
HOUSE BILL 2411

State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Representatives Haigh, Santos, Hasegawa, Kenney, Upthegrove, McCoy, Hunt, and Ormsby

Read first time 01/13/12. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing high school graduation
2 requirements; amending RCW 28A.230.090 and 28A.150.220; and creating a
3 new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature maintains its commitment
6 to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to complete
7 a meaningful high school diploma and graduate from high school ready
8 for career and college.

9 (2) The legislature also recognizes the importance and
10 responsibility of school boards to tailor graduation requirements to
11 local needs and goals. Furthermore, the legislature believes that
12 students should be encouraged and have sufficient flexibility to
13 explore their options and take courses in high school based on their
14 individual interests and plans.

15 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to focus state high school
16 graduation requirements on the core, foundational knowledge and skills
17 that undergird career and college readiness, and leave decisions about
18 additional requirements and course selection to local communities,
19 parents, and students.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 2011 c 203 s 2 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) The state board of education shall establish high school
4 graduation requirements or equivalencies for students, except as
5 provided in RCW 28A.230.122 and except those equivalencies established
6 by local high schools or school districts under RCW 28A.230.097.
7 Beginning with the graduating class of 2016, requirements established
8 by the state board may not exceed the provisions of this section. The
9 purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready
10 for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and
11 citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner.

12 (a) The state board shall establish the following credit and course
13 distribution requirements beginning with the graduating class of 2016:

14 (i) Four English credits;

15 (ii) Three mathematics credits, where the content of the third
16 credit is chosen by the student based on the student's interests and
17 high school and beyond plan;

18 (iii) Three social studies credits;

19 (iv) Two science credits;

20 (v) Two credits in world languages;

21 (vi) One credit in the arts;

22 (vii) One credit in health and fitness; and

23 (viii) Two credits in a career concentration, which are courses
24 chosen by the student based on the student's interests and high school
25 and beyond plan, that may include career and technical education, and
26 are intended to provide a focus for the student's learning.

27 (b) The state board of education shall adopt rules consistent with
28 this section and other applicable state laws defining the minimum
29 content of the required credits and their alignment with the essential
30 academic learning requirements.

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

35 ~~((b))~~ (d) The certificate of academic achievement requirements
36 under RCW 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement
37 requirements under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a
38 public high school but are not the only requirements for graduation.

1 ~~((e))~~ (e) The state board may establish completion of a high
2 school and beyond plan as a graduation requirement. Any decision on
3 whether a student has met the state board's high school graduation
4 requirements for a high school and beyond plan shall remain at the
5 local level.

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

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

20 ~~(c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the high~~
21 ~~school graduation requirements to the education committees of the~~
22 ~~legislature for review and to the quality education council established~~
23 ~~under RCW 28A.290.010. The legislature shall have the opportunity to~~
24 ~~act during a regular legislative session before the changes are adopted~~
25 ~~through administrative rule by the state board. Changes that have a~~
26 ~~fiscal impact on school districts, as identified by a fiscal analysis~~
27 ~~prepared by the office of the superintendent of public instruction,~~
28 ~~shall take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the~~
29 ~~legislature through the omnibus appropriations act or other enacted~~
30 ~~legislation.~~

31 ~~(3))~~ (f) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages
32 other than English established ~~((by the state board of education))~~
33 under this section or by a local school district, or both, for purposes
34 of high school graduation, students who receive instruction in American
35 sign language or one or more American Indian languages shall be
36 considered to have satisfied the state or local school district
37 graduation requirement for instruction in one or more languages other
38 than English.

1 ~~((4))~~ (2) If requested by the student and his or her family, a
2 student who has completed high school courses before attending high
3 school shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to
4 fulfilling high school graduation requirements if:

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

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

15 ~~((5))~~ (3) Students who have taken and successfully completed high
16 school courses under the circumstances in subsection ~~((4))~~ (2) of
17 this section shall not be required to take an additional competency
18 examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive
19 credit.

20 ~~((6))~~ (4) At the college or university level, five quarter or
21 three semester hours equals one high school credit.

22 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.150.220 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 27 s 1 are each
23 amended to read as follows:

24 (1) In order for students to have the opportunity to develop the
25 basic education knowledge and skills under RCW 28A.150.210, school
26 districts must provide instruction of sufficient quantity and quality
27 and give all students ~~((the))~~ an equitable opportunity to complete
28 graduation requirements that are intended to prepare them for
29 postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship. The
30 program established under this section shall be the minimum
31 instructional program of basic education offered by school districts.

32 (2) Each school district shall make available to students the
33 following minimum instructional offering each school year:

34 (a) For students enrolled in grades one through twelve, at least a
35 district-wide annual average of one thousand hours, which shall be
36 increased to at least one thousand eighty instructional hours for
37 students enrolled in each of grades seven through twelve and at least

1 one thousand instructional hours for students in each of grades one
2 through six according to an implementation schedule adopted by the
3 legislature, but not before the 2014-15 school year; and

4 (b) For students enrolled in kindergarten, at least four hundred
5 fifty instructional hours, which shall be increased to at least one
6 thousand instructional hours according to the implementation schedule
7 under RCW 28A.150.315.

8 (3) The instructional program of basic education provided by each
9 school district shall include:

10 (a) Instruction in the essential academic learning requirements
11 under RCW 28A.655.070;

12 (b) Instruction that provides all students ((the)) an equitable
13 opportunity to complete ((~~twenty-four credits for~~)) high school
14 graduation((, ~~subject to a phased-in implementation of the twenty-four~~
15 ~~credits as established by the legislature. Course distribution~~
16 ~~requirements may be established by the state board of education~~))
17 requirements under RCW 28A.230.090;

18 (c) If the essential academic learning requirements include a
19 requirement of languages other than English, the requirement may be met
20 by students receiving instruction in one or more American Indian
21 languages;

22 (d) Supplemental instruction and services for underachieving
23 students through the learning assistance program under RCW 28A.165.005
24 through 28A.165.065;

25 (e) Supplemental instruction and services for eligible and enrolled
26 students whose primary language is other than English through the
27 transitional bilingual instruction program under RCW 28A.180.010
28 through 28A.180.080;

29 (f) The opportunity for an appropriate education at public expense
30 as defined by RCW 28A.155.020 for all eligible students with
31 disabilities as defined in RCW 28A.155.020; and

32 (g) Programs for highly capable students under RCW 28A.185.010
33 through 28A.185.030.

34 (4) Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to require
35 individual students to attend school for any particular number of hours
36 per day or to take any particular courses.

37 (5) Each school district's kindergarten through twelfth grade basic
38 educational program shall be accessible to all students who are five

1 years of age, as provided by RCW 28A.225.160, and less than twenty-one
2 years of age and shall consist of a minimum of one hundred eighty
3 school days per school year in such grades as are conducted by a school
4 district, and one hundred eighty half-days of instruction, or
5 equivalent, in kindergarten, to be increased to a minimum of one
6 hundred eighty school days per school year according to the
7 implementation schedule under RCW 28A.150.315. However, effective May
8 1, 1979, a school district may schedule the last five school days of
9 the one hundred and eighty day school year for noninstructional
10 purposes in the case of students who are graduating from high school,
11 including, but not limited to, the observance of graduation and early
12 release from school upon the request of a student, and all such
13 students may be claimed as a full-time equivalent student to the extent
14 they could otherwise have been so claimed for the purposes of RCW
15 28A.150.250 and 28A.150.260.

16 (6) Nothing in this section precludes a school district from
17 enriching the instructional program of basic education, such as
18 offering additional instruction or providing additional services,
19 programs, or activities that the school district determines to be
20 appropriate for the education of the school district's students.

21 (7) The state board of education shall adopt rules to implement and
22 ensure compliance with the program requirements imposed by this
23 section, RCW 28A.150.250 and 28A.150.260, and such related supplemental
24 program approval requirements as the state board may establish.

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