
HOUSE BILL 2706

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Hunter, Sommers, Tom, Anderson, Talcott, Quall, McIntire, Dunn, Green, Kenney and Lantz

Read first time 01/12/2006. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring a more rigorous curriculum for high
2 school graduation; amending RCW 28A.230.010 and 28A.230.090; adding a
3 new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that, although
6 students are being expected to meet higher academic standards as
7 defined by the essential academic learning requirements, there is still
8 a gap between what is required for high school graduation and the
9 knowledge and skills students need to be successful in college or work.
10 This gap has been confirmed by independent analysis by such
11 organizations as Achieve. To assure that a high school diploma
12 reflects adequate preparation for the intellectual demands of adult
13 life, the legislature intends to create the expectation that all
14 students enroll in a recommended high school program that includes a
15 rigorous curriculum of study in English, mathematics, science, social
16 studies, and an academic or career and technical concentration.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.010 and 2003 c 49 s 1 are each amended to read
18 as follows:

1 School district boards of directors shall identify and offer
2 courses with content that meet or exceed: (1) The basic education
3 skills identified in RCW 28A.150.210; (2) the minimum graduation
4 requirements under RCW 28A.230.090; (3) the recommended high school
5 program under section 4 of this act; (4) the courses required to meet
6 the minimum college entrance requirements under RCW 28A.230.130; and
7 (~~(4)~~) (5) the course options for career development under RCW
8 28A.230.130. Such courses may be applied or theoretical, academic, or
9 vocational.

10 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 2005 c 205 s 3 are each amended to
11 read as follows:

12 (1) The state board of education shall establish minimum high
13 school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students.

14 (a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to
15 fulfill high school graduation requirements shall consider including
16 information on the culture, history, and government of the American
17 Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

18 (b) The certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW
19 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements
20 under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high
21 school but are not the only requirements for graduation.

22 (c) Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's
23 high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan
24 shall remain at the local level.

25 (2) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of
26 education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation
27 requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the
28 graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the
29 legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

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

1 (4) If requested by the student and his or her family, a student
2 who has completed high school courses before attending high school
3 shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling
4 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) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school
16 courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall
17 not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform
18 any other additional assignment to receive credit.

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

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 (1) Beginning with the class of students entering ninth grade in
24 the 2008-09 school year, each school district shall offer the following
25 recommended high school program in which every student shall enroll:

26 (a) At least four credits of English with the content and
27 performance standards of college-preparatory English that emphasize
28 reading, writing, and presentation skills;

29 (b) At least four credits of mathematics, including at least
30 algebra II and geometry or their equivalents plus a higher-level
31 mathematics course designed to prepare students for postsecondary
32 studies so they can avoid remedial college mathematics;

33 (c) At least three credits of science that includes laboratory
34 experience in biology, chemistry, physics or applied physics, or
35 anatomy/physiology;

36 (d) At least three credits of social studies that emphasize reading

1 and writing and covering United States history and government; world
2 history, government, and contemporary issues; and Washington state
3 history and government;

4 (e) At least one-half credit or demonstrated proficiency in
5 computer technology and applications beyond basic keyboarding; and

6 (f) At least four credits in an academic or career and technical
7 concentration where the student chooses electives in a coherent
8 sequence through guidance and counseling and based on the student's
9 interests and aspirations.

10 (2) Students who complete the recommended high school program under
11 this section shall also complete any high school graduation
12 requirements established under RCW 28A.230.090 or established by the
13 school district that exceed the recommended high school program in
14 order to earn a high school diploma.

15 (3) At the written request of a student's parent or legal guardian,
16 a student may be exempted from enrolling in the recommended high school
17 program under this section and may instead complete the minimum high
18 school graduation requirements established under RCW 28A.230.090 plus
19 any additional requirements established by the school district to earn
20 a high school diploma. In addition to the written request, a school
21 district may require a student's parent or legal guardian to meet with
22 the student's counselor or other school staff to discuss whether the
23 student will achieve greater educational benefits by completing the
24 recommended high school program or the minimum requirements for high
25 school graduation.

26 (4) A student who has an individualized education program pursuant
27 to the federal individuals with disabilities education act is exempt
28 from the requirements of this section unless the recommended high
29 school program is provided for in the student's individualized
30 education program.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The higher education coordinating board
32 shall review minimum admissions standards for four-year institutions of
33 higher education and make recommendations to the legislature by
34 December 1, 2006, regarding when the minimum admissions standards
35 should include completion of the recommended high school program under

1 section 4 of this act.

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