

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1412

As of March 25, 2013

Title: An act relating to community service as a high school graduation requirement.

Brief Description: Making community service a high school graduation requirement.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Bergquist, Zeiger, Maxwell, Reykdal, Kagi, Riccelli, Santos, Fitzgibbon, Tarleton, Lytton, Pollet, Farrell, Freeman, Ryu, Stonier, Stanford, Hunt, Van De Wege, Kochmar, Buys, Magendanz, Hayes, O'Ban, Fey, Morrell and Jinkins).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/13/13, 92-6.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/25/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes the state minimum high school graduation requirements. The state minimum requirements are that a student must:

- earn 20 credits, as specified in the chart below – the current 20 credits required for the graduating classes of 2013 through 2015 will be redistributed for the Class of 2016;
- pass the required state high school assessments or an approved alternative assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics;
- complete a culminating project; and
- complete a high school and beyond plan.

High School Course	Graduating Classes of 2013 – 2015 High School Graduation Credit Requirements	Graduating Class of 2016 High School Graduation Credit Requirements
English	3	4
Math	3	3
Science	2 – 1 lab	2 – 1 lab
Social Studies	2.5	3
Arts	1	1
Health & Fitness	2	2

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

World Language	0	0
Occupational Education	1	1
Career Concentration	0	0
Electives	5.5	4
Total Credits required	20	20

School district boards of directors may establish additional local high school graduation requirements. For example, according to a database developed by SBE in 2011, at least 20 school districts require students to complete community service for graduation. The required number of hours ranges from 10 – 100.

Summary of Bill: Beginning with the graduating class of 2017, each student must complete community service as a state high school graduation requirement. The community service must be explained and documented using the student's culminating project. Only a school district may establish parameters and requirements for the community service. A student who completes the requirement in one district and transfers in the senior year to another district is not required to complete additional community service.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) supports this bill. This helps some students to have something to include on their resumes when otherwise they might not have any other relevant experience to include. It provides background for students to explore career pathways open to students and provides experience that employers look for in job applicants. The parameters are determined by the local school district so it is flexible to meet the needs of the districts.

OTHER: SBE supports encouraging districts to offer these types of experiences but hesitate mandating it. SBE recently completed six years revising the state-level high school graduation requirements and SBE decided not to include community service as a graduation requirement. While this does not create barriers to high school graduation, since if a student transfers then they will not need to redo the community service, there are other reasons that it might not be appropriate for some students so there should be a waiver that could be sought by a student and a parent.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Bergquist, prime sponsor; Amber Galaz, Hannah Russ, LYAC; and Christopher Smith, citizen.

OTHER: Emily Persky, SBE; Marie Sullivan, WA State School Director's Assn.