

WAC 180-51-230 Graduation pathway options. (1) Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, each student must meet the requirements of at least one of the nine graduation pathway options in this section. Each of the graduation pathway options are equally valid for earning a Washington state high school diploma.

(2) School districts are encouraged to make the nine graduation pathways specified below available to their students and to expand their pathway options until this goal is met yet have discretion in determining which graduation pathway options they will offer.

(a) Student access to all pathways offered by a district must not be restricted based on a student's disability. Students receiving special education services must be provided with the services and accommodations outlined in the student's individualized education program to support them in meeting the pathway requirement.

(b) Starting in the sixth grade, school districts are strongly encouraged to annually provide students and their parents or guardians with comprehensive information about graduation pathway options offered by the school district.

(c) Beginning in the eighth grade, school districts must annually provide information about graduation pathway options to students and their parents or guardians as part of the students' high school and beyond plan. The information must be provided in a manner that conforms with the school district's language access policy and procedures as required under RCW 28A.183.040.

(3) The state board of education shall review and monitor the implementation of the graduation pathway options to ensure school district compliance with requirements established under RCW 28A.655.250 and subsection (4) of this section. The reviews and monitoring required by this subsection may be conducted concurrently with other oversight and monitoring conducted by the state board of education. The information shall be collected annually and reported to the education committees of the legislature by January 10, 2025, and biennially thereafter.

(4) At least annually, school districts shall examine data on student groups participating in and completing each graduation pathway option offered by the school district.

(a) At minimum, the data on graduation pathway participation and completion must be disaggregated by the student groups described in RCW 28A.300.042 (1) and (3), and by:

(i) Gender;

(ii) Students who are the subject of a dependency proceeding pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW;

(iii) Students who are experiencing homelessness as defined in RCW 28A.300.542(4);

(iv) Multilingual/English language learners.

(b) If the results of the analysis required under (a) of this subsection show disproportionate participation and completion rates by student groups, then the school district shall identify reasons for the observed disproportionality and implement strategies as appropriate to ensure the graduation pathway options are equitably available to all students in the school district.

(5) The graduation pathway option(s) used by a student must be in alignment with the student's high school and beyond plan.

(6) All assessment scores used for graduation pathways in subsection (7)(a) through (g) of this section will be posted on the state board of education website. Assessment scores that the state board of education is responsible for setting, will only be changed through a

public process culminating in official board action in a public board meeting.

(7) **The following are the nine graduation pathway options:**

(a) **Statewide high school assessments.** Meet or exceed the graduation standard established by the state board of education under RCW 28A.305.130 on the statewide high school assessments in English language arts and mathematics as provided for under RCW 28A.655.070.

(b) **Dual credit courses.** Earn at least one high school credit in English language arts and at least one high school credit in mathematics in dual credit courses. For the purposes of this subsection, "dual credit course" means a course in which a student is eligible for both high school credit and college credit at the level of 100 or higher, upon successfully completing the course, by meeting the dual credit course or program criteria established by the local district and the applicable higher education entity. Dual credit courses include running start, college in the high school courses, and career and technical education dual credit courses. Nothing in this subsection requires a student to pay fees or claim college credit to meet this pathway.

(c) **Transition courses.** Earn high school credit in a high school transition course in English language arts and mathematics, an example of which includes a bridge to college course. For the purposes of this subsection, "high school transition course" means an English language arts or mathematics 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 participating institutions of higher education in RCW 28B.10.016, in accordance with established policy and criteria of the local school district and the applicable higher education entity. This definition includes transition courses identified through local agreements between colleges and school districts. English language arts and math high school transition courses must satisfy a student's core or elective credit graduation requirements established by the state board of education in WAC 180-51-210.

(d) **Advanced placement, international baccalaureate, or Cambridge international.** Meet either (d)(i) or (ii) of this subsection:

(i) Earn high school credit, with a grade of C+ or higher in each term, in the following advanced placement, international baccalaureate, or Cambridge international courses in English language arts and mathematics.

(A) For English language arts, successfully complete one high school credit in any of the following courses with a grade of C+ or higher in each term: Advanced placement courses in English language and composition, English literature and composition, macroeconomics, microeconomics, psychology, United States history, world history, United States government and politics, comparative government and politics, European history, human geography, African American studies, seminar, or research; any of the international baccalaureate individuals and societies courses or English language and literature courses; or earn an E in any of the following Cambridge advanced or Cambridge advanced subsidiary courses: English language, literature and English, English general paper, psychology, history, sociology, global perspectives and research, law, classical studies, drama, economics, thinking skills, or geography.

(B) For mathematics, successfully complete one high school credit in any of the following courses with a grade of C+ or higher: Advanced placement courses in statistics, computer science A, computer science principles, precalculus or calculus; any of the international baccalaureate mathematics or computer science courses; or a Cambridge ad-

vanced or advanced subsidiary mathematics, further mathematics, or computer science course.

(ii) Score a three or higher on advanced placement exams in one of the English language arts and one of the mathematics courses identified above; score a four or higher on international baccalaureate exams in one of the English language arts and one of the mathematics courses identified above; or score an E or higher on Cambridge international exams in one of the English language arts and one of the mathematics courses identified above.

(e) **SAT** or **ACT**. Meet or exceed the scores established by the state board of education for the mathematics portion and the reading, English, and writing portion of the SAT or ACT.

(f) **Performance-based learning experience**. Complete a performance-based learning experience that results in a product created by the student that provides evidence of meeting or exceeding state learning standards in English language arts and mathematics. The learning experience may take a variety of forms such as a project, practicum, work-related experience, community service, or cultural activity and should permit the student to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a real-world context. "Real-world context" means learning experiences that provide students the opportunity to carry out activities and solve problems in a way that reflects the complex nature of such tasks in the world outside of the classroom. The product may take a variety of forms such as a performance, presentation, portfolio, report, film, or exhibit that allows the student to demonstrate meeting or exceeding English language arts and/or math learning standards.

(i) Prior to offering a performance-based pathway option, the school district board of directors shall adopt a written policy. The policy must address:

(A) Approval of student proposals.

(B) Approval of school or district-developed performance-based pathway options, if the district chooses to provide such options. For a student to use a school or district-developed performance-based pathway option, the student will sign a learning contract with the school or district.

(C) Evaluation of student products. The evaluation of each student's product must be conducted by a certificated teacher with an endorsement in the relevant subject area, or with other applicable qualifications as permitted by the professional educator standards board, or by an evaluation panel that must include at least one teacher with an endorsement in the relevant subject area, or with other applicable qualifications as permitted by the professional educator standards board. The evaluation panel may include external parties such as community leaders or professionals. Districts are encouraged to use a panel of evaluators.

(D) Measures to ensure the safety of the student learning experience, including if appropriate, work-based learning rules, industry safety standards, youth employment regulations, and local risk management practices.

(ii) To complete a performance-based graduation pathway option, a student shall:

(A) Submit a proposal or sign a learning contract. The proposal or learning contract must describe the student learning experience, the product based on the student learning experience that will allow the student to demonstrate meeting or exceeding English language arts and/or math standards. The proposal or learning contract must identify the learning standards in English language arts and/or math that will

be addressed, in accordance with performance-based pathway graduation proficiency targets posted on the state board of education web page and may include additional learning standards appropriate for the individual student's performance-based pathway.

(B) Engage in a student learning experience that takes place no earlier than the student's ninth grade year. The student learning experience may take place outside of the school day and outside of the school facility, or it may be incorporated into a school day and into a high school course or courses provided the learning experience reflects a real-world context.

(C) Submit a product created by the student based on the student learning experience that permits the student to demonstrate meeting or exceeding the English language arts and/or math learning standards identified in the student's proposal or learning contract. The product must include a student reflection that minimally identifies the connection between the student's learning and the student's preparation for their posthigh school goals and includes a student self-evaluation of the skills and learning gained.

(iii) The decision as to whether a student meets the graduation pathway requirement through a performance-based pathway option will be locally determined based on an evaluation of the student's product as a demonstration of meeting English language arts and/or math standards identified in the proposal/learning contract. Districts may collaborate on the evaluation process.

(A) Evaluation of the student's project must be conducted by a certificated teacher endorsed in the relevant subject area, or with other applicable qualifications permitted by the professional educators standards board, or an evaluation panel that must involve at least one certificated teacher endorsed in the relevant subject area, or with other applicable qualifications permitted by the professional educators standards board. The evaluation panel may include external parties such as community leaders or professionals. Districts are encouraged to use a panel of evaluators.

(B) The evaluation to determine whether the student has met the identified state learning standards must be based on rubrics and proficiency targets developed by the state board of education in collaboration with the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The rubrics and proficiency targets will be posted on the state board of education website. As state learning standards are updated under RCW 28A.655.070, the rubrics and proficiency targets will be updated, if needed, within one year.

(g) **Combination.** Meet any combination of at least one English language arts option and at least one mathematics option established in pathway options (a) through (f) of this subsection.

(h) **Armed services vocational aptitude battery.**

(i) Meet standard on the armed forces qualification test portion of the armed services vocational aptitude battery by scoring at least the minimum established by the military for eligibility to serve in a branch of the armed services at the time that the student takes the assessment. The state board of education will post eligibility scores at least annually by September 1st. Each student may choose to meet either the posted minimum score the year a student takes the armed services vocational aptitude battery or the score posted by the state board of education on a later date prior to the student turning 21 years of age.

(ii) The school must inform the students taking the armed services vocational aptitude battery about the minimum eligibility score

required by each branch of the military as well as information about eligibility requirements for specific military occupations. Schools are encouraged to schedule an armed services vocational aptitude battery career exploration program interpretation seminar after the test so students can participate in high school and beyond planning and learn about available military and nonmilitary occupations for which they have an aptitude. The state board of education will maintain a web page with information about military occupation requirements and minimum eligibility scores required by each branch of the military.

(iii) Schools that offer the armed services vocational aptitude battery must inform students regarding the ways in which their scores and personal information might be shared, per the agreement between the school and the United States Department of Defense which administers the armed services vocational aptitude battery. Each student must be given prior written notice of the option to decide whether the school can release the student's armed services vocational aptitude battery scores to military recruiters for contact purposes. A school administrator, teacher, or counselor must also explain and offer this option to the students on the day of the test.

(iv) This pathway does not require students to meet the physical or other requirements for military enlistment, require enlistment, or require students to release their scores to the military for purposes of recruitment.

(v) Satisfying this pathway does not require students to meet the separate English and mathematics graduation pathway requirements of pathway options (a) through (g) of this subsection.

(i) **Career and technical education course sequence.** Complete the curriculum requirements of a core plus program relevant to the student's postsecondary goals outlined in the student's high school and beyond plan as defined in WAC 180-51-220 in aerospace, maritime, health care, information technology, or construction and manufacturing; or complete a sequence of at least two high school credits in career and technical education courses that meet the following criteria:

(i) The sequence is comprised of courses that are technically intensive and rigorous in a progression relevant to the student's postsecondary goals outlined in the student's high school and beyond plan as defined in WAC 180-51-220. Courses to satisfy this pathway must be comprised of either:

(A) Courses within the same career and technical program area; or

(B) A local sequence of courses within more than one career and technical program area if approved by a district's local school board, local board's designee, or the district's local vocational (career and technical education) advisory committee established under RCW 28A.150.500 and submitted to the office of the superintendent of public instruction for an expedited approval. A sequence submitted to the office of superintendent of public instruction for expedited approval will be deemed approved if a decision is not provided to the district within 45 calendar days of submittal. If a sequence is denied approval, the office of superintendent of public instruction must provide the district with a written notification including the reason for denial. Once a local sequence has been approved by the office of superintendent of public instruction, it may be implemented in other districts with notification of implementation to the office of superintendent of public instruction.

(ii) Each sequence of career and technical education courses must be comprised of courses that meet the minimum criteria identified in RCW 28A.700.030. Specifically, the courses must:

(A) Satisfy either of the following conditions:

(I) Lead to a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized by trades, industries, or other professional associations as necessary for employment or advancement in that field; or

(II) Allow students to earn dual credit for high school and college through tech prep (career technical education dual credit), advanced placement, or other agreements or programs.

(B) Be comprised of a sequenced progression of multiple courses that are technically intensive and rigorous; and

(C) Lead to workforce entry, state or nationally approved apprenticeships, or postsecondary education in a related field.

(iii) Satisfying the career technical education pathway does not require a student to take a course that is part of a career and technical education preparatory program that is approved under RCW 28A.700.030 nor does satisfying this pathway require students to meet the separate English and mathematics graduation pathway requirements of pathway options (a) through (g) of this subsection.

(iv) A course that is used to meet graduation pathway requirements may also be used to meet credit subject area requirements, including career and technical education course equivalencies per RCW 28A.700.070.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.305.130. WSR 24-02-066, § 180-51-230, filed 12/29/23, effective 1/29/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.230.090. WSR 20-01-101, § 180-51-230, filed 12/13/19, effective 1/13/20.]