

## High School Graduation Requirements TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## High School Graduation Requirements

### I. Publication of Graduation Requirements

Prior to registering in high school, and each year thereafter, each student and his/her parents/guardians will be provided with a copy of the graduation requirements in effect for that student (those in effect when the student enrolled in ninth grade). Graduation requirements will also be included in the student handbook.

### II. Procedures Related to Graduation Requirements

#### A. Credit Requirements

##### 1. Earning Credits in District:

High school credit will be awarded for successful completion of a specified unit of study. Successful completion of a specified unit of study means the following:

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

##### 2. Earning Credits Non-District:

The principal/designee is responsible for determining which credits will be recognized by the district for students enrolling from another state approved learning program (public school, approved private school or home school), or from out-of-state, or out-of-country. Credits from another Washington public school or accredited state private school or accredited out-of-state public or private school will be accepted to the extent the credit matches a district graduation requirement, or may be counted as an elective credit. Credits from unaccredited programs or home schools will be evaluated as described below for home school students. Decisions of the principal/designee may be appealed to the superintendent/designee within fifteen (15) school days of the initial decision. Training will be provided to school leaders and counselors to ensure consistency with implementation of this procedure.

**Credits Required Each Semester:** Each student shall be required to register for three (3) credits per semester for grades 9-12. A high school principal may make exceptions to the three (3) credit requirement for students when the student's request is in alignment with the student's High School and Beyond Plan. This request will be made in writing with parent/guardian approval/signature.

**Credits Required for Graduation:** Students will be expected to earn a total of twenty-four (24) credits to complete graduation requirements.

## Subject Area Requirements and Approved Courses

The following courses are approved and required to satisfy the subject area requirements as established by the State Board of Education and the district:

Subject	Class of 2020 Minimum State and District Credit Requirements	Class of 2021 and beyond
English	4	4
Mathematics (4)	3	3
Science	3 (including 1 lab credit)	3 (including 2 lab credits)
Social Studies (Including .5 civics)	3	3
Health and Fitness (5)	2	2
Arts	1	2 (1)
Occupational Education/CTE	1	1
World Languages / Personal Pathway	0	2 (2)
Electives	5	4
<b>Total State and District Credit Requirements</b>	<b>22*</b>	<b>24 (3)</b>

\* District credit requirements more than those required by the State Board of Education.

- (1) One of the two arts credits may be replaced with a personalized pathway requirement.
- (2) Two credits in World Language or personalized pathway requirements.
- (3) For individual students, 2 credits may be waived based on a student's circumstances (see Waivers III.I.3 on page 6).
- (4) Includes completion of Algebra and Geometry.
- (5) Includes 1.5 credits fitness and .5 credit health.
- (6) Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the district will offer a standalone course in Civics for .5 credit.

### a. Math:

Algebra I and Geometry course content is required by state statute and exposure to the content of these courses may not be waived. Students may, however, satisfy these content requirements with other Spokane Public Schools courses identified as equivalent by the Equivalency Crediting Committee. Alternatively, prior coursework that satisfy the content prerequisite sufficient for placement in a higher level course, as determined by the principal/designee, will allow the student flexibility to satisfy any of the mathematics credit requirements with more advanced mathematics coursework.

A third credit of high school mathematics, aligning with the student's interests and high school and beyond plan with agreement of the student's parent or guardian. The high school and beyond plan must be provided to the student's parents or guardians in their native language if that language is one of the two most frequently spoken non-English languages of students in the district ([RCW 28A.230.090](#)). If the parent or guardian is unavailable or does not indicate a preference for a specific course, the school counselor or principal may provide agreement with the plan.

### b. History and Government:

Washington history and government may be waived for students who have completed and passed a state history and government course in another state during grades seven (7) through twelve (12) and who have fulfilled study of the Washington state constitution through an alternative learning experience approved by the principal.

Successful completion of Unit 4 in Civics completes this graduation requirement. A principal may waive this requirement if a student has transferred into the district in their junior or senior year from another state and has not completed the state history requirements.

c. Physical Education/Health:

- i. The district will offer instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AED) in at least one health class pursuant to [RCW 28A.230.179](#).
- ii. Physical education may be waived upon written request of a parent/guardian on account of physical disability, employment, religious belief, or because of participation in directed athletics or military science and tactics ([RCW.28A.230.090](#)). Requests must be initiated by the parent/guardian by completing the Request for Waiver of Graduation Requirement ([Form 62-0050](#)).

B. High School and Beyond Plan

High School and Beyond Plans (HSBP) must be initiated for students during the seventh or eighth grade to guide their high school experience and prepare them for postsecondary education or training and their careers. School districts are encouraged to involve parents and guardians in the process of developing and updating the High School and Beyond Plan. Students' plans will be provided to students' parents or guardians in their native language if that language is one of the two most frequently spoken non-English languages of students in the district.

All high school and beyond plans will, at a minimum, include the following:

1. Identification of career goals, aided by a skills and interest assessment
2. Identification of educational goals
3. Identification of dual credit programs and the opportunities they create for students, including but not limited to career and technical education programs, running start programs, and college in the high school programs
4. Information about the college bound scholarship program established in [Chapter 28B.118 RCW](#)
5. A four-year plan for course taking that does the following:
  - a. Includes information about options for satisfying state and local graduation requirements
  - b. Satisfies state and local graduation requirements
  - c. Aligns with the student's secondary and postsecondary goals
  - d. Identifies dual credit programs and the opportunities they create for students; and
  - e. Includes information about the college bound scholarship program.
6. Evidence that the student has received the following information on federal and state financial aid programs that help pay for the costs of a postsecondary program:
  - a. Information about the documentation necessary for completing the applications; application timelines and submission deadlines; the importance of submitting applications early; information specific to student who are or have been in foster care; information specific to students who are, or are at risk of being, homeless; information specific to students whose family member or guardians will be required to provide financial and tax information necessary to complete the application; and

- b. Opportunities to participate in sessions that assist students and, when necessary, their family members or guardians, fill out financial aid applications
7. By the end of the twelfth grade, a current resume or activity log that provides a written compilation of the student's education, any work experience, and any community service and how the school district has recognized the community service.

### C. Graduation Pathway Options

A student may choose to pursue one or more of the pathway options described below to demonstrate career and college readiness if the option chosen is in alignment with the student's high school and beyond plan.

#### **Statewide High School Assessment**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting or exceeding the graduation standard established by the State Board of Education on the statewide high school assessments in English language arts and mathematics.

#### **Dual Credit Courses**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by completing and qualifying for college credit in dual credit courses in English language arts and mathematics. A dual credit course is a course in which a student qualifies for college and high school credit upon successfully completing the course.

#### **High School Transition Courses**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by earning high school credit in a high school transition course in English language arts and mathematics. A high school transition course is a course offered in high school where successful completion by a high school student ensures the student college-level placement at participating institutions of higher education as defined in [RCW 28B.10.016](#). High school transition courses must satisfy core or elective credit graduation requirements established by the State Board of Education.

#### **AP Courses and International Baccalaureate Programs**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by earning high school credit, with a C+ grade, or receiving a three or higher on the AP exam, or equivalent, in AP, international baccalaureate, or Cambridge international courses in English language arts and mathematics; or receiving a four or higher on international baccalaureate exams.

For English language arts, successfully completing any of the following courses meets the standard: AP English literature and composition, AP English language and composition, AP macroeconomics, AP microeconomics, AP psychology, AP United States history, AP world history, AP United States government and politics, AP comparative government and politics, and any of the international baccalaureate individuals and societies courses.

For mathematics, successfully completing any of the following courses meets the standard: AP statistics, AP computer science A, AP computer science principals, AP calculus, and any of the international baccalaureate mathematics courses.

### **SAT or ACT Scores**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting or exceeding the scores established by the state board of education for the mathematics portion and the reading, English, or writing portion of the SAT or ACT.

### **Combination of Options**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting any combination of at least one English language arts option and at least one mathematics option described above.

### **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by meeting standard in the armed services vocational aptitude battery. The state board of education will post eligibility scores on its website at least annually by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Career and Technical Education Courses**

A student may demonstrate career and college readiness by completing a sequence of career and technical education courses that are relevant to a student's postsecondary pathway that meet either the curriculum requirements of core plus programs for aerospace, maritime, health care, information technology, or construction and manufacturing; or the minimum criteria identified in [RCW 28A.700.030](#).

#### **D. Expedited Appeal Process for Waiving Student Assessment Requirements**

For the graduating classes of 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020, an expedited appeal process for waiving specific requirements in [RCW 28A.655.061](#) pertaining to the certificate of academic achievement and the certificate of individual achievement is available for eligible students who have not met the state standard on the English language arts statewide student assessment, the mathematics high school statewide student assessment, or both. The student or the student's parent, guardian, or principal may initiate an appeal with the district and the district has the authority to determine which appeals to submit to the superintendent of public instruction for review and approval.

A student in the class of 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017 is eligible for the expedited appeal process if he or she has met all other graduation requirements established by the state and district.

A student in the class of 2018 is eligible for the expedited appeal process if he or she has met all other graduation requirements established by the state and district and has attempted at least one alternative assessment option as established in [RCW 28A.655.065](#).

This expedited appeal process will no longer be available after August 31, 2022

### **III. Other Methods to Accrue Credits**

#### **A. Credit for Alternative Programs**

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for planned learning experiences primarily conducted away from the facilities owned, operated or supervised by a district pursuant to [WAC 392-410-300](#). A Credit for Alternative Programs (Form 62-0087) must be submitted to the Chief Academic Officer prior to the experience, will be at no additional cost to the district, and will include at least the following information:

1. Name of program or planned learning experience;
2. Length of time for which approval is desired;
3. Objectives of the program or planned learning experience;
4. Which one or more of the state learning goals are part of the program or planned learning experience;
5. Description of how credits shall be determined in accord with [WAC 180-51-050\(1\)](#);
6. Content outline of the program and/or major learning activities and instructional materials to be used;
7. Description of how student performance will be assessed;
8. Qualifications of instructional personnel;
9. Plans for evaluation of program; and
10. How and by whom the student will be supervised.

Reasons for approval or disapproval will be communicated to those making the request.

#### B. Credit for Work Experience Inside and Outside of Career and Technical Education

Credit for work experience through C.T.E. exists in all our high schools. State law also provides opportunity for students to obtain credits for work experience outside of CTE through the following parameters. Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for work experience pursuant to [WAC 392-410-315](#).

1. The work program will be supervised by the school.
2. The work experience will be specifically related to the school program of the student and shall connect with the student's High School and Beyond Plan.
3. Credit given for work experience will represent growth in the student, and the type of work done should have definite educational value.
4. The job in which experience is gained will provide a varied experience.
5. A work experience program will be supplemented by an adequate program of guidance, placement, follow-up and coordination between job and school by the career placement counselor.
6. Work experience as a planned part of a school subject may be included in the credit given for that subject (e.g., sales training class).
7. One credit may be granted for not less than one hundred and eighty (180) hours for instructional work based learning experience, and not less than three hundred and sixty (360) hours of cooperative work based learning experience related to a student's school program or one credit may be granted on a competency basis as provided under [WAC 180-51-050](#).
8. A student participating in a cooperative worksite learning experience shall be legally employed if the work being performed by the student results in a net increase in productivity or profitability for the business or organization. The student shall be sixteen years of age or older.
9. An employer's report of the student's work record, indicating satisfactory progress on the job, will be filed with the school.
10. The regular state apprenticeship program, where the training is worked out cooperatively with the school and meets the standards for graduation requirements, is acceptable.

11. The placement, supervision, and evaluation of a student earning credit in a work-based learning environment shall meet all other criteria established by [WAC 392-410-315](#).

## C. Credit from Outside Institutions

### 1. Credit for College Courses

Credit toward graduation requirements may be granted for college courses.

The following are approved schools from which a student may take these courses:

- a. Schools approved by the National University Continuing Education Association or accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council.
- b. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities, and state-approved private schools in Washington State. (See the latest edition of Washington Education Directory published by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.)
- c. Other schools or institutions which are approved after appropriate evaluation for a particular course offering by the district.

A written request for high school credit for correspondence or college courses not recognized by the district must be submitted to the high school principal by the parent/guardian or eligible student prior to the start of the course(s). The learning experience identified by the student for the requested credit must link to one or more learning goals and related performance expectations for the state of Washington or equivalent curriculum standards approved by the board. The high school principal/designee will investigate and ascertain the facts relating to the proposed course(s); evaluate the proposed course(s); and approve or deny the request. A copy of the high school principal's/designee's decision shall be sent to the Director for Secondary Schools. The high school principal will designate a qualified member of the staff to serve in supervisory capacity while the course is being offered. In the event a request is denied, the parent/guardian or eligible student shall be notified that an appeal may be made in writing to the executive director for the high school within ten (10) school days of the decision.

### 2. Credit for Running Start

Credit for successful completion of Running Start courses in an approved institution of higher education shall be granted as per procedures established in [WAC 392-169-050](#) and [WAC 180-51-050](#). State law requires that the district award one high school credit for every five-quarter hour credit or three semester hour credit successfully earned through a college or university, except for community college high school completion programs where the district awards the diploma.

Students will be released to participate in the Running Start program based on certification of eleventh (11th) or twelfth (12th) grade level placement.

Tenth (10th) and eleventh (11th) grade students and their parents/guardians will be notified annually of the Running Start Program.

## D. Credit for Courses Taken Prior to High School

### 1. Credit for Courses Taken Prior to High School

A student who has completed high school courses as defined in [RCW 28A.230.090\(4\)](#) with a passing grade before attending high school shall automatically be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling high school graduation requirements, unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's parent or guardian.

The requirements as outlined by the law include the following:

- a. The course was taken with high school students; or
- b. The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh (7th) and eighth (8th) grade classes; or
- c. The student has successfully passed by completing the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or
- d. The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh (7th) and eighth (8th) grade classes and the course would qualify for high school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course offered at a high school in the district as determined by board.

### 2. Receiving Credit

Unless requested otherwise all eligible credits will be added to a student's transcript. Parent/guardians who do not want their student to receive credit must complete an opt-out form (Form [62-0088](#)) available at each middle school or high school.

### 3. Non-numerical Grade

At the request of the student and the student's parent or guardian, high school credit earned before high school may be transcribed with a non-numerical grade, such as "pass" or "credit". A non-numerical grade will not be included in the student's high school grade point average calculation. High school credit earned prior to high school and transcribed with a non-numerical grade will apply to fulfilling high school graduation requirements.

A student and the student's parent or guardian must inform the school before the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade if they do not want credit for the course(s) taken before attending high school, or if they want to request that credit be transcribed with a non-numerical grade.

## E. Credit for National Guard High School Career Training

1. The district may grant credit for National Guard high school career training in lieu of either required or elective high school credits. Approval by the district

will be obtained prior to a student's participation in a National Guard training program as follows:

- a. MIL Form 115 or an equivalent form provided by the National Guard will be completed and filed with the school district; and
- b. The number of credits toward high school graduation to be granted will be calculated, agreed upon by the student and an authorized representative of the school district, and such agreement noted on MIL Form 115 or such equivalent form.

The district may grant credit toward high school graduation upon certification by a National Guard training unit commander that the student has met all program requirements.

#### F. Credit for Home Schooling

1. Guidelines for granting high school credit for home schooling are as follows:
  - a. To gain credit for a course of study, a student must comply with [WAC 392-410-300](#) and must provide:
    - i. A journal that reflects the actual work completed during a home-study course of study;
    - ii. Exhibit(s) of any specific projects completed (e.g., themes, research papers, art and/or shop projects); and/or
    - iii. Any such other performance-based exhibits of specific course-related accomplishments.
  2. To gain credit for a course of study, a student must demonstrate proficiency at a minimum of 80 percent (80%) of the objectives of the course. Such testing will be available as an ancillary service of the district if it is regularly available to all students. If not, the parent/guardian may engage district-approved personnel to conduct such an assessment at a cost to be determined by such personnel.
  3. Credit may be granted to home school students for credits taken at approved schools as provided under "Credit for College Course" above.

#### G. Competency Based Credits

In certain circumstances, the Spokane School District will award competency-based credits to students who can demonstrate academic proficiencies. In all these circumstances, credit will be posted with a P (pass) on the student's transcripts. Failed course(s) will remain on the transcript with the "F" grade.

##### 1. World Language

The Spokane School Board will permit competency or proficiency-based high school credit for World Languages in which a student can demonstrate proficiency across a range of language skills using a district-approved assessment process. Competency-based credits can help students demonstrate and validate expertise they have already gained, including through natural or heritage language experiences, and can allow students to open time in their schedules to pursue other interests. Granting competency-based credit for World Languages allows students to gain high school credit

through their experiences of using the language at home, attending language programs in the community, or living abroad. For the purposes of this procedure, “World Languages” includes those languages that are only spoken or signed. The process for granting World Language Credit will follow the following procedures:

a. Definition:

A world language is any natural language that has been formally studied, including American Sign Language (AMESLAN, the language of the deaf community) and languages no longer spoken, such as Latin and ancient Greek. Computer “languages” and forms of deaf signing other than AMESLAN are not considered world languages for the purposes of this procedure.

b. Demonstrating Proficiency for Competency Based Credit:

The district will administer assessment instruments endorsed by OSPI.

c. Determining Competency and Credit Equivalencies:

i. One or more high school credits will be awarded based on the student demonstrating an overall proficiency level according to ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines:

- Novice Mid: 1 credit
- Novice High: 2 credits
- Intermediate Low: 3 credits
- Intermediate High: 4 credits

ii. Total credit for the language will be based on the lowest common level of proficiency demonstrated across the skill areas. Students may not receive separate credits for individual language skills. Students may receive credit for multiple languages.

d. Testing Opportunities:

The district will manage the assessment process so that students have opportunities to take or retake the assessments required to demonstrate proficiency. Assessments will be offered once per year, in a proctored setting with the appropriate technology. The district will approve the site(s) where the assessments are offered, which may include school sites, community colleges, universities, district buildings, or other appropriate sites.

e. Paying for Assessments:

The superintendent will set a fee for the assessments to cover administrative costs, test fees, and/or proctoring, in addition to any other costs that may be incurred. Fees may vary by language.

f. Reporting Results:

- i. The district will receive official test results for each student participating in the assessment process. The district will provide a letter to the student/family with a copy of the test results and a determination of how many world language credits, if any, will be awarded. If requested by the student/family the school will record the world language credits earned on the official transcript with a grade of “pass.”
- ii. The superintendent/designee will report to the school board the number of proficiency high school credits awarded by language each year.

**2. Success in Higher Courses**

The district may award credit for a course when the student successfully completes the next higher-level course in a sequence that includes a natural progression of the state learning standards from the previous course.

Success in some higher-level courses may constitute demonstration of mastery of the lower-level content. Students who earn credit in higher level math, ELA, and world language courses that may have received a failing or “I-Incomplete grade” in a lower-level sequential math, ELA, or world language course, for a variety of reasons, may be awarded the missing credit by passing the higher-level course.

Passing the following courses may constitute demonstration of mastery of the courses in parenthesis:

- English 10 (English 9)
- English 11 (English 10)
- English 12 (English 11)
- Algebra 2A-2B (Algebra 1A – 1B)

**3. State and National Assessments**

State and national test scores may be used to show competency in two ways: challenging courses; or as a tool for students to recover credit for previously failed courses.

Challenging courses: Students who want to use test results to challenge courses can request that the competency grade (P) be posted to their transcript for certain courses as designated in Table #1 and Table #2. For students wanting to challenge a course who are not planning on replacing the course with a credit bearing course in that subject area should be advised about the potential adverse effect on college admission.

Students may recover credits for previously failed math and English courses using the assessments in Table #1 and Table #2.

<b>Table # 1: Credit for Meeting Standard on the State Assessment – Summary Chart</b>			
<b>State Assessment</b>	<b>Previously Failed Course Eligible for Retrieval</b>	<b>Amount of Credit Possible to Retrieve for Challenging the course</b>	<b>Amount of Credit to Retrieve for Credit Retrieval</b>
Grade 10 Comprehensive Math Test	Algebra or Geometry	1.0	1.0

Grade 10 Comprehensive ELA Test	English 9A English 9B English 10A English 10B	1.0	1.0
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Students who meet standard on the following nationally administered assessments may recover credit for previously failed courses in the following ways:

<b>Table # 2: Credit for Meeting Standard on Nationally Administered Assessments</b>				
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Previously Failed Course Eligible for Retrieval</b>	<b>Amount of Credit Possible to Retrieve for Challenging the course</b>	<b>Amount of Credit to Retrieve for Credit Retrieval</b>
PSAT/NMSQT/SAT Math (2015 and beyond)	Min. 430	Algebra or Geometry	Up to 1.0	Up to 1.0
PSAT/NMSQT/SAT ERW (2015 and beyond)	Min. 410	English 9 or 10	Up to 1.0	Up to 1.0
ACT Math (2015 and beyond)	Min. of 16	Algebra or Geometry	Up to 1.0	Up to 1.0
ACT English	Min. of 14	English 9 or 10	Up to 1.0	Up to 1.0
AP Testing	3, 4, or 5	Subject Area of Test	Up to 1.0	Up to 1.0

#### H. Equivalency Courses:

Equivalency courses approved by the school district can satisfy specific graduation requirements. The board of directors will approve equivalency credits; both cross credits and dual requirements per [RCW 28A.230.097](#), Subsection 1. Both a cross credit and a dual requirement will count for only one credit for graduation purposes.

1. Courses may be identified as covering the graduation content requirements in more than one subject area in one of two ways: by the Equivalency Crediting Committee or by declaration of the Washington State Legislature. A student must choose the single content area to which the cross credit will be applied; however, the course will be transcribed as the actual course taken.

2. Dual Requirements:

Cross credited courses that allow a student to earn one credit and satisfy two graduation content requirements (one academic and one career and technical) by completing a career and technical course determined by the Equivalency Crediting Committee to be equivalent to an academic core course. If a student chooses to use the approved CTE course to satisfy a core academic graduation requirement, then that course must be listed on the transcript as the equivalent core academic class.

### 3. Terms and Definitions:

Graduation Content Requirement – Courses (or their equivalent) within a curricular area that a student must fulfill to graduate. Example: Students in Spokane Public Schools must take 6 semesters of mathematics, including Algebra I, Geometry, and an additional approved math course.

Graduation Credit Requirement – A set number of credits that a student must fulfill to graduate. (1 credit equals 2 semesters of coursework.) Example: Students in Spokane Public Schools must earn a total of 24 credits to be eligible to graduate.

Cross-Credit – A course that offers a student a choice of meeting a graduation requirement in more than one content area. Example: AP Computer Science can fulfill a requirement in either science, CTE, or math (the student must be concurrently enrolled in or have successfully completed Algebra II).

Dual-Requirement – A CTE course that simultaneously meets two graduation requirements. Example: Digital Photography could simultaneously fulfill the graduation content requirement for both The Arts and CTE. The student taking the course would receive one (1.0) credit toward graduation.

Equivalency – A description used in relation to courses, credits, or competencies that are determined to have equivalent content based on alignment with all essential district standards. Final approval for courses recommended for equivalency by the equivalency crediting committee will be submitted to the Board for approval.

Equivalency Crediting Committee - A committee comprised of administrators, teachers, and instructional programs coordinators and facilitators who make the determination as to whether courses have met the standard of being equivalent.

A list of approved courses will be updated regularly and will be approved by the Spokane Board of Directors per [RCW.28.230.097](#).

#### I. Waivers and Exemptions

All state requirements must be satisfied except that the district may waive Washington history and government for students who have completed and passed a state history and government course in another state during grades seven through twelve and who have fulfilled study of the Washington state constitution through an alternative learning experience approved by the principal. Additionally, the district may waive physical education, pursuant to [RCW 28A.230.050](#), upon written request of a parent or guardian on account of physical disability, employment, or religious belief or because of participation in directed athletics or military science and tactics. This will not alter the credit requirements established by the board.

##### 1. Exemption

State law requires all students have access to graduation. In rare circumstances, some students with an I.E.P will need accommodations to ensure they have an opportunity to graduate with his or her peers. A student with I.E.P documentation may be granted an exemption from any requirement in this policy if such requirement impedes the progress toward graduation provided there is a direct relationship between the failure to meet the requirement and the student's ability.

## 2. Requesting a Waiver

Waiver of graduation requirements is determined by the principal. The procedure for processing requests for waiver will be as follows:

- a. Request will be initiated by the parent/guardian or the eligible student by completing the Request for Waiver of Graduation Requirement (Form 62-0050);
- b. The principal will investigate the request for waiver of graduation requirements;
- c. The principal will decide in writing based upon appropriate data and upon conclusions of the investigation;
- d. The principal will develop appropriate record keeping procedures for storage of all pertinent data relating to each waiver request; and
- e. The parent/guardian or eligible student will be notified that an appeal to the decision on waiver requests may be made in writing to the superintendent no later than thirty (30) days prior to the anticipated graduation date.
- f. The Director of Secondary Schools shall annually report each fall to the Board of Directors as to the number of waivers granted for graduation requirements, Spokane Public Schools Career Pathway Diplomas issued, and exceptions made to the graduation ceremony requirements to include the circumstances of each.

## 3. 2-Credit Waiver (Class of 2021 and Beyond)

The district may waive up to two of the flexible credits required for graduation for an individual student, based on the student's circumstances. A student granted a waiver must earn the 17 core credits, but may graduate with as few as twenty-two credits, rather than twenty-four credits.

## IV. Graduation and Diplomas

When students fulfill all graduation requirements, they may participate in the next graduation ceremony offered by the high school or district. Each student will be awarded a diploma after satisfactorily completing the district's requirements for graduation. Option schools may have additional graduation requirements as identified by school's site-based decision-making process. Upon request, each graduating student will receive a final transcript.

However, a student's diploma or transcript may be withheld until the student pays for any school property (including fees) that has been lost or willfully damaged. Upon payment for damages, or the equivalency through voluntary work, the diploma or transcript will be released. The student or his/her parents/guardians may appeal the imposition of a charge for damages to the superintendent or board of directors.

A student may be denied participation in graduation ceremonies for violations of school rules. Such exclusion will be regarded as a school suspension. In such instances, the diploma will still be granted.

Students with disabilities receiving special education services who have Individual Education Programs providing for special education or related services beyond the fourth year of high school and who have attended four years of high school must be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies with their graduating class. A student's participation in graduation ceremonies must not affect the student's future ability to receive a high school diploma or a Certificate of Individual Achievement. This requirement is known as Kevin's Law.

A student's participation in graduation ceremonies does not affect the student's future ability to receive a high school diploma, or a Certificate of Individual Achievement, nor does it preclude a student from continuing to receive special education and related services under an IEP beyond the graduation ceremony.

While it is not the intention of the board of directors to make exceptions for students who have not met all graduation requirements, the Board acknowledges that extraordinary situations do occur and, therefore, a high school principal may authorize exceptions to these requirements for exceptional circumstances, such as a debilitating family circumstance or hospitalization, only after consultation with the Spokane Public Schools' high school principals, and in agreement with the Chief Academic Officer in order to ensure uniformity across all district high schools. Unless additional circumstances exist, family plans and travel arrangements associated with the belief that a student will participate in the graduation ceremony are not examples of exceptional circumstances that allow a principal to make exceptions to the requirements for participation in the graduation ceremony. Those students who participate in the graduation ceremony due to an authorized exception will not receive a diploma from Spokane Public Schools until all graduation requirements have been met.

Any student receiving services under an IEP who will continue to receive such services between the ages of 18 and 21 will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies and activities after four years of high school attendance with his or her age-appropriate peers and receive a certificate of attendance.

#### A. Graduation Ceremonies

The district will allow students who are members or descendants of a federally recognized tribe to wear traditional tribal regalia or objects of Native American cultural significance along with or attached to a gown and/or cap at the graduation ceremony or related school event. Additionally, the district will not require such students to wear a cap if it is incompatible with the regalia or significant object they have chosen to wear. Otherwise, the district has discretion to determine the conduct for graduation ceremonies as described below.

1. Graduation Ceremonies will be conducted in the following manner:
  - a. Each participating student must participate in the graduation ceremony rehearsal. Each student who participates will purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as designated by the school administration and the class advisor and officers.
  - b. With the exception of allowing tribal regalia as stated above, caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner, as designated by the school administration and class advisor.
  - c. Students who participate will use good taste in their choice of accessories for their attire.
  - d. Each student who participates will cooperate with the class advisor and participate in all parts of the graduation ceremonies.

- e. Failure to comply with the above requirements may forfeit a student's privilege to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

## 2. Student Recognition

### a. Latin Honors System

Starting with the graduating class of 2020, schools will recognize students using the Latin Honors system with the following categories and weighted grade point averages.

- i. Summa Cum Laude: 4.3 weighted GPA
- ii. Magna Cum Laude: 4.1 weighted GPA
- iii. Cum Laude: 3.8 weighted GPA

Schools are encouraged to recognize these students in a variety of settings and formats. And schools are also encouraged to identify students for these categories as early in the senior year (e.g., after first semester grades) to allow students to use these honors as part of college application and scholarship searches.

If schools want to implement the Latin Honors system prior to the class of 2020, they should also maintain the current system for recognizing valedictorians until the class of 2020. As part of registration and advising, each school should clearly communicate how students would qualify for these honors, what the criteria are, and should help advise students around this as part of registration.

### b. Distinguished Scholars

In addition to valedictorians, salutatorians, and Latin honors, high school graduations may also recognize students who have maintained strong grades and who have demonstrated outstanding performance in their secondary school career. Schools will establish their own criteria and should publish the criteria to students when entering high school.

### c. Seal of Biliteracy

To be awarded the Washington Seal of Biliteracy, graduating high school students must meet the following criteria as in

[WAC 392-410-350](#):

- i. Demonstrate proficiency in English by 1) meeting statewide minimum graduation requirements in English as established by the Washington State Board of Education and 2) meeting state standards on the reading and writing or English language arts assessment.
- ii. Demonstrate proficiency in one or more world language. For purpose of this section, "world language" is defined as a language other than English, including American sign language, Latin and Native American or other indigenous languages or dialects. The fact that a language is not written is not a barrier to receive the Seal of Biliteracy. Proficiency may be demonstrated by:

- a. Passing a foreign language Advanced Placement exam with a score of 3 or higher;
- b. Passing an International Baccalaureate exam with a score of 4 or higher;
- c. Demonstrating intermediate-mid level or higher proficiency on the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines using assessments approved by OSPI for competency-based credits; and demonstrating proficiency using reading assessments approved by OSPI (when developed);
- d. Qualifying for four competency-based credits by demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language at intermediate-mid level or higher on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines; or
- e. Demonstrating proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the world language through other national or international assessments approved by OSPI. OSPI and the federally recognized Tribes in Washington have a language proficiency system in place to determine tribal language proficiency with students for the Seal of Biliteracy.

Schools will establish processes to recognize students who have achieved this designation and to record this on their high school transcript.

## V. Diplomas

### A. Alternative Methods of Obtaining a Diploma

#### 1. Students Who Left High School for Specific Military Services:

The district may issue a high school diploma to a person who left high school before graduation to serve in World War II, the Korean conflict, or the Vietnam era as defined in [RCW 41.04.005](#).

- a. A written request for the diploma must be submitted on the form entitled Application for Veterans (Application for Veterans - Form 62-0079).
- b. The superintendent will determine those veterans who have substantial ties to the district. Examples include but are not limited to the following: living or having lived in the district; having attended school in the district, having children or other descendants who have attended school in the district; having been employed by the district, or having volunteered in the district.
- c. The school district may issue a diploma to or on behalf of a person otherwise eligible, notwithstanding the fact that the person holds a high school equivalency certification or is deceased.

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04/25/2012  
01/09/2013  
07/24/2013  
04/15/2015  
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11/17/2017  
03/28/2018  
08/22/2018  
03/20/2020  
11/13/2020  
03/09/2022  
Superintendent: Dr. Adam Swinyard