

# New Graduation Pathway Option



The Legislature passed [House Bill 1308](#) creating a new performance-based graduation pathway option.

## What are graduation pathway options?

In order to graduate from high school, students must complete 1) a High School and Beyond Plan, 2) the credit and subject area requirements, and 3) a graduation pathway option (see linked [graphic](#)), along with any other local requirements.

The graduation pathway options provide students multiple ways to show readiness for their individual education and career goals. The pathway a student completes must align with the student's postsecondary goals as described in their High School and Beyond Plan. School districts decide which pathways to offer, and are encouraged to offer as many options as possible.

## New performance-based pathway

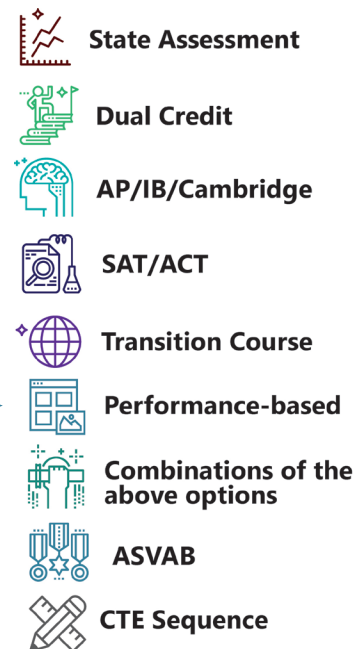
The performance-based pathway allows students to show what they know and can do in real-world, hands-on ways that align with their individual goals for life after high school. This student-centered pathway is intended to be customizable, with the aim of being relevant and engaging to the student. There is a lot of flexibility as the learning experience:

- May take a variety of forms  
*Examples: project, practicum, work-related experience, community service, cultural activity*
- May result in a variety of student work that can be evaluated  
*Examples: performance, presentation, portfolio, report, film, exhibit*
- May, or may not, be done as part of a class where the student also earns credit

To meet the graduation pathway requirement, the learning experience must:

- Provide evidence that the student meets or exceeds state learning standards in **English language arts (ELA) and mathematics**
- Align with the student's High School and Beyond Plan goals
- Meet state requirements (rules to be developed) regarding the safety and quality of the learning experience and the assessment criteria for determining the student has demonstrated the learning standards

## Graduation pathway options:



The performance-based pathway is combinable with other the ELA and math pathway options, meaning the student can do one pathway in ELA and another pathway in math. For example, a student could pass the state assessment in ELA and then focus their performance-based pathway in math.

## New requirements for districts

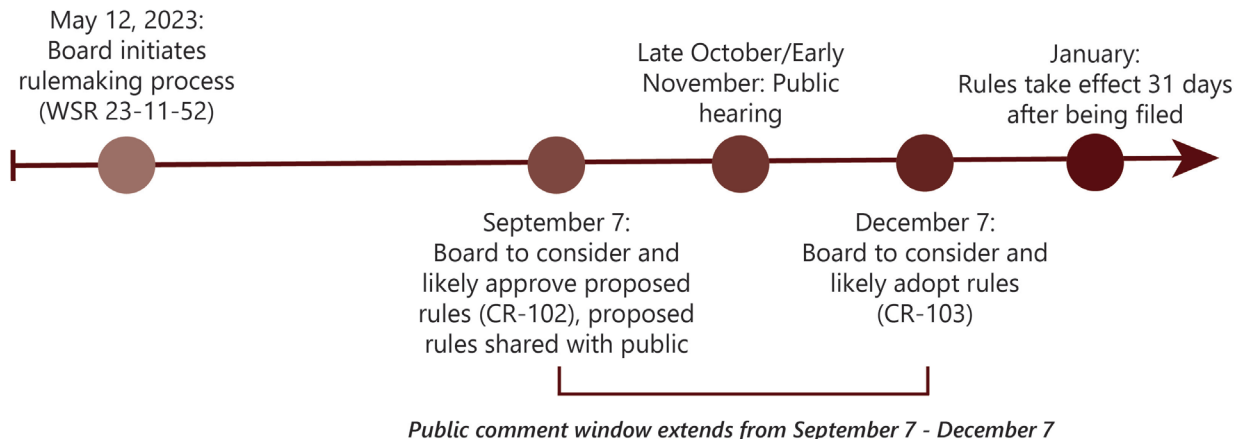
The newly passed law includes some other new requirements for school districts:

- School districts must annually provide students in grades 8-12 and their guardians with comprehensive information about the pathways offered.
- School districts must examine their local pathways data annually to see if there are any differences between groups of students in terms of who is participating in and completing the pathways offered. If there are differences, the district must identify why and make appropriate changes to ensure the options are equitably available to all students.

## Rulemaking

The State Board of Education must adopt rules (state laws in the form of Washington Administrative Code) to implement the new pathway. These rules will outline in more detail the requirements for ensuring the safety and quality of the learning experience and the assessment criteria for determining the student has demonstrated the learning standards.

The plan is to spend the summer months developing proposed rules for the Board's consideration in September, which will begin the public comment window, with final adoption planned for December (see timeline below).



Rulemaking is a public process. If you would like to provide input, you can:

- Submit written comments to [rulescoordinatorSBE@k12.wa.us](mailto:rulescoordinatorSBE@k12.wa.us) between Sep. 7 and Dec. 4
- Testify at the public hearing (Date TBD)
- Testify at board meetings (Sep. 7 and Dec. 7)
- Request to meet with State Board staff (sooner is better)

## Tools

The State Board of Education, in collaboration with OSPI, will make tools to support implementation of the performance-based pathway. These tools include graduation proficiency targets (i.e., which ELA and math standards must be met and what level is considered “met” for graduation) and associated rubrics (also called “scoring guides” or “assessment frameworks”). These tools will help educators understand what to look for in evaluating the student’s performance. The target date for publication of the tools is February 2024.

## Local policy

School districts must adopt a local policy that meets state requirements before offering the performance-based pathway option. Most school districts that are interested in offering this pathway will be able to offer it beginning with the Class of 2025. Some districts that have already laid groundwork may be able to begin with the Class of 2024. For example, districts that are already doing mastery-based learning and districts that have a local culminating project requirement may be able to develop this new pathway faster.



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