



**Resolution to Approve Washington State Graduation Requirement Framework: Career and College Ready**

**Adopted on January 9, 2014**

WHEREAS, Our children are our state's future and our education system must prepare them now for the continuing challenges of the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, All students deserve an excellent and equitable education; and

WHEREAS, We must join together to support students in our education system and to provide the resources and direction needed to help all students succeed in meeting their educational and career goals; and

WHEREAS, Washington's Basic Education Act provides direction by stating that school districts must provide instruction of sufficient quantity and quality and give students the opportunity to complete high school graduation requirements that are intended to prepare them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education provides direction through its rule-making authority for state graduation requirements, including subject-area credits, a High School and Beyond Plan, and a Culminating Project by all students, and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education recognizes that the Legislature must formally authorize and fund changes to graduation requirements that have a fiscal impact on school districts before they may take effect, per RCW 28A.230.090(2)(c); and

WHEREAS, Washington State is in the bottom 20 percent of all states in participation of students ages 18-24 in education beyond high school, particularly low-income students, and many high school graduates of color are less likely to go directly to community/technical and four-year colleges; and

WHEREAS, Washington State graduation requirements for science are significantly lower than the majority of other states, as were state requirements for English and social studies until the State Board of Education implemented new graduation requirements for the Class of 2016; and WHEREAS, The State Board of Education has listened to stakeholders and revised its graduation credit requirements proposal in response to the feedback received; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education has determined over a multi-year period of study that Washington's current state graduation requirements need to be strengthened so that students are prepared for the education and training needed to earn a credential beyond high school considered necessary for most living-wage jobs in the 21st century, and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education places equal value on multiple pathways to career and college readiness, and calls for students, parents/guardians and local educators to work together on High School and Beyond Plans that will guide students' course selections through high school and evolve as students' goals develop and change; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education places significant value on the opportunity for high school students to pursue professional/technical certificates through a skill center or high school Career and Technical Education program during their high school career; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education recognizes the value of flexibility in students' high school course choices, with flexible credits including electives and Personalized Pathway Requirements, and WHEREAS, The 2013 Legislature appropriated funding to support implementation of the opportunity to earn 24 credits; and

WHEREAS, Presuming the 2014 Legislature enacts the State Board of Education framework with funding, it is the Board's intent that the new graduation requirements will apply beginning with the high school graduating class of 2019. This phase-in period will allow ample time for planning and implementation details as well as required rules to be developed with stakeholder input.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT The State Board of Education is approving an amended career and college-ready graduation requirement framework that will allow all students to pursue personalized post-secondary pathways. These post-secondary pathways will be locally determined, but must include at least the following options for high school and skill center students:

- To pursue a professional/technical certificate or degree at a community or technical college.
- To pursue a four-year degree at a college, university, or college transfer program (students' high school classes should align with the Washington Student Achievement Council's College Admission Standards).

Each high school student will identify their post-secondary pathway in their High School and Beyond Plan.

The subject credit requirements are as follows:

English: 4 credits

Math: 3 credits

Science, 2 labs: 3 credits

Social Studies: 3 credits

Health: .5 credit

Career and Technical Education: 1 credit\*\*

Fitness: 1.5 credits

Arts: 2 credits\*\*\* (one may be a Personalized Pathway Requirement\*)

World Languages (required if on a four-year degree pathway) or Personalized Pathway Requirement\*: 2 credits

Electives: 4 credits

\* Personalized Pathway Requirements are related courses that lead to a specific post high school career or educational outcome chosen by the student based on the student's interests and High School and Beyond Plan, that may include Career and Technical Education, and are intended to provide a focus for the student's learning.

\*\*or 1 Occupational Education credit, as defined in WAC 180-51-067.

\*\*\*Only 1 credit in arts may be substituted for a Personalized Pathway Requirement.

While students must attempt 24 credits, up to two of the 24 credits may be waived by local administrators if students need to retake courses to fulfill the 17 core state requirements that all students must meet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT The State Board of Education will continue to reexamine the role of the High School and Beyond plan and the Culminating Project in career and postsecondary planning and preparation, and to ensure greater consistency across districts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the State Board of Education recognizes that K-12 students would benefit from increased flexibility in course equivalency, further opportunities for meeting two graduation requirements while earning one credit, and increased opportunities for earning competency credit; the Board will encourage both the Legislature and school districts to facilitate such flexibility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the State Board of Education will work with institutions of higher education for expanding recognition of high school classes as meeting admission requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board will track the relevant data to assess the efficacy of the graduation policy over time. It will annually review course-taking and other appropriate data by subgroups used in the Achievement Index so it can determine if the new requirements are indeed helping more students graduate career and college ready.