

**WASHINGTON STATE  
WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD  
MEETING NO. 174  
NOVEMBER 14, 2013**

**CORE 24: CAREER AND COLLEGE READY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

In 2006, the Legislature directed the State Board of Education to revise the definition of the purpose and expectations of a public high school diploma. In 2010, after extensive committee work, stakeholder input, and research the State Board of Education approved (but did not implement) the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements. The adopted graduation requirements for the class of 2016 are a step toward the Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements, but include only changes that have no state fiscal impact. The State Board of Education has maintained that it will not advocate for full implementation of the 24 credit framework without adequate funding.

In 2010 the Workforce Board endorsed, through formal motion, the State Board of Education proposal for requiring two credits of a career concentration, a two-for-one policy for career and technical education courses deemed equivalent to core academic courses, and the proposed rules for the High School and Beyond Plan and the Culminating Project. Further, the Workforce Board emphasized that the Legislature should re-prioritize state spending to accommodate the fiscal impacts of the proposed new requirements.

There remains concern about the impact the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements may have on a student's ability to pursue a Career and Technical Education program of study, especially those students who choose to take course work at a Skills Center.

The 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements are a prime issue under consideration by the Career Education Opportunities Legislative Task Force on which the Workforce Board's Executive Director is a member. The requirements may also be the subject of legislation during the 2014 Legislative session and/or additional action by the State Board of Education.

**Board Action Requested:** For discussion only.

## 24 Credit Graduation Requirements

The 24 credit framework is designed to be both rigorous and flexible. The default pathway intended for most students will keep all postsecondary options open, including meeting the college admission requirements for direct entry into a public four-year institution or pursuing a program of study with a community or technical college, apprenticeship, or private career college.

Proponents of the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements assert that, for students who have a plan as defined in their High School and Beyond Plan, the framework is flexible enough to accommodate any individual program of study that prepares a student for some form of postsecondary education or training.

There exists concern, however, that the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements unnecessarily restrict a student's ability to pursue an education pathway that will not lead to immediate entrance into a four-year college or university following high school graduation. The Washington Association for Career and Technical Education has advocated for increased student choice options that will better enable students to pursue an individualized program of study, allowing them to pursue a technical certificate or two year degree immediately following high school graduation as opposed to direct entrance into a four year institution. The Washington Association for Career and Technical Education has advocated to re-classify additional graduation credits for English, Science, and World Language to be "student choice" instead of "mandatory" in support of a student's High School and Beyond Plan. While components of flexibility exist, utilization of the flexibility options and their impact on Skills Centers and Career and Technical Education remain a concern. Currently, Washington Administrative Code provides students and parents the ability to substitute the third year of math for a career-oriented program as defined in the student's High School and Beyond Plan. In order for students to utilize this option, they must concurrently meet with their guardians and a school representative and openly state their intention to pursue a career-focused program of study.

Students may take an approved Career and Technical Education course that has been determined to be equivalent to a specific academic course. This option is only available if the local school district has exercised its ability to deem a specific Career and Technical Education Course as equivalent to a specific academic course. Currently only 101 of the 295 school districts in Washington offer Career and Technical Education Courses that receive in district course equivalency credit. Science is the most common course equivalency, followed by art, math, and others. A recent budget proviso requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a recommended statewide list of course equivalencies. Currently, the decision to create course equivalencies remains an issue of local control.

Key elements of the framework that allow for flexibility include:

- Seven of the 24 credits can be substituted according to a student's High School and Beyond Plan.
- Only 22 credits are required for graduation; 2 credits may be waived locally for students who have attempted 24 credits.

A student's ability to pursue courses more consistent with the educational and career goals expressed in his or her High School and Beyond Plan is not established in the Revised Code of Washington or Washington Administrative Code. This flexibility option is part of the State Board of Education's November 2010 resolution to approve state graduation requirements. These requirements, while approved by the State Board of Education, have not been adopted or funded by the Legislature.

Limited flexibility may affect students interested in pursuing a program of study at a Skills Center. Typically, students attend a Skills Center half time in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. It is important to accommodate travel and other logistics to allow students to take a half day of course work. The 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation requirements would normally require a student to take English, math, social studies, and science in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. If a student's home district does not accept a Skills Center course as equivalent to one of these subjects, then the student would not be able to attend the Skills Center for a half day. Since the default pathway outlined in the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements would require additional fine arts and language credits, students may be guided to take classes that would preclude attending a Skills Center.

### **Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2016 and Beyond**

Because of limited resources and the complications that would arise with the full implementation of the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements, the State Board of Education has taken incremental steps towards its full implementation. While the State Board of Education formally adopted a 24 credit framework in November of 2010, it has not advocated for full implementation unless adequately funded by the Legislature. The State Board of Education evaluated the proposed changes and in November 2011 adopted the 20 credit Career and College Ready Graduation requirements beginning with the graduating class of 2016. The 20 credit framework represents increased credit requirements that do not require additional funding from the Legislature and includes the changes described below. The state intends that graduation requirements prepare students for postsecondary education, gainful employment and citizenship. The Washington Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements are designed to meet the state's intent and to help students prepare for success in postsecondary education and careers.

State Board of Education approved November 2011 graduation requirements, effective for the graduating class of 2016, include:

- Increase English from 3 credits to 4 credits.
- Increase Social Studies from 2.5 credits to 3 credits; require .5 credit of civics.
- Decrease electives from 5.5 to 4 credits.
- Washington State History and Government are now a non-credit requirement, allowing districts the flexibility to offer the course at the middle and/or high school level.
- Clarifies that the 2 credits of health and fitness includes .5 credit of health and 1.5 credits of fitness.
- Creates a "two for one" policy that would enable students taking a CTE-equivalent course to satisfy two graduation requirements while earning one credit.
- Two-Year Extension for Implementation.

Based on extensive feedback received by the State Board of Education, both during the November 2011 meeting and in the months prior, the graduation requirements were modified to allow school districts to receive a two-year extension from the changes to the social studies and English credit requirements. This exemption period provides school districts additional time to plan for and implement the required changes. This also moves the state incrementally towards the full implementation of the 24 credit Career and College Ready Graduation Requirements without placing any additional fiscal burden on local school districts. Districts who received this extension shall maintain the prior English, Social Studies, and elective credits for the period of the exemption.

Also, the Board revised credit requirements substituting a non-time-based definition of a credit for the time-based 150 instructional hour credit definition. This revision increased flexibility for districts in defining credits that meet graduation requirements.

### **High School and Beyond Plan**

The State Board of Education established the High School and Beyond Plan as a graduation requirement in 2000. The requirement is effective for students in the graduating class of 2008 and beyond.

The High School and Beyond Plan is a formal process designed to help students think about their future and select course work that will best prepare them for their post high school goals. Students create their High School and Beyond Plans in cooperation with parents/guardians and school staff. Ideally, students write their plans in eighth or ninth grade and then continue to revise them throughout high school to accommodate changing interests or goals. Each school district determines the guidelines for the High School and Beyond Plan.

The State Board of Education considers the High School and Beyond Plan to be central to the new graduation requirements approved in November 2010. Pending legislative authorization and funding, The State Board of Education has approved adding the following elements to the High School and Beyond Plan to make the requirements more consistent across districts and more relevant to students:

- Personal interests, abilities, and relationship to current career goals.
- Four-year plan for course-taking that is related to graduation requirements and the student's interests and goals, including consideration of dual credit opportunities within such a plan.
- Research on postsecondary training and education related to one's career goals, including comparative information on the benefits and costs of available choices.
- Budget for postsecondary education or training and life, based on potential education and training choices.
- Participation in a postsecondary site visit.
- Completion of an application for postsecondary education and training.
- Completion of a resume.
- Identify assessments that may assist in planning or are required to achieve educational/career goals.
- Should relate to the student's Culminating Project.

## **Culminating Project**

The State Board of Education established the Culminating Project as a graduation requirement in 2000. The requirement is effective for students in the graduating class of 2008 and beyond.

Students have the flexibility to construct Culminating Projects that demonstrate essential skills through reading, writing, speaking, production, and/or performance; skills of analysis, logic and creativity; and the integration of experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems. School districts should clearly identify Culminating Project student outcomes and develop and publish assessment criteria to support those outcomes. Each district should have a Culminating Project management system designed to support the students and staff. Districts should also have policies in place to handle special circumstances, such as district transfers, parental challenges to the project, etc.

Districts may opt to include the community in project planning, support, or feedback. There is no state-level prohibition against doing joint projects of two or more students. School districts shall ensure the safety of each student by complying with legal and risk management guidelines

The State Board of Education may consider changes to the Culminating Project. One proposal is to require the Culminating Project to include a portfolio, a presentation, and a product. The project may also include a research or reflective paper, community service, job shadowing, internship, or other components deemed appropriate by the district. The State Board of Education may also propose that the project demonstrate one or more examples of students' skills in each of the following categories:

- Learning and innovation skills (creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration).
- Information, media, and technology skills.
- Life and career skills (flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, financial literacy, leadership and responsibility, perseverance).

No action has been taken on these proposals.

## **Career Education Opportunities Task Force**

The Career Education Opportunities Task Force was created in section 719 of the state's 2013 - 2015 operating budget. Task force members include; co-chair Sen. Ann Rivers (18th District – R), co-chair Rep. Monica Stonier (17th District – D), Sen. Mark Mullet (5th District – D) Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe (1st District – D), Rep. Dick Muri (28th District – R), Rep. Brad Hawkins (12th District – R), Rep. Drew Hansen (23rd District – D) and alternate Rep. Chris Reykdal (22nd District – D). The task force also includes representation from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Workforce Board, the State Board of Education, the Washington Student Achievement Council, the Washington Association for Career and Technical Education, and one Governor appointee. Collectively, task force members are to analyze career and college ready graduation requirements, explore how to expand comprehensive career guidance and counseling, options for increasing student and parent awareness of multiple

pathways to education and training, strategies for enhancing work integrated learning opportunities, strategies for appropriate oversight of Career and Technical Education, and recommendations for how to maximize statewide use of the list of Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended Career and Technical Education course equivalencies. A preliminary report is due in December of 2013 with a final report due in Sept of 2014.

In addition, the budget proviso requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction with developing a recommended list of course equivalencies for Career and Technical Education courses and submit the list to the Career Education Opportunities Task Force.

### **HB 1656 Establishing statewide high school graduation requirements that permit increased flexibility for students to select courses based on their interests and plans**

Introduced during the 2013 Legislative Session, HB 1656 sought to address concerns that the proposed Career and College Ready requirements limit an individual student's ability to participate in Career and Technical Education, especially at Skill Centers.

The bill would have required that the State Board of Education must establish the following course distribution requirements, for a total of 22 credits:

- English: 4 credits
- Mathematics: 3 credits, with the content of the third credit chosen by the student based on their High School and Beyond Plan
- Science: 2 credits
- Social Studies: 3 credits
- Health and Fitness: 2 credits
- Occupation Education: 1 credit
- Arts: 1 credit
- Career Concentration: 6 credits

The bill would have defined a Career Concentration as a series of related courses within a career pathway that lead to a specific post high school career or educational outcome chosen by the student based on their individual High School and Beyond Plan and is intended to provide a focus for the student's learning. Particularly for students whose High School and Beyond Plan indicates intent to enroll directly in a four-year institution of higher education after graduation, the State Board of Education may encourage selection of the following courses as the student's Career Concentration:

- Science: 1 additional credit
- Arts: 1 additional credit
- World Languages: 2 additional credits
- Electives: 2 credits

Further, HB 1656 would have required that the State Board of Education adopt rules defining the minimum content of the required credits and their alignment with state learning standards. Rather than providing students an opportunity to earn 24 credits for graduation, the definition of Basic Education is to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to complete the statutory graduation requirements as outlined in HB 1656.



# THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## Washington State Graduation Requirements 2012 to 2017

Credits in bold red denote a change from the previous year

Class of:	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017			
Entering 9 <sup>th</sup> grade after July 1 of:	2008 See note (1)	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013			
<b>English</b>	3	3	3	3	<b>4</b> See note (2)	4			
<b>Mathematics</b>	2	<b>3</b>	3	3	3	3			
		algebra 1 or integrated math 1							
		geometry or integrated math 2							
	algebra 2 or integrated math 3, or a 3 <sup>rd</sup> credit of math other than algebra 2, see note (3)								
<b>Science</b> Including at least 1 lab	2	2	2	2	2	2			
<b>Social Studies</b>	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	<b>3</b> See note (2)	3			
					1 US history and government		1 US history		
					1 contemporary world history, geography, and problems (or an equivalent course)				
					.5 Washington State history and government, see note (4)		.5 civics		
					.5 social studies elective				
<b>Arts</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1			
<b>Health and Fitness</b>	2	2	2	2	Health	<b>.5</b>			
					Students must earn credits unless excused per RCW 28A.230.050		Fitness	<b>1.5</b>	
<b>Occupational Education</b>	1	1	1	1	1 See note (5)	1			
<b>Electives</b>	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	<b>4</b>	4			
<b>Total Required Credits</b> See note (6)	19	<b>20</b>	20	20	20	20			
<b>Non-credit Requirements</b>	Culminating Project								
	High School and Beyond Plan								
	Certificate of Academic Achievement or Individual Achievement awarded to students who pass the required assessments								
	Washington State history and government								
<b>Assessments</b>	Reading and Writing High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE)			Reading and Writing HSPE, or ELA SBAC, or 10 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA Exit Exam See note (8)		10 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA Exit Exam, or ELA SBAC See note (8)			
	Math HSPE, or one Math EOC, or earn 2 credits of math after 10 <sup>th</sup> grade See note (7)	One Math End-of-Course Exam (EOC) in algebra I/Integrated math 1 or geometry/Integrated math 2		One Math End-of-Course Exam (EOC) or algebra I/Integrated math 1 EOC Exit Exam or geometry/Integrated math 2 EOC Exit Exam or Math SBAC See note (9)					
	Pass one Science EOC in biology See note (10)								

**Notes:**

- (1) Credit requirements were constant from the Class of 2004 to 2012; non-credit requirements were constant from the Class of 2009-2012.
- (2) An automatic 2-year extensions for implementing additional credits were available to districts that applied, extending the implementation of the credits to the class of 2018.
- (3) A student may elect to pursue a 3<sup>rd</sup> credit of math other than algebra 2 or integrated math 3 if the elective choice is based on a career oriented program of student identified in the student's High School and Beyond Plan, and the student, parent or guardian, and a school representative meet, discuss the plan, and sign a form (WAC 180-51-067(2)(b)).
- (4) The Washington State history and government requirement may be met in grades 7 through 12; if the course is taken in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade it fulfills the requirement, but high school credit will be awarded only if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for 8<sup>th</sup> grade; students who meet the requirement but do not earn credit must still take the required number of social studies credits in high school.
- (5) CTE courses locally determined to be equivalent to a non-CTE course may be used to meet two graduation requirements.
- (6) The 150-hour definition of credit was replaced with a non-time based definition, as of February, 2012.
- (7) In 2009-210, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) was replaced by the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE); through the Class of 2012, students who pass the WASL are not required to pass the HSPE.
- (8) SBAC refers to the Common Core State Standard assessments developed by the multi-state consortium, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium; ELA SBAC refers to the English Language Arts assessment that will be administered to students in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA Exit Exam refers to a Common Core State Standard assessment that will be developed by Washington using SBAC components.
- (9) The Math EOC Exit Exam will be developed by the spring of 2015, and will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards.
- (10) When the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) have been implemented and assessments have been developed, a comprehensive NGSS assessment may be required for graduation. The timeline of implementation and assessment has not been determined at this time.

Updated October 2013

# State Graduation Requirements – Impact on Student Access to CTE

## Current SBE Graduation Requirement for 2016

20 credit requirement - 16 core credits, 4 electives

	9th		10th		11th		12th	
Period 1	English	English	English	English	English	English	English	English
Period 2	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Quant Math	Quant Math
Period 3	S. Studies	S. Studies	Fine Arts	Fine Arts	S. Studies	S. Studies	S. Studies	S. Studies
Period 4	Science	Science	Science	Science				
Period 5	Health/Fit	Health/Fit	Health/Fit	Health/Fit				
Period 6	Occ Ed	Occ Ed	World Lang.	World Lang.	World Lang.	World Lang.		
core requirements								
electives								
College Entrance Requirement								

## SBE Approved (but not in rule) Graduation Requirements pending funding (Approved 2010)

24 credit requirement - 17 core credits, 4 credits HECB required, 1 additional Art credit, 2 electives

	9th		10th		11th		12th	
Period 1	English	English	English	English	English	English	English	English
Period 2	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Elective or Math	Elective or Math
Period 3	S. Studies	S. Studies	Fine Arts	Fine Arts	S. Studies	S. Studies	S. Studies	S. Studies
Period 4	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Career Conc	Career Conc
Period 5	Health/Fit	Health/Fit	Health/Fit	Health/Fit	Fine Arts	Fine Arts	Career Conc	Career Conc
Period 6	Occ Ed	Occ Ed	World Lang.	World Lang.	World Lang.	World Lang.	Elective	Elective
core requirements		<i>Italics</i> - 1 arts credit, world language credit, career concentration credit, and electives						
electives		may be substituted according to a student's High School and Beyond Plan						
College Entrance Requirement								