

RCW 28A.230.090 High school graduation requirements or equivalencies—High school and beyond plans—Career and college ready graduation requirements and waivers—Reevaluation of graduation requirements—Language requirements—Credit for courses taken before attending high school—Postsecondary credit equivalencies. (1) The

state board of education shall establish high school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students, except as provided in RCW 28A.230.122 and 28A.655.250 and except those equivalencies established by local high schools or school districts under RCW 28A.230.097. The purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner.

(a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to fulfill high school graduation requirements shall consider including information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

(b) Except as provided otherwise in this subsection, the certificate of academic achievement requirements under *RCW 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high school but are not the only requirements for graduation. The requirement to earn a certificate of academic achievement to qualify for graduation from a public high school concludes with the graduating class of 2019. The obligation of qualifying students to earn a certificate of individual achievement as a prerequisite for graduation from a public high school concludes with the graduating class of 2021.

(c) Each student must have a high school and beyond plan to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school as provided for under RCW 28A.230.212 and 28A.230.215. Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan shall remain at the local level. Effective with the graduating class of 2015, the state board of education may not establish a requirement for students to complete a culminating project for graduation. A district may establish additional, local requirements for a high school and beyond plan to serve the needs and interests of its students and the purposes of this section.

(d) (i) The state board of education shall adopt rules to implement the career and college ready graduation requirement proposal adopted under board resolution on November 10, 2010, and revised on January 9, 2014, to take effect beginning with the graduating class of 2019 or as otherwise provided in this subsection (1)(d). The rules must include authorization for a school district to waive up to two credits for individual students based on a student's circumstances, provided that none of the waived credits are identified as mandatory core credits by the state board of education. School districts must adhere to written policies authorizing the waivers that must be adopted by each board of directors of a school district that grants diplomas. The rules must also provide that the content of the third credit of mathematics and the content of the third credit of science may be chosen by the student based on the student's interests and high school and beyond plan with agreement of the student's parent or guardian or agreement of the school counselor or principal, or as provided in RCW 28A.230.300(4).

(ii) School districts may apply to the state board of education for a waiver to implement the career and college ready graduation requirement proposal beginning with the graduating class of 2020 or 2021 instead of the graduating class of 2019. In the application, a school district must describe why the waiver is being requested, the specific impediments preventing timely implementation, and efforts that will be taken to achieve implementation with the graduating class proposed under the waiver. The state board of education shall grant a waiver under this subsection (1)(d) to an applying school district at the next subsequent meeting of the board after receiving an application.

(2)(a) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

(b) The state board shall reevaluate the graduation requirements for students enrolled in vocationally intensive and rigorous career and technical education programs, particularly those programs that lead to a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students enrolled in these programs have sufficient opportunity to complete the program and earn the program's certificate or credential, and complete other state and local graduation requirements.

(c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements to the education committees of the legislature for review. The legislature shall have the opportunity to act during a regular legislative session before the changes are adopted through administrative rule by the state board. 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, shall take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the legislature through the omnibus appropriations act or other enacted legislation.

(3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other than English established by the state board of education or a local school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation, students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied the state or local school district graduation requirement for instruction in one or more languages other than English.

(4) Unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's family, a student who has completed high school courses before attending high school shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling high school graduation requirements if:

(a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or

(b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school district board of directors.

(5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this

section shall not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive credit.

(6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three semester hours equals one high school credit. [2023 c 271 § 2; 2021 c 307 § 2; 2020 c 307 § 6; (2020 c 7 § 11 expired July 31, 2020); 2019 c 252 § 103; 2018 c 229 § 1; 2017 3rd sp.s. c 31 § 4; 2016 c 162 § 2; 2014 c 217 § 202; 2011 c 203 § 2. Prior: 2009 c 548 § 111; 2009 c 223 § 2; 2006 c 114 § 3; 2005 c 205 § 3; 2004 c 19 § 103; 1997 c 222 § 2; 1993 c 371 § 3; prior: 1992 c 141 § 402; 1992 c 60 § 1; 1990 1st ex.s. c 9 § 301; 1988 c 172 § 1; 1985 c 384 § 2; 1984 c 278 § 6. Formerly RCW 28A.05.060.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 28A.655.061 expired August 31, 2022.

Intent—2023 c 271: See note following RCW 28A.230.215.

Intent—Conflict with federal requirements—2020 c 307: See notes following RCW 28B.77.290.

Expiration date—2020 c 7 § 11: "Section 11 of this act expires July 31, 2020." [2020 c 7 § 12.]

Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2020 c 7: See notes following RCW 50.16.100.

Intent—2019 c 252: See note following RCW 28A.655.250.

Effective date—2017 3rd sp.s. c 31: See note following RCW 28A.305.130.

Finding—Intent—2014 c 217: See note following RCW 28A.150.220.

Intent—2009 c 548: See RCW 28A.150.1981.

Finding—2009 c 548: See note following RCW 28A.410.270.

Intent—Finding—2009 c 548: See note following RCW 28A.305.130.

Finding—2009 c 223: "The legislature finds that although the United States has long exemplified democratic practice to the rest of the world, we ought not to neglect it at home. Two-thirds of our nation's twelfth graders scored below proficient on the last national civics assessment, and fewer than ten percent could list two ways that a democracy benefits from citizen participation. A healthy democracy depends on the participation of citizens. But participation is learned behavior, and in recent years civic learning has been pushed aside. Preparation for citizenship is as important as preparation for college and a career, and should take its place as a requirement for receiving a high school diploma." [2009 c 223 § 1.]

Finding—Intent—2006 c 114: See note following RCW 28A.230.097.

Intent—Findings—2005 c 205: See note following RCW 28A.320.170.

Part headings and captions not law—2004 c 19: "Part headings and captions used in this act are not any part of the law." [2004 c 19 § 301.]

Effective date—2004 c 19: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 18, 2004]." [2004 c 19 § 303.]

Intent—1997 c 222: "In 1994, the legislature directed the higher education board and the state board of education to convene a task force to examine and provide recommendations on establishing credit equivalencies. In November 1994, the task force recommended unanimously that the state board of education maintain the definition of five quarter or three semester college credits as equivalent to one high school credit. Therefore, the legislature intends to adopt the recommendations of the task force." [1997 c 222 § 1.]

Findings—Part headings—Severability—1992 c 141: See notes following RCW 28A.410.040.

Finding—Severability—1990 1st ex.s. c 9: See notes following RCW 28A.225.220.

Severability—1984 c 278: See note following RCW 28A.185.010.