



## UPDATE

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*May 2021*

### **May Board meeting**

SBE held its Board meeting May 12-13, and discussed emergency waiver program rules, instructional hour rules, recognition and accountability, this year's legislative session, 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 approved proposed permanent rules for an Emergency Waiver Program for students in the Classes of 2020 through 2022. The formal public comment period for this rule is now in effect and will continue until the final public comment opportunity occurring at the Board's July 14-15 meeting. The Board is expected to adopt the final permanent rules at the July meeting. These permanent rules will replace the emergency rules once they take effect. 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.

- [Proposed Permanent Rules on the Emergency Waiver Program](#)
- [Emergency Rules on the Emergency Waiver Program](#)
- Learn more via SBE's webpages: [Emergency Waiver Program](#) and [Emergency Rules FAQs](#)
- Emergency Waiver One Pager in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

**Instructional Hour Rules** – The Board approved [proposed permanent rules for Chapter 180-16 WAC](#) (State Support of Public Schools). The formal public comment period for this rule is now in effect and will continue until the final public comment opportunity occurring at the Board's July meeting. The rules clarify that "in-person" instruction is the default method of delivery and that other modalities, such as distance and hybrid learning, are allowable under these exceptions:

1. Under funding allocation models (WAC 392-121, RCW 28A.232, and RCW 28A.250) that allow for other modalities, such as Alternative Learning and Online Learning.
2. As an opportunity for individual students, under district and student agreement, to engage in instructional hours delivered through other modalities due to health or safety needs of the student.

3. As necessary to allow for continued operation and delivery of basic education services during an emergency.

**Graduation Pathway Options Research Update** - On behalf of the Board, Strobel Consulting conducted a survey of districts about graduation pathway options, as required by legislation, and is also conducting focus groups. During the May Board meeting, Alisha Strobel presented preliminary information about the survey and focus groups and responded to questions and comments from Board members. By including data from students and families of current students as well as high school and district staff, this work exceeds legislative requirements.

**Recognition and Accountability** - Beginning in December and continuing through April, the SBE is working with the Learning Policy Institute to develop 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 closely tied to educational outcomes for all students. The revised accountability system will most likely include opportunity to learn measures and more robust and meaningful outcome measures at the building, district, and state level.

**Equity Statement** – Each year the Board reviews and potentially revises the equity statement to ensure it includes the contributions of each Board member. The annual review also serves as a way to reflect the collective learning the Board has undergone through each Board member's individual journey toward being anti-racist. See the updated [Equity Statement](#) on the SBE website.

**Legislative Wrap-Up and Interim Planning** – Staff provided an overview of the 2021 legislative session, with a focus on agency request bills and other legislation that directly impacts the Board's work. In addition, the Board began planning for the interim and had an initial brainstorming discussion on priorities and policy proposals to consider for next session. Agency request bills that passed include:

- [EHB 1121](#) – Emergency waiver of graduation requirements
- [EHB 1131](#) – Emergency waiver of instructional hours and days at private schools
- [SSB 5249](#) – Supporting mastery-based learning

**Private Schools** – The Board approved a total of 463 private schools to operate in the 2021-2022 school year. Some schools were provisionally approved, which allows schools to operate and enroll students while resolving issues regarding required staffing or facility inspections.

## Upcoming Board meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for July 14-15, 2021. The agenda and materials will be posted one week in advance of the meeting on [SBE's meetings page](#).

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