

---

## Education Committee

---

### HB 1509

**Brief Description:** Concerning credit requirements for high school graduation.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Stonier, Harris, Dolan, Caldier, Ormsby, Volz, Stanford, McCaslin, Riccelli, Holy, Pollet, Taylor, Doglio, Shea, Sawyer, Peterson, Gregerson, Sells, Tharinger, Farrell, Orcutt and Santos.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eliminates, for the graduating classes of 2019 onward, the twenty-four credit graduation requirement and establishes a twenty-one credit requirement for graduation with delineated credit requirements by course type.</li></ul>
---



**Hearing Date:** 2/6/17

**Staff:** Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

**Background:**

Graduation Requirements.

To qualify for graduation from a public high school in Washington, students must satisfy minimum course credit requirements, meet standard on required statewide assessments, complete a high school and beyond plan, and satisfy any graduation requirements adopted by the local school district.

Minimum course credit requirements for students in the graduating classes of 2017 and 2018 obligate these students to complete 20 credits in specified subject areas. Unless a one or two-year extension waiver is granted by the State Board of Education (SBE) to a requesting school district, students in the graduating class of 2019 and subsequent classes will be required to complete twenty-four credits in specified subject areas.

Administrative rules adopted by the SBE define high school credit as:

---

*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.*

- successful completion, as defined by written district policy, of courses taught to the state's essential academic learning requirements (EALRs). If there are no state-adopted learning standards for a subject, the school district board of directors, or its designee, must determine learning standards for the successful completion of that subject; or
- satisfactory demonstration by a student of proficiency/competency, as defined by written district policy, of the EALRs.

Credits Required for Graduation.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Graduating Classes of 2017 and 2018</b>	<b>Graduating Class of 2019 Onward</b>
English	4	4
Math	3	3
Science	2	3
Social Studies	3	3
Arts	1	2
Health and Fitness	2	2
Occupational Education/Career and Technical Education	1	1
World Languages or Personalized Pathway Requirements	0	2
Electives	4	4
<b>Total Required Credits</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>

Minimum Graduation Requirements and the Role of the State Board of Education.

With limited exceptions, the SBE is directed by statute to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students. The SBE is also required to periodically reevaluate the graduation requirements and to report related findings to the Legislature. Proposed changes that have a fiscal impact on school districts, as identified by a fiscal analysis prepared by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the Legislature.

In accordance with its duty to establish and enforce graduation requirements, the SBE is obligated to adopt rules to implement the twenty-four credit graduation requirement. As part of this obligation, the SBE is authorized to establish course distribution requirements consistent with the twenty-four credit graduation requirement.

Rules adopted by the SBE to implement the twenty-four credit graduation requirement must include authorization for a school district to waive up to two credits for individual students based on unusual circumstances. A district granting a waiver must do so according to written policies that were adopted by the applicable school district board of directors.

**Summary of Bill:**

Provisions governing the rules that the SBE must adopt to implement the twenty-four credit graduation requirement for the graduating classes of 2019 onward are modified to eliminate the twenty-four credit requirement and replace it with a twenty-one credit requirement. The credit and subject allocation requirements are shown below.

<b>Courses</b>	<b>Required Credits</b>
English	3
Mathematics	3
Science	2
Social Studies	3
Arts	1
Health and Fitness	2
Career and Technical Education	1
Electives	4
World Languages or Personalized Pathway Requirements	2
<b>Total Required Credits</b>	<b>21</b>

A two-credit waiver provision for students that applies to the twenty-four credit graduation requirement remains applicable for the twenty-one credit graduation requirement.

A provision specifying the general contents that the minimum instructional program of basic education that each school district must offer is modified to remove a reference to the twenty-four graduation credit requirement, and to eliminate the authority of the SBE to establish course distribution requirements for graduation credit requirements.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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