
Education Committee

ESSB 6778

Brief Description: Establishing an alternative route to a high school diploma.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Shin, Kauffman and Kline).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Awards a high school diploma to students who complete the minimum course requirements for admission to a public four-year institution of higher education as established by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, complete one occupational credit, attain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in those courses, and complete a culminating project and a high school and beyond plan.
- Does not require these students to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement or a Certificate of Individual Achievement.

Hearing Date: 2/19/10

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

High School Graduation.

The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes minimum requirements for high school graduation. The current requirements are 19 credits among a specified distribution of subjects, a culminating project, and a high school and beyond plan. The credit distribution for graduation is as follows:

English	3.0 credits
Mathematics	2.0 credits
Science	2.0 credits, including one laboratory science

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Social Studies	2.5 credits, including one in U.S. History, .5 in Washington State History, and one in Contemporary World Problems
Health and Fitness	2.0 credits
Arts	1.0 credit
Occupational Education	1.0 credit
Electives	5.5 credits

Beginning with the class of 2013 students must earn an additional credit in mathematics, and with certain exceptions the credit must be in Algebra II or an equivalent.

In addition students are required to earn either a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) based on their performance on statewide assessments of reading, writing, and mathematics. There is a temporary exception through the class of 2012 that authorizes graduation without a CAA or a CIA if the student has not met the state standard on the mathematics assessment, but fulfills other specified requirements. Local school districts can adopt additional requirements.

Minimum College Admission.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) establishes minimum criteria for admission to a public four-year institution of higher education. In 2007 the HECB adopted new criteria which were subsequently revised in 2009 and will take effect in 2012. In addition to earning 15 credits among a specified distribution of courses, students must attain a minimum cumulative grade point average for all high school courses of 2.0 on a 4.0 point scale.

The College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR) through 2011 are as follows:

English	4 credits, including three credits of literature and composition
Mathematics	3 credits, including algebra, geometry, and advanced math
Science	2 credits, which must be laboratory science. One credit must also be algebra-based science and one credit must be biology, chemistry, or physics (which can also be the algebra-based course).
World Languages	2 credits of the same language
Social Science	3 credits
Arts	1 credit, or an elective from one of the other CADR subjects

Beginning in 2012 the English requirement is that at least three of the four credits are in college preparatory composition or literature. Meeting the state standard on the high school reading assessment is worth two credits. Also in 2012 the mathematics requirement is for credits in algebra 1, geometry, and algebra II, or an equivalent integrated math series. Meeting the state

standard on the high school mathematics assessment is worth the first two credits. Mathematics through pre-calculus equals three credits. Students must take a math-based quantitative course in the senior year.

Achievement of the minimum criteria does not guarantee admission. Higher education institutions can impose additional minimum criteria, and all have a comprehensive review process for consideration of applicants.

Summary of Bill:

As an alternative to other high school graduation requirements (state or local), any student who meets the following requirements receives a high school diploma:

- successfully completes the minimum number of credits and the CADR for admission to a public four-year college or university as adopted by the HECB;
- completes one occupational credit as defined by SBE rule;
- earns a cumulative average grade of at least 3.0 for the required courses; and
- completes a culminating project and a high school and beyond plan under rules established by the SBE.

Students who meet these alternative requirements are not required to earn a CAA or CIA to earn a diploma.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.