

Working Draft of ITF Policy Recommendations to SBE

Charge to ITF

- An implementation schedule that prioritizes phase-in of new credit requirements. (#10)
- Phasing in CORE 24 to address issues such as teacher supply, facility infrastructure, etc. (#10)
- Ways to operationalize competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements. (#1, #2, #4)
- Scheduling approaches to 24 credits that can meet the required 150 instructional hours. (#2)
- Ways to assist struggling students with credit retrieval and advancing their skills to grade level. (#6)
- Ways to provide appropriate career preparation courses, as well as career concentration options. (#5)
- Automatic enrollment (#9)
- Middle School/High School Beyond Plan (#7, 8)

1. Two-for-one Policy

Intent: Encourage competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements by enabling students to earn 1 credit and satisfy 2 requirements

- Intended for cross-credited courses (would require clearly established competencies to determine equivalency)
- Issues:
 - Cap on number of credits that could be earned this way?
 - Applicable to CTE/Academic courses only, or to Academic/Academic courses, as well?
 - What are the parameters needed to ensure “consistent interpretation and application” to enable credit transfer across districts?

2. Redefine “credit” in WAC

Intent: Create more flexibility to create scheduling approaches to provide Core 24 and encourage competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements by eliminating the time-based definition of a credit

- Issues:
 - Concern had been expressed about the potential impact on 2261’s 1,080 hours, or whether the state could use this change to say Core 24 was already funded. (OSPI’s fiscal experts say this is not an issue.)
 - ITF pretty evenly divided about advantages and disadvantages
 - Do you want to make a statement that the ITF found that Core 24 did not require a specific type of schedule, but that districts would need to be creative to find ways to build in sufficient flexibility so that students could take needed support classes or retrieve credits?

3. Waiver authority

Intent: Create more flexibility for local administrators to meet individual student needs through authority to waive a limited number of state-mandated graduation requirements

- Issues still unresolved:
 - How many credits could be waived at the discretion of local authorities?
 - Is the intent to reduce the total number of credits or to substitute requirements?
 - Would any subjects be off-limits?
 - Could the culminating project or high school and beyond plan be waived?
 - Circumstances/Conditions for waiving requirements, such as:
 - Waive foreign language requirement as an option for ELL students.
 - Waive requirements for students pursuing IB or Cambridge diplomas.
 - Other?

4. Competency-based credit

Intent: Encourage competency-based methods of meeting graduation requirements by:

- permitting students who pass end-of-course assessments to earn credit in the designated subjects
- encouraging state leadership to create sample policies and procedures for districts to use as guides
- Issues:
 - Districts can already establish competency-based credit policies about EOCs. The issue is whether it would be helpful to have in WAC a statement that a passing score on state-level end-of-course assessments is sufficient to earn credit in that subject area.
 - Second option hasn't been discussed by whole group yet

5. Career Concentration (see definitions from January 2010 meeting notes)

Intent: Suggest ways to provide appropriate career preparation courses, as well as career concentration options through a broad definition of career concentration.

- Issues:
 - Need to agree upon a definition of career concentration

6. Credit Recovery

Intent: Suggest ways to assist struggling students with credit retrieval and advancing their skills to grade level by giving failing students multiple options to retrieve credit upon demonstration of mastery of standards (create database of programs or options schools are using to retrieve credit other than repeating entire course)

- Issues:
 - This was a suggestion from one subgroup; has not been discussed in the large group

- Is the idea that the state would create a database?
- Are there other suggestions for assisting struggling students?

7. Middle School High School and Beyond Plan

Intent: Begin elements of the High School and Beyond Plan at the middle level by advocating for: 1) comprehensive guidance and counseling at the middle level and 2) a statewide electronic guidance system that would create a multi-grade continuum from 7th to 12th grade and be easily transferable across districts.

- Issues:
 - Identify elements that should begin at middle level

8. High School Requirements Satisfied by Courses Taught to 7-8th grade Standards

Intent: Open up scheduling flexibility and provide opportunities for students to begin meeting high school graduation requirements in middle school by allowing a few requirements taught to 7-8th grade standards to be met prior to ninth grade.

- Issues:
 - Can you endorse the basic premise of satisfying a graduation requirement taught to 7th-8th grade standards?
 - Would you suggest any parameters/conditions for the Board to consider? (e.g. students can satisfy “x” number of requirements in this way; applies only to these subject(s): (name))

9. Automatic Enrollment

Intent: Assure that all students know what courses are needed to keep all options open after high school and make informed choices about their courses based on their education and career goals through graduation requirement guidelines that include a broad philosophical statement about the desirability of all students meeting College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADRs).

- Issues:
 - Does this recommendation address the concern that some students (particularly students traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education) will be less likely to opt in to a pathway that emphasizes CADRs?
 - The group was pretty clear that students need to have the flexibility to move between pathways. Do you have a recommendation to suggest when students would first indicate their chosen pathway? (e.g., when registering for 9th grade? in sophomore year?, etc.)
 - What, if anything, should be in rule about automatic enrollment?

10. Phase-in (delivered to SBE in November 2009)

Intent: Establish an implementation schedule that prioritizes phase-in of new graduation requirements. The ultimate success of students’ meeting

the requirements of CORE 24 depends on a systems approach across the K-12 spectrum. The ITF believes the framework articulated in ESHB 2261 addresses much of the necessary supports needed to meet this essential work on behalf of the students across the state. With that in mind and based on the ITF's current awareness of the issues with this work, the following recommendations are put forward for consideration by the SBE:

1. Stable funding in categories articulated in ESHB 2261 must be provided to support the implementation of CORE 24 for at least grades 8 through 12. In particular, funding to meet class size standard, extra support for high poverty schools, guidance and counseling, as well as resources aimed at supporting struggling students are essential.

2. Once funding begins, the ITF believes districts will need one year for planning purposes and five years to make the relevant changes needed to graduate the first students meeting CORE 24 expectations (beginning with students in the eighth grade of the first graduating class affected by the new requirements).

3. The ITF also remains concerned about the facilities needs associated with the increase in graduation requirements. We believe that many high schools will need to create and/or repurpose space to provide appropriate learning environments to meet these increased course requirements.