



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

DRAFT Resolution on Biology Graduation Requirement

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education consists of members both elected by school directors and appointed by the Governor, charged with advocacy and strategic oversight of public education, implementing a standards-based accountability framework, providing leadership in personalizing education and ensuring respect for diverse cultures and abilities, promoting achievement of basic education goals, and articulate with higher education, workforce, and early learning, coordinating and unifying the public education system; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education believes that all students deserve an excellent and equitable education; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education places equal value on multiple pathways to career and college readiness, and recognizes the value of flexibility in students' high school choices, with flexible credits including electives and Personalized Pathway Requirements, and multiple alternatives for students to meet assessment requirements, and;

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education provides direction through its rule-making authority for state subject area graduation requirements, and has the statutory responsibility to identify the score students must to achieve to meet standard on state assessments, and;

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education endorses removing the biology end-of-course graduation requirement effective immediately, to apply beginning with the high school graduating class of 2017; and

WHEREAS, there is time sensitivity to this issue, as graduations are coming up in the middle of June; and the biology end-of-course exam affects the most students: there are currently over 3,000 seniors who have met all other graduation requirements, except for passing the biology end-of-course exam, which creates anxiety for students and families concerning diploma security and graduation ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, K-12 budgets proposed and passed by both chambers presuppose the elimination of biology end-of-course graduation requirement effective immediately.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Board of Education respectfully asks the Legislature to act immediately, so that schools and districts are able to designate students from the Class of 2017 as eligible to graduate, even without passing the biology end-of-course exam.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the State Board of Education will continue to make further recommendations on graduation requirements to the Legislature as necessary, or as new standardized tests are utilized by districts.