

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SENATE BILL 5498

Chapter 224, Laws of 2022

67th Legislature
2022 Regular Session

POSTHUMOUS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 9, 2022

Passed by the Senate March 7, 2022
Yeas 49 Nays 0

DENNY HECK

President of the Senate

Passed by the House March 4, 2022
Yeas 97 Nays 1

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of
Representatives**

Approved March 30, 2022 2:42 PM

JAY INSLEE

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Sarah Bannister, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SENATE BILL 5498** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

SARAH BANNISTER

Secretary

FILED

March 31, 2022

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SENATE BILL 5498

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2022 Regular Session

State of Washington **67th Legislature** **2022 Regular Session**

By Senators C. Wilson, Billig, Das, Lovelett, Lovick, Nobles, Wagoner, and Wellman

Prefiled 12/07/21. Read first time 01/10/22. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to posthumous high school diplomas; amending RCW
2 28A.230.120; and creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature affirms its statutory
5 assertion that the purpose of a high school diploma is to declare
6 that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education,
7 gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills
8 to be a lifelong learner.

9 (2) The legislature finds that, on rare occasions and due to
10 unforeseen circumstances, school districts may wish to provide
11 recognition of a student's status of being on-track to graduate,
12 which is interrupted by an untimely passing that prevents the
13 completion of the secondary education program. In these limited
14 instances, school districts should have discretion to issue a
15 posthumous high school diploma with an "honoris causa" inscription.

16 (3) The legislature recognizes that the authority to issue a high
17 school diploma properly rests with the local school district and its
18 determination of whether a student has met the applicable state and
19 local graduation requirements. The legislature finds, however, that
20 establishing uniform requirements governing the issuance of

1 posthumous diplomas by school districts will promote the proper and
2 effective administration of the public education system.

3 (4) The legislature, therefore, intends to authorize school
4 districts to issue posthumous high school diplomas for qualifying
5 students and in accordance with delineated requirements that promote
6 local discretion, consistent administration, and the acknowledgment
7 of academic achievements that were prematurely interrupted by the
8 student's untimely passing.

9 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.120 and 2008 c 185 s 1 are each amended to
10 read as follows:

11 (1) School districts shall issue diplomas to students signifying
12 graduation from high school upon the students' satisfactory
13 completion of all local and state graduation requirements. Districts
14 shall grant students the option of receiving a final transcript in
15 addition to the regular diploma.

16 (2) School districts or schools of attendance shall establish
17 policies and procedures to notify senior students of the transcript
18 option and shall direct students to indicate their decisions in a
19 timely manner. School districts shall make appropriate provisions to
20 assure that students who choose to receive a copy of their final
21 transcript shall receive such transcript after graduation.

22 (3)(a) A school district may issue a high school diploma to a
23 person who:

24 (i) Is an honorably discharged member of the armed forces of the
25 United States; and

26 (ii) Left high school before graduation to serve in World War II,
27 the Korean conflict, or the Vietnam era as defined in RCW 41.04.005.

28 (b) A school district may issue a diploma to or on behalf of a
29 person otherwise eligible under (a) of this subsection
30 notwithstanding the fact that the person holds a high school
31 equivalency certification or is deceased.

32 (c) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt a form
33 for a diploma application to be used by a veteran or a person acting
34 on behalf of a deceased veteran under this subsection (3). The
35 superintendent of public instruction shall specify what constitutes
36 acceptable evidence of eligibility for a diploma.

37 (4)(a) A school district, at the request of the parent, guardian,
38 or custodian, may issue a posthumous high school diploma for a
39 deceased student if the student:

1 (i) Was enrolled in a public school of the district at the time
2 of death;
3 (ii) Was deemed on-track for graduation before the time of death;
4 and
5 (iii) Died after matriculating into high school.
6 (b) A high school diploma issued under this subsection (4) must
7 bear the inscription "honoris causa" and may not be issued before the
8 graduation date of the class in which the student was enrolled.
9 (c) Nothing in this subsection (4):
10 (i) Obligates school districts to award a diploma for a deceased
11 student at the same ceremony or event as other graduating students;
12 or
13 (ii) Limits the retroactive issuance of a high school diploma.
14 (d) Diplomas issued under this subsection (4) may not be applied
15 toward student graduation counts or for any other purpose of federal
16 and state accountability data collection.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as
18 Evitan's law.

Passed by the Senate March 7, 2022.
Passed by the House March 4, 2022.
Approved by the Governor March 30, 2022.
Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 31, 2022.

--- END ---