

BOARD POLICY

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students graduating from the Bellingham School District are expected to be well prepared to face the diverse and changing world beyond graduation. Graduates will be:

- **Knowledgeable individuals** who read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively. They will know and apply the basic principles of mathematics, science, social studies, health and fitness, and fine arts.
- **Quality producers** who successfully apply academic, intellectual, artistic, and practical learning to create quality products and performances.
- **Effective communicators** who apply their communication skills and processes effectively in a variety of ways and settings.
- **Competent thinkers** who are able to think analytically and creatively, solve problems, and make decisions.
- **Effective collaborators** who can work successfully with diverse individuals and groups.
- **Responsible citizens** who are informed and apply knowledge to improve the quality of their lives and communities.
- **Life-long learners** who are self-directed and apply learning confidently and successfully to new and different situations and tasks in preparation for a changing world and workplace.

These expectations will be achieved through a variety of experiences, both required and elective, prior to the student becoming eligible for graduation. Beginning in 6th grade, students will create a Student Success Plan for middle and high school and year 13 which will include not only the courses to be taken, but also information about the student's goals, abilities, and needs. The plan is based on state and/or district requirements and their individual interests. Student Success Plans will be reviewed and updated annually in consultation with parents and school staff.

A core course of study for students in grades 9 and 10 will be developed to ensure that all students are provided opportunities to meet the state requirements as measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The core consists of courses in English, science and mathematics with content that is aligned with the Grade Level Expectations in reading, writing, science and mathematics.

All students in grade 10 will be assessed in reading, writing, mathematics and science based on the Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). All graduates will be required to meet the state-defined competency in all components of the WASL. Students may be provided with alternative assessment structures that measure the WASL components. The superintendent is directed to develop procedures that would allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills using alternative assessment structures.

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Students who do not meet the WASL requirements will be provided additional opportunities to learn required content, skills and strategies to enable them to meet the state- and district-defined standards prior to graduation.

Students who receive services from the special education program will be granted a diploma based on satisfactory completion of a course of study which meets graduation requirements through general education courses, general education courses with accommodations, general education courses with modifications, or through approved special education courses designed to meet their unique needs. Deviations from the graduation requirements defined in this policy shall be determined by the Individual Educational Program (IEP) team, based on the student's individual needs, and specifically outlined in the IEP document.

Beginning with the class of 2008, students must meet the standards required for the following courses or provide evidence of competence (see specific courses marked with *) to be eligible for graduation. In addition, all students must complete a culminating project; create a plan that outlines how they will use high school to prepare for their career objectives; and earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement, or a Certificate of Individual Achievement for students in special education programs.

GRADUATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS – CLASSES OF 2007-2011		
Subject	Credits	Content
English	3.5	<i>English 9 and 10</i> , and other courses in reading, writing, and communication
Mathematics	2.0	Courses including concepts of algebra, geometry, statistics, measurement, and number sense
Science	2.0	Courses including concepts of earth, life, and physical sciences
Social Studies	3.0	<i>Washington and the World, World Geography, US History, World History, Citizenship</i>
Health and Fitness	2.0	<i>Health*</i> (.5) and <i>PE*</i> (1.5) courses
Arts	1.0	Visual and/or performing arts
Occupational Education	1.0	<i>Technology Connections*</i> (.5) and other Occupational Education course (.5)
Electives	8.5	
Total Required	23	

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GRADUATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS – CLASS OF 2012		
Subject	Credits	Content
English	4.0	<i>English 9 and 10</i> , and other courses in reading, writing, and communication
Mathematics	2.0	Courses including concepts of algebra, geometry, statistics, measurement, and number sense
Science	2.0	Courses including concepts of earth, life, and physical sciences
Social Studies	3.0	<i>Washington and the World, World Geography, US History, World History, Citizenship</i>
Health and Fitness	2.0	<i>Health*</i> (.5) and <i>PE*</i> (1.5) courses
Arts	1.0	Visual and/or performing arts
Occupational Education	1.0	<i>Technology Connections*</i> (.5) and other Occupational Education course (.5)
Electives	8.0	
Total Required	23	

GRADUATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS – CLASS OF 2013		
Subject	Credits	Content
English	4.0	<i>English 9 and 10</i> , and other courses in reading, writing, and communication
Mathematics	3.0	Students must earn three (3) credits in mathematics through Algebra II and meet state minimum proficiency standards in math as demonstrated on state assessments/ requirements. Students who do not pass the WASL are required to take math through their senior year or through Algebra II and meet state minimum proficiency in math as demonstrated on state assessments/requirements.
Science	2.0	Courses including concepts of earth, life, and physical sciences
Social Studies	3.0	<i>Washington and the World, World Geography, US History, World History, Citizenship</i>
Health and Fitness	2.0	<i>Health*</i> (.5) and <i>PE*</i> (1.5) courses
Arts	1.0	Visual and/or performing arts
Occupational Education	1.0	Courses that fulfill the Occupational Education requirement
Electives	7.0	
Total Required	23	

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GRADUATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS – CLASS OF 2014 AND BEYOND		
Subject	Credits	Content
English	4.0	<i>English 9 and 10</i> , and other courses in reading, writing, and communication
Mathematics	3.0	Students must earn three (3) credits in mathematics through Algebra II and meet state minimum proficiency standards in math as demonstrated on state assessments/ requirements. Students who do not pass the WASL are required to take math through their senior year or through Algebra II and meet state minimum proficiency in math as demonstrated on state assessments/requirements.
World Language	2.0	Students must earn two (2) credits in the same language e.g., two years of Spanish, French, German, etc.
Science	2.0	Courses including concepts of earth, life, and physical sciences
Social Studies	3.0	<i>Washington and the World, World Geography, US History, World History, Citizenship</i>
Health and Fitness	2.0	<i>Health*</i> (.5) and <i>PE*</i> (1.5) courses
Arts	1.0	Visual and/or performing arts
Occupational Education	1.0	Courses that fulfill the Occupational Education requirement
Electives	5.0	
Total Required	23	

Students may request waivers to graduation requirements identified with an asterisk above – PE (up to 1.5 credit may be waived), Health, or Technology Connections. All students need knowledge and skills in these areas, but competency may be achieved in a variety of ways. The superintendent is directed to create a process by which students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in any of the competency subject areas. Students who demonstrate competency will have this graduation requirement waived, enabling them to select another course to complete the total number of credits required for graduation.

Students who transfer into the Bellingham School District from another school or district will have their transcript reviewed upon entry into the district. Any adjustments in the number of credits required for graduation will be documented on the official transcript.

Legal Reference: WAC 180-51-050

Approved: November 18, 2003

Revised: April 26, 2007