

Old Capitol Building
PO Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

k12.wa.us



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

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BULLETIN NO. 007-20 EXECUTIVE SERVICES

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
School District Assessment Coordinators
School District Special Education Directors
Educational Service District Special Education Directors
High School Counselors
High School Principals

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Graduation Pathways Beginning with the Class of 2020

CONTACT: See page 11 for a contact list

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Washington State Legislature provided students with multiple pathways to graduation by passing [House Bill \(HB\) 1599](#). HB 1599 expands the ways Washington students show readiness for their next step after high school. In November 2019, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted updated rules regarding graduation requirements to reflect the changes in HB 1599.

This bulletin provides a summary of the changes for graduation requirements that are in place for the Class of 2020 and beyond. A detailed [Graduation Pathways Toolkit](#) can be found on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS BEGINNING WITH THE CLASS OF 2020

Beginning with the Class of 2020, students must meet state and local requirements related to [High School and Beyond Plans](#) and [minimum credit requirements](#), as well as complete at least one graduation pathway aligned with their High School and Beyond Plan goals.

GRADUATION PATHWAYS

The most significant change to graduation requirements is the expanded ways students can demonstrate readiness for graduation through one or more of eight pathways. When a student completes one or more graduation pathway, they can demonstrate to employers, postsecondary education partners or training institutions, and the military that they are ready for the next step after high school.

Graduation pathways consist of both existing "alternative" pathways and new options. The new law specifies that pathways used for graduation "must be in alignment with the student's [high school and beyond plan](#)" (RCW 28A.655.250). The pathways are built with the first year after high school in mind and are intended to be equal in value. Whether a student wants to pursue their postsecondary goals by joining a branch of the military the first year after high school, go straight to work in a credential-bearing field, or enroll in an education or training opportunity, there is a pathway available.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION, APPRENTICESHIP, AND EMPLOYMENT

CTE PATHWAY

There are two approaches to meeting the CTE graduation pathway requirement: completing a sequence of courses meeting specific criteria or completing a Core Plus program.

Sequence of CTE Courses Rule Definition

A "sequence of CTE courses" means at least two high school CTE credits in courses that are in the same CTE program area. The sequence must either include an opportunity for the student to earn both high school and college-level credit (i.e., dual credit) or include or lead to an industry recognized credential.

Local CTE Graduation Pathway Sequences

School districts may opt to create **local** CTE graduation pathway sequences which include courses from more than one CTE program area. Local sequences are innovative combinations of course work which are built to meet workforce demand and allow students to access postsecondary education/training or employment (including apprenticeship) the first year after high school. Local sequences must still include the opportunity to earn both high school and college-level credit and/or include or lead to an industry recognized credential.

Local sequences must be approved by the school board, the school board's designee, or the district's CTE advisory committee (established under 28A.150.500). Once approved locally, districts must submit the local sequence to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for final approval, via the [Expedited CTE Pathway Approval form](#). OSPI has 45 calendar days to review and approve the local sequence, or return the application to the district for

additional work. Local sequences that have been approved for use in one district may be adopted by other districts. In this case, districts must notify OSPI of their plan to adopt an approved local sequence.

CORE PLUS

For a Core Plus CTE graduation pathway, students must complete a Core Plus program and earn the Core Plus certificate indicating readiness for entry level employment with Core Plus employer partners.

MILITARY SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY (ASVAB)

Students must achieve the minimum score to meet the ASVAB pathway requirement.

The minimum score required to qualify for this pathway will be posted, at least annually, by September 1st on the [SBE website](#).

Schools must inform students taking the ASVAB of the minimum eligibility scores for each branch of the military, as well as information about the eligibility requirements for specific military occupations. SBE will maintain [webpages](#) with this information. Additionally, schools that offer the ASVAB must inform students regarding the ways in which their scores and personal information might be shared.

In order to meet the ASVAB pathway for graduation, students do not have to meet other minimum requirements for military enlistment, nor do they have to enlist or provide their scores to the military for purposes of recruitment.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PATHWAYS

Students completing this pathway must meet at least one of the following pathways in English language arts (ELA) and one of the following pathways in math.

STATEWIDE HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS PATHWAY

Students who meet or exceed the graduation standard established by SBE for the high school Smarter Balanced assessments in ELA and math, or the WA-AIM assessments in ELA and math, qualify for this pathway.

ACT OR SAT EXAMS PATHWAY

Students who meet or exceed the scores established by SBE for the mathematics portion or reading, English, or writing portions of the SAT or ACT qualify for this pathway.

DUAL CREDIT EXAMS (ADVANCED PLACEMENT, INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL) PATHWAY

Students who earn a minimum score on Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge International exams in specific ELA- or math-related courses qualify for this pathway. Students must score a three or higher for Advanced Placement, a four or higher on International Baccalaureate, or an "E" or higher on Cambridge International exams. Qualifying exams are listed in the table below.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT, INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, OR CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL COURSE PATHWAY

Students who earn at least one high school credit, with a C+ or better, in specific ELA- or math-related courses qualify for this pathway. As provided for under WAC 392-415-050, the numerical equivalent of a C+ is a 2.3 grade. Qualifying courses are provided in the table below.

Exam-Based Program	ELA Course/Exam	Math Course/Exam
Advanced Placement	English Language & Composition English Literature & Composition Macroeconomics Psychology US History World History US Government & Politics Comparative Government & Politics	Statistics Computer Science A Computer Science Principles Calculus
International Baccalaureate	Any "Individuals and Societies" Any "English Language and Literature"	Any Mathematics
Cambridge International	English Language Literature and English English General Paper Psychology History Sociology	Advanced or Advanced Subsidiary Mathematics or Further Mathematics

Exam-Based Program	ELA Course/Exam	Math Course/Exam
	Global Perspectives and Research Law	

DUAL CREDIT COURSES (RUNNING START, COLLEGE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL, CTE DUAL CREDIT) PATHWAY

Students who earn at least one high school credit in ELA and math in a Running Start, College in the High School, or CTE dual credit courses qualify for this pathway.

It is important to note that the high school credit earned by the student in these courses must appear on the high school transcript as an ELA or math course code. Students are not required to claim the college credit they are eligible for in order to qualify for this pathway. Students are not required to earn a certain grade in order to qualify for this pathway, but they must earn the high school credit (i.e., they cannot fail the course).

TRANSITION COURSES PATHWAY

Students who earn high school credit in a transition course in ELA or math qualify for this pathway. Under the new rules adopted by SBE, a transition course must be an ELA or math course offered in high school that, based on the final grade, allows the student to place directly into a credit-bearing college level course at one or more of Washington’s public colleges or universities. This includes Bridge to College courses as well as any course with a local agreement guaranteeing college-level placement per that local agreement. [See the Bridge to College Bulletin.](#)

CERTIFICATE OF INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

In addition to the new graduation pathways, students through the Class of 2021 who are served by Individual Education Plans (IEPs) can continue to access the Certificate of Individual Achievement if it is specified within their IEP. Students served with IEPs in the Class of 2022 (this year’s sophomores) and beyond must complete at least one of the graduation pathways aligned with their post-high school goals as defined above.

EXPEDITED WAIVER FOR THE CLASS OF 2020

Students in the Class of 2020 who do not meet one of the graduation pathways described above may be eligible to access an [expedited assessment appeal waiver](#). This is similar to the expedited assessment appeal (waiver) process available to the classes of 2014–19; the process requires districts to request a waiver from OSPI for individual students.

An expedited waiver will be granted if the district’s request to OSPI demonstrates the student has the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the high school graduation standard and to achieve the goals detailed in their High School and Beyond Plan.

Routes for demonstrating those skills include:

- (A) Successful completion of a college-level class in the relevant subject area*
- (B) Admission to a higher education institution or career preparation program
- (C) Award of a scholarship for higher education
- (D) Enlistment in a branch of the military*

*Note: Students looking to access options (A) or (D) above may more easily meet the criteria for the dual credit course pathway or the military/ASVAB pathway described earlier in this bulletin.

In addition to these four specified routes, there are other ways to demonstrate readiness for graduation. Resources are available on the [Expedited Assessment Appeal “Other” Pathway](#) webpage to assist districts in preparing waiver requests.

DATA AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR DISTRICTS AND OSPI

Districts continue to be responsible for ensuring students have met graduation requirements prior to earning a diploma. Because districts have access to student-level information before OSPI does (and access to data that OSPI never receives, such as High School and Beyond Plan goals and locally determined graduation requirements) districts should plan to leverage their local data to advise students and determine when a student meets a graduation pathway or pathways, as well as their other graduation credit and local requirements.

Student-level data for many of the pathways are already collected at the local level and reported up through the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS). Other pathways or elements of pathways may require additional data reporting by districts because this information is not currently collected by OSPI from districts. See the table below for a description of how data are or will be collected. Bolded, red items indicate a new or revised data collection for districts. More detailed information about data collection and submission will be provided in the coming months.

Pathway Group	Pathway	2019–20 School Year	2020–21 and Beyond
CTE Pathway	Sequence of CTE courses	Existing CEDARS data	Existing CEDARS data with revised IRC collection
	Local CTE sequence	District report to OSPI local	District report to OSPI local

Pathway Group	Pathway	2019–20 School Year	2020–21 and Beyond
		sequences and CTE approves + Existing CEDARS data	sequences and CTE approves + Existing CEDARS data
	Core Plus	TBD	TBD
ASVAB Pathway	ASVAB	Graduation Alternatives Database (transitioning to Graduation Pathways Database)	New CEDARS data collection starting 2020–21 school year
General Post-Secondary Education Pathway	Statewide High School Assessment	OSPI Assessment Data	OSPI Assessment Data
	ACT/SAT Exams	Exam scores provided to OSPI by College Board and ACT through data sharing agreements	Exam scores provided to OSPI by College Board and ACT through data sharing agreements
	Dual Credit Exams (AP, IB, Cambridge)	Exam scores provided to OSPI by College Board, IB and Cambridge through data sharing agreements	Exam scores provided to OSPI by College Board, IB and Cambridge through data sharing agreements
	Dual Credit Courses (AP, IB, Cambridge, RS, CIHS, CTE)	Existing CEDARS data	Existing CEDARS data
Transition Course Pathway	Bridge to College	Existing CEDARS data	Existing CEDARS data
	Local Transition Course	Districts report to OSPI local transition course information + existing CEDARS data	Districts report to OSPI local transition course information + existing CEDARS data

Per HB 1599, Section 202, OSPI is required to report “which pathways are available to students at each of the school districts, and the number of students using each graduation pathway for graduation purposes.” OSPI is required to report to the legislature by January 10, 2021. Districts may, but are not required to, provide pathways data to OSPI prior to the end of the school year

for students in the class of 2020. Districts will be expected to report pathways data for the 2019–20 school year no later than October 2020. This will allow OSPI to meet its legislative reporting requirements. If districts want to use OSPI-compiled pathways data, they may choose to submit data earlier than required.

TWO CREDIT WAIVER FOR STUDENT CIRCUMSTANCES

Districts can waive up to two credits for students based on “student circumstances.” The 17 core or mandatory credits of the 24-credit diploma may not be waived. The 17 core credits are listed below and are described in detail in [WAC 180-51-068](#), and also on the [SBE website](#).

Core Credit Areas (cannot be waived)	Required Number of Credits
English Language Arts	4
Math	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Health and Fitness	2
Arts	1
Career and Technical Education	1

School boards must adopt or amend local policy directing the implementation of this credit waiver, and follow that policy and procedure. Districts are not required to apply for approval or submit additional documentation to OSPI for the two credit waiver. Districts will be required, starting with the 2020–21 school year, to report through CEDARS whether students are eligible to waive up to two credits.

TRANSCRIBING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT EARNED IN MIDDLE SCHOOL (WAC 180-51-030)

This policy was changed under HB 1599. Beginning in the 2019–20 school year, students who complete high school courses before attending high school must have the credit(s) automatically transcribed on their high school transcript. This means courses completed in the 2019–20 school year are subject to this policy change.

For students enrolled in high school credit-bearing courses before entering ninth grade, the student and their parent/guardian may choose to opt-out of having the credit automatically placed on the student’s high school transcript. Students and their parent/guardian have until the end of the 11th grade to opt-out.

Students who enroll in high school credit-bearing courses prior to attending high school must pass the course in order to have the course added to their high school transcript. The new policy prevents courses that students fail from being automatically transcribed.

Students and their parent/guardian may also request the credit earned before high school be transcribed with a non-numerical grade, such as "pass" or "credit." Non-numerical grades are not included in the student's high school grade point average, but the course still applies to fulfilling high school graduation requirements. Students and their parent/guardian have until the end of the 11th grade to request credit earned before attending high school to be transcribed with a non-numerical grade.

OSPI recommends districts adopt a policy and procedure for consistently and efficiently administering this requirement, including the number of times students can opt-out and back in, and how non-numerical grade requests will be administered.

ELECTRONIC HIGH SCHOOL AND BEYOND PLANS (RCW 28A.230.215)

Beginning with the 2020–21 school year each school district must ensure that an electronic High School and Beyond Plan platform is available to all students.

The platform must meet content requirements found under RCW 28A.230.090, including:

- Identification of career goals, aided by a skills and interest assessment
- Identification of educational goals
- A course-taking plan that fulfills state and local graduation requirements and aligns with the student's career and educational goals
- A résumé or activity log
- Evidence that the student has received information on state and federal financial aid programs that help pay for college

OSPI will publish a list of available platforms in order to aid districts in complying with this requirement. In addition to meeting the content requirements above, platforms identified on OSPI's list will also meet operability requirements found under RCW 28A.230.215, including:

- Allow students to create, personalize, and revise their plan
- Grant parents or guardians, educators, and counselors appropriate access to the student's plan
- Comply with state and federal requirements for student privacy
- Allow for the portability between platforms
- Be sufficiently flexible to allow for future updates to statutory requirements or administrative changes.

ACADEMIC ACCELERATION

Each school district must adopt an academic acceleration policy for high school students by the 2021–22 school year. The intent of academic acceleration policies is to promote access to advanced course work for all students and reduce gaps in access and equity among students in rigorous advanced courses, including dual credit.

Under an academic acceleration policy, students who meet or exceed standard on the middle school or high school statewide assessments must be enrolled in the next most rigorous level of advanced courses or programs offered by the high school.

In all cases, automatic enrollment must be in line with the student’s goals described in the High School and Beyond Plan.

Students who meet or exceed standard on the ELA portion of the middle or high school statewide assessment are eligible for enrollment in advanced courses in English, social studies, humanities, and other related subjects.

Students who meet or exceed standard on the math portion of the middle or high school statewide assessment are eligible for enrollment in advanced courses in math.

Parents/guardians of high school students must be provided an opportunity to opt the student out of the academic acceleration policy and enroll their student in an alternative course or program that aligns with the student’s High School and Beyond Plan goals.

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For specific questions regarding student data collection or expedited assessment appeals/waivers, please contact Deb Came, Assistant Superintendent of Assessment and Student Information, at 360-725-6336 or email deb.came@k12.wa.us.

For specific questions regarding special education, please contact Glenna Gallo, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, at 360-725-6075 or email glenna.gallo@k12.wa.us.

For specific questions regarding transition courses, please contact Kathe Taylor, Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Teaching, at 360-725-6417 or email kathe.taylor@k12.wa.us.

For specific questions regarding Career and Technical Education (CTE), please contact Rebecca Wallace, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education, at 360-725-6243 or email rebecca.wallace@k12.wa.us.

For specific questions regarding Core Plus, please contact Angie Mason-Smith, Program Specialist of Core Plus, at 360-725-6242 or email angie.mason-smith@k12.wa.us.

For specific questions regarding academic acceleration and dual credit, please contact Tennille Jeffries-Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of System and School Improvement, at 360-725-4960 or email, tennille.jeffries-simmons@k12.wa.us.

The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins and Memos](#) page of the OSPI website.

Michaela W. Miller, Ed.D., NBCT
Deputy Superintendent

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