 and presented those changes to the Quality Education Council and to the legislature's education committees as required by RCW 28A.230.090. At that time SBE signaled its intention to move forward on only those changes that the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) had determined would have no state fiscal impact. The 2011 Legislature did not take action with respect to SBE's proposed changes, making it possible for SBE to move forward to adopt rules for those changes that have no state fiscal impact. In September 2011, unless directed otherwise, staff will present draft rules for changes in graduation requirements for the Class of 2016 (WACs 180-51-066 and 180-51-050). Staff would then bring the rules back in November for public hearing and possible adoption.

In addition, staff is reviewing possible changes to several other rules. One pertains to waivers (WAC 180-18-050) and is discussed in a different section of this packet. The second, at the instigation of OSPI staff, pertains to changes clarifying procedures for granting high school graduation credits to students with special educational needs (WAC 180-51-115). The latter still needs to be reviewed by a stakeholder advisory group, and may not be ready in September.

POLICY CONSIDERATION

Changes to WAC [180-51-066](#). This current SBE graduation rule would be amended to:

- Add 1 credit of English (moving from 3 credits to 4 credits).
- Add .5 credits of civics (moving social studies from 2.5 credits to 3 credits).
- Reduce electives to 4 credits (moving from 5.5 credits to 4 credits).
- Change Washington State History to a non-credit requirement.
- Permit career and technical education-equivalent classes to satisfy two graduation requirements, while earning 1 credit.
- Require 1 credit of biology (new).

Total credits would remain at 20. The districts impacted the most will be those that do not currently require 4 credits of English (40) and 3 credits of social studies (38). Twelve districts will need to add both English and social studies credits. The impact of the civics requirement will be variable, as many districts are already teaching civics. However, SBE does not have precise information about those numbers.

The biology requirement is an artifact of the Elementary and Secondary Reauthorization Act (No Child Left Behind (NCLB)). By the 2007-08 school year, states had to have in place their science assessments, and administer them annually, at least once in each of the 3 - 5, 6 - 9, and 10 - 12 grade spans. The requirements stipulated that "assessments administered in the 10 - 12 grade span

in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science may be end-of-course tests so long as the associated courses, or combinations of courses, are ones that all students must take.”¹ Since Washington is implementing a biology end-of-course assessment that is being used to satisfy the requirements of NCLB, the state needs to require biology of all students. OSPI’s analysis of CEDARS records in October 2010 found that the vast majority (93.5 percent) of students were taking biology, most (62.4 percent) in tenth grade.

No changes are being suggested at the present time to the Culminating Project. Although the Board had discussed amending the requirement for the purpose of making it more consistent across districts, staff recommends postponing any changes to the rule until the Board has revisited this issue with district input.

Changes to WAC 180-51-050. This current SBE rule would be amended to remove the requirement that a high school credit shall mean 150 hours of planned instructional activities and substitute language that would read:

“High school credit shall mean successful completion of the subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the state, per written district policy.”

SBE staff has worked with WSSDA staff and a small advisory group of district representatives to develop a sample policy to guide districts. The suggested district policy language would be:

High school credit will be awarded for successful completion of a specified unit of study. In this district, successful completion of a specified unit of study means:

- Earning a passing grade according to the district’s grading policy; and/
- Demonstrating competency/proficiency/mastery of content standards as determined by the district; and/ or-
- Successfully completing an established number of hours of planned instructional activities to be determined by the district.

The district will establish a process for determining competency/proficiency/mastery for credit-bearing courses of study.

The advisory group developed an FAQ for the unit of credit definition to guide districts; that FAQ is attached to this document.

No changes would be made to the competency-based definition of a credit currently in rule.

Changes to WAC 180-51-115. This rule pertains to procedures for granting high school graduation credits for students with special educational needs. At the instigation of OSPI staff, SBE staff has begun working on changes that will update the rule (originally written in 1984) and clarify the procedures. Changes will be brought to SBE once staff has vetted the changes with stakeholders; there may not be time to do this by September.

Changes to WAC 180-18-050. Finally, there is one potential rule change that is not related to graduation requirements. Staff has brought to SBE’s attention the possibility of rule changes to one of SBE’s WACs related to waivers for restructuring purposes. These changes would clarify criteria and procedures for Option One waivers. They might also incorporate the stipulation that SBE had attached to waivers when the 2011 Legislature was considering reducing the school year. Although

¹ <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/saaprguidance.pdf>, p. 29.

the 2011 Legislature did not take that action, SBE's position would be strengthened in the future if it were in rule. SBE's approved language² read:

If a state law is enacted authorizing or mandating that a school district operate on less than the current statutory requirement of school days, and a school district reduces the number of school days in a year in response to the change in law, then the total number of days for which a waiver is granted in any year shall be automatically reduced by a number equal to the total number of school days a district reduces its schedule for that year below the current statutory requirement.

EXPECTED ACTION

None.

² March 2011 SBE Meeting

FAQs for Unit of Credit Definition³

1. How does Washington State define a high school credit?

The State Board of Education (SBE) WAC 180-51-050 defines a high school credit in two ways: by time and by competency:

- Time: 150 hours of planned instructional activities.
- Competency: Satisfactory demonstration by a student of clearly identified competencies established pursuant to a process defined in written district policy.

Currently, if a district's bell schedule results in less than 150 hours of planned instructional activities for a credit, the district must request a waiver of the 150-hour requirement. (Note: The terms "competency" and "proficiency" are often used interchangeably.)

2. What part of the WAC definition of a high school credit is changing?

SBE is removing the time-based (150 hour) requirement. Districts will be able to establish policies that specify how they will know students have successfully completed the state's subject area content expectations sufficiently to earn a credit.

3. Why is SBE changing the time-based definition of a high school credit?

The change is part of SBE's overall review of graduation requirements and move towards a new career- and college-ready graduation requirements framework that will include 24 credits. The framework was approved in November 2010.

The recommendation to change the time-based definition of a credit emerged from the work of the Implementation Task Force (ITF), a group of education practitioners appointed by SBE to recommend policy changes needed to implement the SBE's new graduation requirements. The ITF recommended that a non time-based policy would:

- Place the focus on student-centered learning.
- Allow districts more flexibility to meet the increased credit requirements.
- Allow districts to determine, and individualize, how much course time is needed for students to meet the state's standards.

4. Is there a uniform state policy on how each district should define a credit?

Districts will base their definition on criteria they stipulate in policy, such as:

- Earning a passing grade according to the district's grading policy; and/or

³ Based on the input of Advisory Group members Ann Varkados (Bethel SD), Greg Borgerding (White River SD), Karen Eitreim (North Thurston SD), and Michelle Wadeikis (Wenatchee SD) to Marilee Scarbrough (WSSDA) and Kathe Taylor (SBE), provided on March 17, 2011 and April 27, 2011.

- Demonstrating competency/proficiency/mastery of content standards as determined by the district; and/or
- Successfully completing an established number of hours of planned instructional activities defined by the district.

5. Can a district continue to use time as the basis for a credit?

Yes. The change will not prevent a district from using a time-based definition, but will provide greater flexibility for districts to restructure the school day. Districts can define credit by all of the criteria listed in question #3. If a district chooses to include a time-based component, the previous 150-hour definition offers a starting point for district discussion.

6. Does a district still need to provide students with a minimum district-wide annual average of 1,000 hours of instruction?

Yes. Legislation in 2011 delayed the increase of the district-wide annual average to at least 1,080 hours for students enrolled in each of grades 7-12, originally scheduled to be effective September 1, 2011. Per ESSB 5919, the increase will not occur before the 2014-15 school year.

7. What is the difference between a credit that is defined strictly on the basis of competency (proficiency), and one that is defined using other criteria (earning a passing grade, demonstration of proficiency/mastery, time)?

Competency-based credit is awarded solely on the basis of meeting a preset level of proficiency on a set of standards; how much time the student took to meet the standard is immaterial. In lieu of grades, evaluative terms like “met standard,” “exceeded standard,” or “not met standard” are often used. Students can earn competency-based credit without the benefit of a classroom experience by demonstrating proficiency on knowledge acquired outside of a classroom setting.

Non competency-based credit is awarded on the basis of meeting expectations that may incorporate factors (e.g., effort, homework completion, behavior, attendance, class participation, etc.) in addition to meeting an established performance standard. Evaluation is usually in the form of grades that are based on a pre-determined scale. Students earn this type of credit after participating in a classroom-based experience.

8. Will the change from a time-based definition of credit affect a district's apportionment funding?

If a district ends up reducing its instructional time, there *could* be a reduction in claimable FTEs, especially as it relates to part time students. For instance, if a student is enrolled in a single daily scheduled class which is scheduled for 60 minutes, it would be claimed for a 0.20 FTE. If the time is reduced to 45 minutes then the calculation of FTE generates only a 0.15 FTE. Districts should work with their business officers to determine any potential impact to district funding for changes to instructional time.

9. Can scheduled time for advisories or the culminating project count as instructional time?

It depends on how the time is structured. Generally, if all students are in a classroom with a teacher guiding the students through an established curriculum (such as Navigation 101) or on a focused project, then it counts as instructional time. If students are in a classroom that allows students to self-direct their time (e.g., study hall), then it would not count as instructional time. A

good rule of thumb for what counts as instructional time is to ascertain whether the experience will appear on the student's high school transcript. If it's on the transcript, chances are it represents instructional time.

10. How will students transfer credits between districts if the methods of calculating a credit are all different?

Because districts have different bell schedules, the time basis for a credit has often varied among districts, as have the definitions districts have used to determine what constitutes "planned instructional activities." Districts will continue to make local decisions about what to accept and how much credit to award to students who transfer from other districts.

11. Can a district offer credit for classes shorter than the "traditional" class period of 45-55 minutes?

Yes. It is the district's responsibility to determine how it will measure learning outcomes. A non time-based policy shifts the emphasis from time to rigor and places responsibility on districts to assure that rigorous standards are applied to all courses, and that the time needed to achieve those standards is provided.

12. How does a district know if the student has met standard?

A non time-based policy shifts the emphasis from time to rigor and places responsibility on districts to assure that rigorous standards are applied to all courses, and that the time needed to achieve those standards is provided. Districts may decide, for example, that they know that a student has met standard when:

- the student has successfully completed all of the course requirements to the satisfaction of the instructor.
- the student has mastered subject area standards as determined by their performance on classroom-based and district assessments.

13. Can a district issue partial credit for work completed?

Decisions about how much credit to award are determined locally, according to local district policy.