

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 2110

C 66 L 24

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Reorganizing statutory requirements governing high school graduation.

Sponsors: Representatives Nance, Simmons, Callan, Lekanoff and Reeves.

House Committee on Education

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Background:

Overview of Graduation Requirements.

The purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner. To qualify for a high school diploma, public school students must satisfy credit and subject area requirements established by the Legislature and the State Board of Education (SBE), fulfill any locally established requirements, complete a High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP), and meet the requirements of at least one graduation pathway option.

Although graduation requirements are largely developed at the state level and subject to frequent revisions, determinations about student compliance with requirements are made at the school district level.

Credit and Subject Area Requirements.

Graduating students must complete 24 credits in specified subject areas. Although the SBE adopts rules to implement the credit requirements, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction adopts the state's learning standards that guide the content of courses offered to students.

Of the 24 required credits, 17 are in core subject areas, for example, English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science. The remaining seven credits are more flexible: four are elective credits and three are personalized pathways credits determined by the student's

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interests and their HSBP. In limited circumstances, waivers for credit and subject area requirements can be granted to students.

The Legislature has also mandated instruction in specific subjects, examples of which include: cardiopulmonary resuscitation; AIDS prevention; comprehensive sexual health education; the constitutions of the United States and Washington; and civics in the form of a stand-alone course for high school students.

High School and Beyond Plans.

Each student must complete an HSBP. The purpose of the HSBP is to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school.

The HSBP is initiated for students in grade 7 through the administration of a career interest and skills inventory. The HSBP must contain specific elements prescribed in statute, including: the identification of career goals and interests; an academic plan for course taking; and evidence that the student has received certain financial aid program information. The HSBP must be updated annually to review academic progress and inform future course taking, and revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs.

In addition to statutory requirements, school districts may establish local HSBP requirements that serve the needs and interests of their students.

Graduation Pathways.

Graduation pathway requirements began application with the graduating class of 2020. The intent of the pathway options is to provide students with multiple ways to demonstrate readiness in furtherance of their goals for high school and beyond. Students may choose one or more of nine pathway options, most of which are credit or assessment based, but any selected option must align with the student's HSBP.

School districts are encouraged to make all pathway options available to their students, and to expand their options until that goal is met, but school districts have discretion to determine which pathway options they offer.

Summary:

Numerous organizational and technical revisions are made to graduation requirement provisions without modifying the requirements or the related school district and state agency duties and authorizations. Examples of the nonsubstantive changes include consolidating graduation requirements into a specific statutory chapter, making grade and other references more consistent, and removing expired language.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 97 0

Senate 46 0

Effective: June 6, 2024