



## UPDATE

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### *March 2021*

#### **March Board meeting**

SBE held its Board meeting March 10-11, and discussed emergency waiver program rules, recognition and accountability, this year's legislative session, ethnic studies, graduation pathway options, and more. You can find documents from the meeting on [SBE's Simbli page](#), and links to recordings (streamed by TVW) on [SBE's meetings page](#).

**Emergency Waiver Program Rules** - House Bill 1121 authorized the State Board of Education to adopt rules to implement an Emergency Waiver Program to authorize school districts and private schools to waive certain graduation requirements because of disruptions in learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board adopted emergency rules for an Emergency Waiver Program for students in the Classes of 2020 and 2021. Emergency rules are necessary to allow for students and educators to plan for students to be able to use the waiver, if appropriate, to graduate this year.

It is anticipated that the Board will adopt permanent rules on the Emergency Waiver Program for students in the Classes of 2020 through 2023 at the July 2021 Board meeting. These permanent rules will replace the emergency rules once they take effect.

- [Emergency Rules on the Emergency Waiver Program](#)

**Recognition and Accountability** - Beginning in December and continuing through February, the SBE met with external experts to discuss the development of a more equitable statewide accountability system. SBE seeks to align the accountability system to the goals of basic education to develop a system that is more equitable and more closely tied to educational outcomes for all students. The revised accountability system will most likely include measures of opportunity to learn and more robust and meaningful outcomes measures at the building, district, and state level.

**Legislative Session** - Staff provided an [update](#) on the status of the Board's request legislation. In addition, staff briefed members on other bills aligned with SBE's legislative priorities, strategic plan, and the Board's areas of authority.

**Ethnic Studies Resolution** – The Board adopted a resolution providing notice of its intent to establish an ethnic studies graduation requirement within the existing credit framework. The

form this requirement takes will be developed by December 2021 in consultation with stakeholders, particularly students, their families, and educators who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Once implemented, the requirement will provide students the opportunity to receive their required academic content through an ethnic studies lens, while allowing for local flexibility. The [resolution](#) was developed by SBE's Equity Committee with feedback received from various interested stakeholders.

**Graduation Update/Pathway Options Research** - On behalf of the Board, Strobel Consulting will conduct the survey of districts about graduation pathway options (required by legislation). In addition, the 2021 research on graduation pathway options will include follow-up to the previous 2019-2020 survey of stakeholders.

- [Video presentation about Strobel Consulting Year II survey](#)

**Waiver from Credit-Based Graduation Requirements Update** –The State Board of Education administers waivers from credit-based graduation requirements and Maritime High School in Highline School District is the newest participant in that waiver program. These waivers allow a school to provide instruction that aligns to the learning standards but does not use the traditional conceptualization of numerical credit and subject area graduation requirements. Participants in the waiver program have tended to focus on personalized learning and interdisciplinary studies.

**Private Schools Application Update** - The State Board of Education annually approves [private schools](#). By statute, state controls over private schools are limited to ensuring the health and safety of students, and to ensure students have a sufficient basic education to meet usual graduation requirements.

SBE staff presented an overview of private schools in Washington, and an overview of the approval process. The application window for the approval of private schools for the 2021-2022 school year begins in mid-March 2021. The Board considered approval of a few private schools for the 2020-2021 school year at the meeting.

## **Upcoming Board meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 12-13, 2021. The agenda and materials will be posted one week in advance of the meeting on [SBE's meetings page](#).

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