

Chapter 180-111 WAC
EMERGENCY WAIVER OF CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS

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WAC

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WAC 180-111-010 Authority and purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to establish an emergency waiver program to allow school districts as defined in WAC 180-111-020, and private schools, to waive certain graduation requirements on an individual student basis and emergency waiver of certain requirements for private schools in WAC 180-111-060. The intent is to help prevent students from being unduly impacted by unforeseen disruptions to coursework and assessments resulting from an "emergency or disaster" as defined in RCW 38.52.010. "Emergency" may also include a national declaration of emergency by an authorized federal official.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-010, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21. Statutory Authority: 2020 c 7 § 10-12 and RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-01-077, § 180-111-010, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21.]

WAC 180-111-020 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Demonstrated postsecondary preparation" means the student has demonstrated skills and knowledge indicating preparation for the next steps identified in their high school and beyond plan under RCW 28A.230.090 and for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and civic engagement.

(a) The school district shall review the individual student's completed and planned coursework and other information applicable to the individual student and determine if the student has demonstrated postsecondary preparation.

(b) This individual student review may include, but is not limited to, whether the following considerations apply to that student:

(i) The student has completed a graduation pathway option in accordance with RCW 28A.655.250 and WAC 180-51-230.

(ii) The student has completed activities consistent with the criteria for "career prep" or has participated in an approved "career launch" program through career connect Washington.

(iii) The student has completed a preparatory career and technical education course or a course that meets the preparatory standards as defined in RCW 28A.700.030.

(iv) The student has developed and practiced leadership and employability skills through a job, volunteer position, or a career and technical student organization that would enable them to advance in their chosen career field and has obtained external validation from an employer, tribal elder, CTE business or industry advisory committee

member, or other community member that can attest to the student's preparation for their next steps.

(v) The student is a participant in a recognized apprenticeship preparation program or registered apprenticeship program or has signed an apprenticeship agreement with an employer.

(vi) The student has earned college credit in a core subject area.

(vii) The student has earned an industry recognized credential.

(viii) The student has completed minimum college admission standards for four-year institutions of higher education, in accordance with RCW 28B.77.020 (7) (a).

(ix) The student placed into a college-level math or English course at an institution of higher education.

(x) The student completed a summer bridge program or a senior transition course (bridge to college).

(xi) The student has completed an admission to a higher education institution or career preparation program.

(xii) The student received an award of a scholarship for higher education.

(2) "Eligible student" means:

(a) The student was reasonably expected to graduate as defined in subsection (5) of this section;

(b) The student has demonstrated postsecondary preparation as defined in subsection (1) of this section; and

(c) The student experienced a significant disruption to their ability to complete graduation requirements due to the emergency, which could include, but is not limited to: Inability for the student to access the school building or other education facility due to closure or, if online learning is a part of the school program, the student did not have a reliable internet connection or sufficient technology within their household, had to support their family by working during the emergency, had to care for family members during the emergency, illness of the student or student's household member, or other circumstances due to the emergency that directly compromised the student's ability to complete the credit requirements or a graduation pathway option.

(3) "Emergency" means the same as the definition for "emergency or disaster" in RCW 38.52.010. "Emergency" may also include a national declaration of emergency by an authorized federal official.

(4) "Good faith effort" means the school district considered and implemented options, determined appropriate by the school district, to support each individual student in meeting credit and pathway requirements.

(a) For each student who is being considered for the emergency waiver, school districts shall provide individual student advising to help each student determine: What supports they need to be successful; how they might meet the graduation requirements, including the feasibility of summer or a partial or full additional year of high school enrollment; and whether the emergency waiver is appropriate for the individual student.

(b) Options for supporting students to meet credit and course-based graduation pathway requirements include, but are not limited to:

(i) Provision of additional academic supports to aid student completion.

(ii) Awarding credits based on the student's demonstrated proficiency/mastery of the state's learning standards under WAC 180-51-050,

180-51-051, and 392-410-300, including credits, grades, and courses transcribed on the high school transcript.

(iii) Awarding credit through expanded learning opportunities, dual credit programs, work-based learning (WAC 392-410-315), traditional online, summer learning, CTE course equivalencies, and other local credit options for awarding credit outside of school.

(c) Options for supporting students to meet the exam-based graduation pathway requirement include, but are not limited to: Efforts to ensure students are aware of, and can access, online or by other alternative access options, the SAT, ACT, ASVAB, AP, IB, Cambridge International, and state assessments (if applicable). School districts are encouraged to reduce or eliminate any cost to students in using these options.

(5) "Reasonably expected to graduate" means the individual student's earned credits and current or planned enrollment would have been sufficient, as determined by the school district, for the student to meet the applicable state minimum graduation requirements for the student's graduation year cohort (as defined in WAC 180-51-056, 180-51-067, 180-51-068, and 180-51-210) by August 31st of the school year when the emergency waiver is granted if not for the impact of the emergency.

(6) "School district" means any school district, charter school established under chapter 28A.710 RCW, tribal compact school operated according to the terms of state-tribal education compacts authorized under chapter 28A.715 RCW, state schools established under chapter 72.40 RCW, and community and technical colleges granting high school diplomas.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-020, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21. Statutory Authority: 2020 c 7 § 10-12 and RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-01-077, § 180-111-020, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21.]

WAC 180-111-030 Application and approval process for public school districts.

(1) The state board of education will make an application available to school districts seeking the emergency waiver of certain graduation requirements. A school district may apply to the state board of education for the authority to waive pathway and credit-based graduation requirements for individual students. The state board of education will accept applications through a deadline to be determined by the state board of education.

(2) To be granted the emergency waiver authority, the school district must certify it will administer the emergency waiver in accordance with program rules as stated in this chapter.

(3) The application must be certified by the school district superintendent or equivalent personnel with authority to sign on behalf of the school district.

(4) The SBE will develop an application and process for granting school districts emergency waiver authority in a subsequent emergency that will include:

(a) For local emergencies: The school districts will apply to the state board of education and will state the nature and duration of the emergency and how it impacts students' ability to meet requirements. The district may request specific credit and graduation pathway option flexibility based on the nature of the emergency. If the state board

of education approves the district application, the board will grant the school district authority through a formal action in a public board meeting.

(b) For state or national emergencies: The state board of education will adopt rules that address the specific circumstances surrounding each new emergency, any applicable eligibility criteria, and limitations on the number and type of credits that can be waived.

(5) The state board of education may approve applications that meet the criteria stated in subsections (2) and (3) of this section. The board may delegate this authority to its executive director for efficiency per RCW 28A.305.130(7).

(6) The state board of education will promptly post on its public website a list of all approved applications.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-030, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21. Statutory Authority: 2020 c 7 § 10-12 and RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-01-077, § 180-111-030, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21.]

WAC 180-111-040 School district implementation of the emergency waiver of certain graduation requirements.

(1) Before granting any emergency waivers, the school district board or equivalent governing body shall adopt by resolution a plan that describes the school district's process for granting and declining emergency waivers for students. The plan must include:

(a) A process for school district staff to initiate an emergency waiver and a process for students to request an emergency waiver if not initiated by the district;

(b) A school district process if an initial decision is made to decline an emergency waiver for an individual student, for further review and recommendations by a panel with at least one school counselor and educators with expertise in trauma-informed instruction and culturally responsive education, and if appropriate, special education, instruction for multilingual/English language learners, and a migrant graduation specialist or migrant student advocate;

(c) A process for students to appeal within the school district a decision to not grant an emergency waiver; and

(d) Culturally responsive ways, based on the school district's local community, to communicate with students and families about the emergency waiver and the process to request, appeal, or decline the emergency waiver.

(2) Beginning from the date of approval of its emergency waiver application, in accordance with WAC 180-111-030, a school district may waive certain graduation requirements on an individual student basis to eligible students in accordance with this section and subject to any specific limitations for particular graduation cohorts of students or specific emergency declarations specified in this chapter or in the board's approval of a school district emergency waiver application. The emergency waiver may be granted after completing all of the following requirements:

(a) Before use of this emergency waiver for graduation credit requirements, school districts shall consider using their existing authority to waive credits through the following ways:

(i) Local graduation requirements under WAC 180-51-020 may be waived at local discretion without approval of the state board of education.

(ii) Two-credit waiver of flexible credits may be granted for individual student circumstances, in accordance with WAC 180-51-068(13) and 180-51-210(2).

(iii) Students may be excused from physical education in accordance with the applicable requirements in WAC 180-51-067(6), 180-51-068(6), and 180-51-210 (4)(f).

(iv) The noncredit requirement of Washington state history may be waived in accordance with WAC 180-51-067 (4)(b), 180-51-068 (4)(b)(i) and (ii), and 180-51-210 (4)(d)(iv)(A) and (B).

(b) The school district shall review the individual student's completed and planned coursework and determine that the student was reasonably expected to graduate as defined in WAC 180-111-020 and that the student has demonstrated postsecondary preparation as defined in WAC 180-111-020.

(c) The school district shall demonstrate a good faith effort, as defined in WAC 180-111-020, to help the individual student complete coursework, address credit deficiencies, and meet core course and graduation pathway option requirements through other options that align with their high school and beyond plan. The school district shall document the steps taken to demonstrate this good faith effort in the individual student record.

(d) The school district shall consult with the individual student, and make a reasonable effort to consult with a parent or guardian of the student, and shall make a reasonable effort to provide information about this emergency waiver in the preferred languages of the student, and of the parent or guardian of the student if applicable. The information must include, but is not limited to:

(i) In the consideration of whether emergency waiver(s) are appropriate for an individual student, and if so what emergency waiver(s), the school district shall advise the student to waive only those credit(s) that are least applicable to the student's postsecondary plans as articulated in the student's high school and beyond plan;

(ii) The potential benefits and limitations that could result from receiving the emergency waiver including impacts on postsecondary plans and, if applicable to their high school and beyond plan, the recommendation to contact the student's intended postsecondary institutions or apprenticeship provider regarding potential impacts; and

(iii) The option for the individual student to decline the emergency waiver and for the student to be provided with the opportunity to earn the credits needed or meet their intended pathway option to complete graduation requirements which may include continued enrollment beyond the planned graduation date.

(3) The school district shall ensure equity in administering the emergency waiver. The school district shall disaggregate emergency waiver data by student groups as referenced in RCW 28A.300.042(3) and shall conduct further disaggregation of student groups if data are available to do so. If disproportionality is found, the school district shall take appropriate actions to ensure equitable administration. This consideration must further be designed to identify and mitigate potential disparate impacts of the emergency waiver and to determine if any changes to the school district's approach in administering the emergency waiver, including supports under WAC

180-111-020(4) to help students meet the requirements, are needed before the conclusion of the school year.

(4) The school district shall:

(a) Maintain a record of the following in the individual student record: Actions taken under the good faith effort to help the student meet the graduation requirements, courses (including the term and amount of credit) and requirements waived, and how the student demonstrated postsecondary preparation;

(b) Include a notation of waived credits and graduation pathway on the student's high school transcript in accordance with RCW 28A.230.125;

(c) Keep a record of the number of emergency waivers requested and not granted;

(d) Report on administration of the emergency waiver to the state board of education in a manner determined by the state board of education; and

(e) Report student level emergency waiver data to the office of the superintendent of public instruction in a manner determined by the superintendent of public instruction in consultation with the state board of education.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-040, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21. Statutory Authority: 2020 c 7 § 10-12 and RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-01-077, § 180-111-040, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21.]

WAC 180-111-050 Emergency waiver of certain graduation requirements in response to novel coronavirus. This section is for the novel coronavirus emergency, in response to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency on February 29, 2020. It applies to the classes of 2020 through 2024 beginning in the 2020-21 school year. Beginning from the date of approval of a school district's emergency waiver application, in accordance with WAC 180-111-040:

(1) Waived credit graduation requirements are limited to the student's classes impacted by the novel coronavirus disruption. The school district shall prioritize student completion of core coursework and coursework related to the student's high school and beyond plan under RCW 28A.230.090. School districts may waive credits for eligible students in the classes of 2020 to 2024. In addition to existing waiver authorities as described in WAC 180-111-040 (2)(a):

(a) For the classes of 2020 to 2023, school districts may waive up to two additional credits under this emergency waiver, provided that students graduate with no fewer than a total of 20 credits.

(b) For the class of 2024, school districts may waive up to one additional credit under this emergency waiver, provided that students graduate with no fewer than a total of 21 credits.

(2) For the class of 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023: The emergency waiver may be applied to core credits or flexible credits, provided that no more than one credit in each core subject area is waived. The terms "core" and "flexible credits" used in this section are defined in WAC 180-51-210.

(3) For the class of 2024: The emergency waiver may be applied to core or flexible credits.

(4) A student's graduation pathway requirement, as outlined in WAC 180-51-230, may be waived for eligible students in the classes of

2020 to 2024 after a school district has made a good faith effort to help the student meet their pathway requirement, as defined in WAC 180-111-020. For students graduating in 2024, the district may waive the graduation pathway requirement with the following limitations:

(a) If a student receives an emergency waiver of up to one mathematics credit, the student must meet a mathematics pathway option; and

(b) If a student receives an emergency waiver of up to one English credit, the student must meet an English pathway option.

(5) The graduation pathway requirement may also be waived for a student so that the student may earn a diploma before their planned graduation year, provided that:

(a) The student may not be granted an emergency waiver of credit requirements; and

(b) The student must meet all other state graduation requirements including credit requirements under WAC 180-51-210.

(6) This emergency waiver may apply to individual students participating in the international baccalaureate diploma programme as defined in RCW 28A.230.122 to enable these students to earn a Washington high school diploma.

(7) Schools operating under the waiver defined in WAC 180-18-055 may waive graduation requirements in a manner consistent with this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.230.090 and 28A.150.220(7). WSR 24-09-057, § 180-111-050, filed 4/15/24, effective 5/16/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.230.320, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7), and 28A.195.040. WSR 22-12-025, § 180-111-050, filed 5/23/22, effective 6/23/22. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-050, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21. Statutory Authority: 2020 c 7 § 10-12 and RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-01-077, § 180-111-050, filed 12/10/20, effective 1/10/21.]

WAC 180-111-060 Emergency waiver of certain requirements in response to novel coronavirus for private schools. (1) This section applies to private schools approved to operate in Washington under chapter 180-90 WAC.

(2) In response to emergencies as defined in WAC 180-111-020 that impact a private school or the public school district in which a private school is located, private schools may waive credit-based graduation requirements for individual students who have demonstrated post-secondary preparation as defined in WAC 180-111-020, in a manner consistent with the provisions of WAC 180-111-040 and rules adopted to address specific emergencies. Private schools are exempt from the reporting requirements listed in WAC 180-111-040 (4)(d) and (e).

(3) Private schools that have implemented an online education program consistent with the provisions of RCW 28A.195.090 will be considered to have met the instructional hour requirements. Private schools have discretion to determine whether the curriculum has been adequately satisfied.

(4) Each private school shall notify the state board of education in a format provided by the board whether the private school is waiving requirements under this section.

(5) For the 2020 to 2022 school years, the state board of education will maintain a private school's status as an approved private school if:

(a) Due to a significant disruption caused by the novel coronavirus, the school is unable to fulfill the requirements of RCW 28A.195.010 of a full school year of one hundred eighty days or are unable to fulfill the annual average total instructional hours requirements.

(b) For the 2021-22 school year, approved private schools may operate an online education program consistent with the provisions of RCW 28A.195.090 for all of their students and will not be subject to rescission of approval based on a failure to have students enrolled in the school's physical facilities provided that:

(i) Prior to the use of this waiver of the requirement that students are enrolled in and attending the school's physical facility, the school will notify the state board of education; the process and form of the notification will be established by the state board of education; and

(ii) The school maintains a physical address for the education of students in Washington and plans to resume classroom instruction when it is safe to do so based on lifting state and local emergency declarations restricting the delivery of educational services or based on a determination of the school's governing body.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.195.010, 28A.230.090, 28A.150.220(7). WSR 21-16-059, § 180-111-060, filed 7/28/21, effective 8/28/21.]