



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: April 29, 2020
FROM: Denise Juneau, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Dr. Diane DeBacker, Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Caleb Perkins, Executive Director of College and Career Readiness, Emily Harrison, Project Manager for College and Career Readiness
For Introduction: April 29, 2020
For Action: April 29, 2020

1. TITLE

Authorizing Board Resolution No. 2019/20-33 to Suspend Local Graduation Requirements and Support the Suspension of State Graduation Requirements, and Suspending Provisions of Board Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report authorizes Board Resolution No. 2019/20-33 to suspend local graduation requirements and support the suspension of state graduation requirements for high school seniors during the COVID-19 school closure in the second semester of the 2019-20 school year, and suspends relevant provisions in Board Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements, so that students can graduate without being penalized for circumstances beyond their control. The State has authorized the waiving of state graduation requirements in House Bill 2965.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board authorize the attached Board Resolution, and temporarily suspend identified provisions of Board Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements, for high school seniors during the COVID-19 school closure. Immediate action is in the best interest of the district.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

State Response to School Closures Necessitated by COVID-19:

The State Legislature passed and the Governor signed HB 2965 ([linked here](#)). The bill authorizes school districts in Washington to waive state graduation credit requirements for seniors who were on track to graduate on time before schools were closed. The relevant section of the bill is included here:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. (1)(a) Recognizing that schools and districts throughout Washington have different needs and resources to respond to the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, within existing resources, the state board of education may administer an emergency waiver program to grant local education agencies and private schools flexibility so that *students in the graduating class of 2020 or earlier who were on track to graduate before the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February*

29, 2020, and any subsequent amendments to that proclamation, *are not negatively impacted* by measures taken by the local education agency or private school in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). (b) Consistent with the intent of the emergency waiver program, the state board of education may adopt rules to allow: (i) School districts, charter schools established under chapter 28A.710 RCW, and tribal compact schools operated according to the terms of state-tribal education compacts authorized under chapter 28A.715 RCW to apply to the state board of education for a waiver of high school graduation requirements or equivalencies established under RCW 28A.230.090 for students in the graduating class of 2020 or earlier who cannot meet the statewide minimum credit and subject area graduation requirements due to school closures related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The state board of education may approve waivers that meet criteria including demonstration of a good faith effort to address core course requirements and credit deficiencies through other mechanisms; and (ii) The state board of education to waive provisions relating to the number of instructional hours, the number of school days, credit based graduation requirements, and other provisions for the 2019-20 school year for private schools established under chapter 28A.195 RCW that close due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)..

The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) then adopted emergency rules around an emergency waiver for districts in response to COVID-19 on April 8th, 2020 and has already launched the application for districts. Per the SBE, to get the waiver, districts will need to complete the application and demonstrate a good faith effort to help students meet core course requirements and address credit deficiencies. Districts that receive the waiver will have the authority to waive credits on an individual basis for seniors who were on track to graduate by the end of the school year. Summer term is included in the school year, and students may waive planned summer credit recovery courses if the summer term is cancelled due to COVID-19.

The following is a key excerpt from the [SBE rules](#) finalized on April 8th. It addresses the waiver that SPS will offer to its students.

SBE Rule Excerpt:

(2) Waived credit graduation requirements

(a) Waived credit graduation requirements are limited to credits a student would have had the opportunity to earn by the end of the 2019-20 school year including:

(i) courses and other credit-earning opportunities the student was enrolled in as of February 29, 2020, and

(ii) credits that the student planned to complete by the end of the 2019-20 school year as defined in RCW 28A.150.203 for terms not yet started as of February 29, 2020, that were scheduled to occur during the period of school closure due to the novel coronavirus. These planned credits must be indicated on the student's high school and beyond plan, in course registration records, or in the student's credit attainment or recovery plan.

(b) Waived graduation requirement credits may include both core credit graduation requirements and flexible credit graduation requirements, as defined in WAC 180-51-210.¹

¹ Note from SPS: To see the list of core and flexible credits, please click [here](#). Note that this is a link to the requirements for the Class of 2018, because Seattle Public Schools

(3) This 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.

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

(5) Each local education agency shall maintain a record of courses and requirements waived as part of the individual student record and shall report to the state board of education in a manner determined by the state board of education.

(6) The local education agency shall consider equity in administering the emergency waiver under this section. This consideration should be designed to identify and mitigate potential disparate impacts of the emergency waiver and to determine if any changes to the local education agency's approach in administering the emergency waiver are needed before the conclusion of the 2019-20 school year.

SPS Response to HB 2965:

In response to HB 2965 and the SBE rules for the waivers referenced in this law, staff have worked with Superintendent Juneau to submit SPS's Application for Emergency Waiver of Credit Based Graduation Requirements. The waiver allows schools to apply to the district to waive state credit based graduation requirements for individual students in the Class of 2020 and prior classes. Per rules from the SBE, students will be eligible to waive any credits that they would have had the opportunity to earn prior to the end of the 2019-20 school year. SPS will develop a process for waiving these credits, and students will be able to graduate on time if they were on track to graduate prior to school closures. The Department of College and Career Readiness is working closely with school counselors to determine which students were on track, and school counselors will develop final lists of students eligible for the Emergency Waiver.

SPS Request for a Board Resolution to Waive Graduation Requirements:

Although nothing in the emergency rules requires a board resolution, and district school boards do not have to pass a resolution to implement the emergency waiver process, the Washington State School Directors' Association does recommend that every school board pass a resolution authorizing the waiving of state graduation requirements. Therefore, Seattle Public Schools is requesting that our School Board pass such a resolution, to show support for the suspension of graduation requirements under these extenuating circumstances.

Seattle Public Schools also requests that the resolution allow for the district-wide waiving of local graduation requirements. SPS has a number of local graduation requirements above and beyond OSPI graduation requirements, which cannot be waived using the Emergency Waiver. Although there is a long-standing process in place for the district to waive these requirements for individual students, staff request that the School Board pass a resolution authorizing the

received permission to delay implementation of the 24 credit graduation requirements for two years. The Class of 2021 is the first class at SPS that will be subject to the 24 credit graduation requirement.

Superintendent to waive the local requirements at the district level, for all seniors. Requiring schools to process individual waivers for these local requirements while also processing Emergency Waivers for individual students would be extremely challenging and time consuming. Uncompleted local requirements will be waived, either at a district level or at the student level, and students and staff who are already struggling to respond to school closures would benefit greatly from not having to fill out requests to waive local requirements.

Note that some SPS local requirements are part of policy, which is why a board resolution is necessary. HB 2965 specifies that local graduation requirements may be waived at local discretion without permission from the SBE. SPS local requirements are as follows:

- Service Learning (This is part of Board Policy No. 2415.)
- The 21st credit (The State requires only 20 credits for the Class of 2020 and previous classes. Again, this is part of Board Policy No. 2415.)
- .5 CTE credit (Not a part of any Board policy, but is documented as a graduation requirement in SPS’s Graduation Bulletin.)
- World History 1 (Can be replaced with any Social Studies elective credit. Not a part of any Board policy, but is documented as a graduation requirement in SPS’s Graduation Bulletin.)
- Language Arts 9, 10, 11 and 12 (Can be replaced with any other Language Arts credits that meets state standards for content. Not a part of any Board policy, but is documented as a graduation requirement in SPS’s Graduation Bulletin.)

Finally, Seattle Public Schools also requests that the resolution allow for the district-wide waiving of school-based graduation requirements. A few high schools in our district have requirements like additional credits or senior projects. There is a long-standing process in place for these requirement to be waived for individual students, but given that circumstances may be preventing the majority of students at those schools from completing the requirements, it would be cumbersome to require schools to initiate waivers for individual students.

Approach to Longstanding State Waivers:

Unrelated to COVID-19, the State has existing waivers for the following graduation requirements:

- WA State History
- PE (Up to 1.5 credits may be waived. Generally, students must take the PE Classroom Based Assessment even if they waive PE credits. However, as part of the emergency response to COVID-19, OSPI has suspended the PE Classroom Based Assessment for this school year, so seniors who waive PE do not need to take that exam.)

As these requirements are not a part of the Emergency Waiver, SPS is not asking the School Board to make any statement about them in the requested board resolution. Staff will continue to waive these requirements as needed for individual students using the existing process.

Summary of Graduation Requirements and Approach to Waivers of those Requirements:

What is SPS’s first plan for having seniors stay	For which requirements will seniors apply for individual	For which requirements is the state allowing	For which requirements are we asking the Board for the	For which requirements are we asking the Supt for permission to	How are we addressing other requirements? (e.g., High
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on track to graduate?	waivers from the state per HB 2965?	general waivers?	permission to issue blanket waivers?	issue blanket waivers?	School and Beyond Planning, 1599 Pathway)
Support students to stay engaged in their courses and earn the credits to the extent possible.	On track students may apply to waive any of the following credits if they planned to earn them by the end of the school year: -4 ELA -3 math -2 science -3 social studies -1 arts -2 health and fitness -1 occ. ed. -4 electives. Click here for more details.	-Washington State history -PE	-Service learning -21 st credit	-additional 0.5 CTE credit -World History 1 (This specific course can be replaced with any Social Studies elective course.) -ELA 9, 10, 11, 12 (These specific courses can be replaced with any other ELA courses that meet standards.)	-HSBP: There are resources in Naviance. In addition, staff are developing a HSBP course in Schoology. HSBP may not be waived. -1599 Pathway: staff will guide students on how to get the expedited waiver if they have not already completed a 1599 pathway.

Statement on the Continuation of Learning:

Although the Department of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction (CAI) appreciates the flexibility offered by the Emergency Waiver, and all of the pre-existing waivers authorized by the State and SPS, nothing in this Board Action Report should be understood to imply that staff do not want students to complete as many graduation requirements as they can through remote learning. CAI will proceed with the plan to ensure that seniors have meaningful opportunities to earn credits, in alignment with our values as a district, and per guidance in HB 2965 to provide a good faith effort to engage students in learning during the school closure. School counselors have already attempted to reach out to every high school senior, to check in on their wellness, and to see if they have the technology they need to learn remotely. As of April 20th, 2020, SPS has distributed laptops to 339 seniors in need. In addition, SPS had already provided laptops to all students, including seniors, at Cleveland, Franklin, Chief Sealth, & Rainier Beach, during the 1:1 rollout of technology that began this year. Between repurposing laptops already owned by the district and ordering new laptops, every senior who still needs one will be able to get one. SPS is also working with local business partners to secure internet access for all students who need it, including high school seniors.

Why a Board Resolution on Waiving Graduation Requirements is Recommended:

At a Board meeting in March, the School Board passed a resolution related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most applicable part of that resolution is the following:

“NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Seattle School Board hereby suspends provisions of its board policies and/or whole policies, as identified by the District Superintendent or designee, if such suspension is necessary to implement written guidance from OSPI relating to containing COVID-19 for the duration identified in the Governor’s order of March 13, 2020 and a subsequent order of school closure, if any.”

Although the resolution gives the Superintendent broad authority, it does not specifically address the waiving of local and state graduation requirements referenced in this BAR. The resolution from March 18 refers to written guidance from *OSPI* pertaining to containing COVID-19, and the waiver of state graduation requirements comes from *SBE*. Although SBE and OSPI are distinct departments under the State of Washington, they are not the same, so the March resolution does not apply. Also, the Emergency Waiver does not waive local graduation requirements, only state requirements. For both of those reasons, and because WSSDA recommends it, SPS’s legal department recommends that the School Board adopt the attached board resolution to waive state and local graduation requirements. Please note that the School Board does not need to authorize the Emergency Waiver, but staff are requesting support for the Emergency Waiver in the form of the attached proposed resolution.

b. Alternatives

The main alternative is to reject the proposed resolution. A resolution on the Emergency Waiver of state graduation requirements is not required by the SBE. If the resolution is rejected, SPS will still waive state graduation requirements for individual students, and staff will also waive the local and school graduation requirements for individual students. This alternative is not recommended, because a district-wide waiver of local requirements would benefit both school counselors and seniors. Counselors will be able to spend their time meeting with individual students and advising them about the pros and cons of waiving state graduation requirements. Students will be able to spend their time completing their spring semester courses and preparing for college and/or careers.

c. Research

The Department of Research and Evaluation pulled data on senior credit earning, to be used as a proxy for estimating on-track rates. Note that students need to earn 20 credits to meet state graduation requirements and 21 credits to meet local graduation requirements, and that those credits need to be in specific subjects/courses. This analysis only looks at credit earning as a whole, not credits in required subjects, as that is a very complicated analysis that would require coordination across content areas. Accordingly, determinations of whether or not students are on track must be done by counselors for individual students.

On March 16th, 2020, there were just over 4,000 high school seniors enrolled in SPS (includes Class of 2020, and students repeating 12th grade). Just over 2,700 students had already earned at least 21 credits, meaning that they had earned enough credits to meet state and local graduation requirements. Nearly 700 students had at least 18 credits, but less than 21, meaning that if they passed their courses this semester, they would have enough credits to graduate. Over 400 students had fewer than 18 credits, and would need to recover credits in order to graduate in June. The district is working diligently to ensure that all of these students can continue to earn

credits this semester and meet state and local graduation requirements, but it seems likely that hundreds of students will need the Emergency Waiver and the local waiver in order to graduate in June.

Research and Evaluation also provided disaggregated data for Students of Color Furthest From Educational Justice (SoCFFEJ), and African American males. There are over 1,700 SoCFFEJ in this year's graduating class, and over 1,000 have already earned at least 21 credits. Just over 300 have at least 18 credits, but less than 21, and nearly 300 have fewer than 18 credits. There are just under 400 African American males in the senior class. Nearly half have already earned 21 credits, about 80 have earned at least 18 credits but less than 21, and nearly 100 have fewer than 18 credits. Percentagewise, SoCFFEJ generally, and African American males in particular, are less likely than other students to have already earned all of the credits needed to graduate, and thus more likely to use the waivers.

After schools closed, school counselors made attempts to call all 4,000 seniors, and were able to reach over 2,700. Counselors asked students about their wellness, found out if they needed laptops and/or internet in order to complete their coursework, and also looked through their transcripts to determine which classes they still needed to pass in order to meet graduation requirements. They found that more students need Language Arts 12 than any other class, followed closely by US Government. This suggests that these classes will be most likely to be waived under the Emergency Waiver, if students are not able to complete them.

Schools will be required to report to the district on which students ultimately use the Emergency Waiver, and what credits those students waive. Staff will collect this data to share with the School Board and with the State, and will provide disaggregated data on African American males and SoCFFEJ.

SPS does not pull data on local graduation waivers into the ATLAS student data database. Therefore, staff are not able to provide any estimates on the number of students who have waived local graduation requirements in recent years, or on which requirements they are waiving.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

School counselors, similar to each year, will need to spend time meeting with students regarding waivers and then completing the paperwork necessary for those waivers. It is expected this will be done within current work time. Some additional costs will be incurred by staff in the Department of College and Career Readiness to prepare guidance and forms, this is estimated to be less than \$10,000 of staff time, and is within current funding and staffing.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District's Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

CAI has met multiple times with principals, counselors, and academic intervention specialists to discuss how to support seniors through the school closure. School staff are supportive of the Emergency Waiver, and want to provide as much flexibility to students as possible, so that they can graduate as planned and enter college and/or career. A high school principal suggested the idea of a district-wide waiver for local graduation requirements, and his idea received support from many other school principals, as well as CAI staff.

After schools closed, school counselors made attempts to call all 4,000 seniors, and were able to reach over 2,700. Counselors asked students about their wellness, found out if they needed laptops and/or internet in order to complete their coursework, and also looked through their transcripts to determine which classes they still needed to pass in order to meet graduation requirements, and if they would be eligible for the waiver. Many counselors used these calls as an opportunity to let students know that waivers would be available to help them graduate as planned. In a second round of calls, all students who are eligible for an Emergency Waiver will talk with their counselors about the pros and cons of waiving required credits, and will be able to make informed decisions. No students will be forced to use the waiver. Students who choose not to use the Emergency Waiver will be able to earn the credits through summer school if summer school can be held, and/or by returning to school in the fall to complete their coursework.

In addition, SPS has posted a Class of 2020 FAQ to the district website, which includes information on waiving graduation requirements. Emails were sent out to families to direct them to this FAQ.

And finally, SPS is making plans to provide additional supports to seniors of color, supports that will go above and beyond those that can be offered by school staff. The Department of African American Male Achievement is reaching out to African American boys to see what they need to succeed this semester. The Department of Equity, Partnerships, and Engagement is working to partner with local community organizations like Africatown, the Somali Parent Education Board, and Somali Mother's Group, as well as the City of Seattle, to reach out to and engage SoCFFEJ. The hope is that these groups will be able to offer social, emotional, nutritional, and perhaps even financial resources to seniors, so that they have the ability to keep learning throughout this crisis.

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

In developing the district's approach to graduation waivers, staff sought to understand how waiver options would impact students of color furthest from educational justice. Our analysis led us to articulate the following desired outcomes for SoCFFEJ:

- Waivers will have no negative impact, or the positive impact will outweigh any possible negative impact.
- Every student will be provided with the technology and other resources needed for remote learning.
- Students will be engaged by their teachers and other school staff, and will continue learning.
- Students will feel reassured that SPS staff are working to provide them the flexibility that they may need to graduate on time and pursue their postsecondary plans.
- Students will be supported and advised as they decide whether or not waive state graduation requirements.

District and school staff have already taken many steps to secure these outcomes for seniors, and will continue to do so until they graduate.

SPS's goal is that as few students of color as possible use the Emergency Waiver, not because they are denied access to the waiver, but because they are able to keep learning remotely, and earn credit in all of the courses that they are enrolled in this semester. The District is working diligently to get computers out to all high school seniors, so that they can continue with their learning. As of April 20, The Department of Technology Services (DoTS) has distributed laptops to 339 seniors, and students at Cleveland, Franklin, Chief Sealth, and Rainier Beach already had laptops through the 1:1 rollout of technology that began this year. Computers are going first to students in need of credit recovery, SoCFFEJ, AA males, students who live in Seattle Housing Authority, and students experiencing homelessness. It is expected that there will be enough laptops for all seniors who need them, but every day that a student waits for a laptop is a day of lost learning. DoTS is also working to get internet to these vulnerable students. Although SPS does not have official data on the number of students who need internet, national data suggests that families of color are less likely to have home broadband and more likely to rely on mobile phones to access the internet (Pew Research Center, 2019).

In order to better understand computer and internet usage amongst our students, DoTS and Research and Evaluation have been collecting data on Schoology log-ins by students post school closures. In the absence of data on how many students currently have access to computers and internet, Schoology log-ins can be seen as proxy data. Note that students may be able to access Schoology through their phones, but are likely not able to fully participate in remote learning using only their phones. Early analyses indicate that a large number of African American male students are not connecting with their teachers via Schoology. The overall percentage of students who have logged into Schoology since the school closure is 71.5% while the percentage for African American males is 60%. This number is expected to increase as more students receive laptops and internet access, and data on Schoology log-ins will be collected again.

The data on Schoology log-ins, taken together with the data on credit earning that is referenced above in the section on research, suggests that even with all of the academic and technological support that SPS can offer, many of our senior SoCFFEJ will not be able to earn all of the credits that they need in order to meet state graduation requirements, and will be eligible for the Emergency Waiver. SPS recognizes that there are both pros and cons to using the Emergency Waiver. Counselors will be trained to walk eligible seniors through those pros and cons, and to help them make the best possible decision. On the pro side, students who use the waiver will be able to carry on with their pre COVID-19 plans, whether that is attending a post-secondary

institution, doing an apprenticeship, joining the military, going straight to the workforce, etc. They will not be delayed, will not have to do summer credit recovery or return to high school for a second senior year, and will be able to graduate with their classmates. On the con side, students who use the waiver may miss important learning that they will need later on. They may start college or an apprenticeship lacking foundational skills or knowledge, and may need to pay for developmental coursework instead of taking credit-bearing courses as freshman. It is widely recognized that students who are placed into remedial courses are less likely to ultimately graduate from college, and that African American and Latino students are more likely to have to take developmental courses (EdSource, 2016). SPS does not want this for our graduates, nor do we want to hold our students back if they are ready to move on. Considered holistically, while there are some cons to providing waivers as an option, it is clear that they are outweighed by their main benefit: giving SoCFFEJ the ability to graduate and move on with their postsecondary plans. With these equity considerations in mind, it is anticipated that all districts in Washington will request the authority to grant these waivers

SPS is making plans to provide additional supports to seniors of color, supports that will go above and beyond those that can be offered by school staff. The Department of African American Male Achievement is reaching out to African American boys to see what they need to succeed this semester. The Department of Equity, Partnerships, and Engagement is working to partner with local community organizations like Africatown, the Somali Parent Education Board, and Somali Mother's Group, as well as the City of Seattle, to reach out to and engage SoCFFEJ. The hope is that these groups will be able to offer social, emotional, nutritional, and perhaps even financial resources to seniors, so that they have the ability to keep learning throughout this crisis.

CAI will collaborate with the Department of Research and Evaluation to collect data on which students are using the Emergency Waiver, and what credits they are waiving. SPS will also collect data on which seniors are able to earn credit for their spring semester courses. Data will be disaggregated to show credits earned and waivers used for all students, AA males, and SoCFFEJ.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

Students will benefit from the option of waiving credits required by the state, and from the districtwide waiver of local graduation requirements. With schools closed and students expected to learn remotely, there will be many challenges to credit earning. Students who were going to be able to graduate on time before the outbreak of COVID-19 should still be able to graduate and move on with their post-secondary plans. Students should not be held back because they don't have the technology they need to learn remotely, and/or are suffering from physical, emotional, or economic trauma caused by the virus that is impacting their ability to learn and complete coursework.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)

- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. _____, [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item
- Other: Board Resolution

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

This would result in the suspension of identified provisions in Board Policy No. 2415, as described above and as attached to this Board Action Report. The proposed Board Resolution and the suspension of identified provisions in Policy No. 2415 are consistent with the goals outlined in Board Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

N/A. This motion was not discussed in committee and will be brought to the School Board for introduction and action.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the identified provisions of Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements, will be suspended for high school seniors, as will local graduation requirements that are outlined in the SPS Graduation Bulletin. High school leaders, counselors, and teachers will be informed via email/School Leader Communicator. SPS will develop a process for approving waivers for individual students. All students and families will be informed that local graduation requirements have been waived. Counselors will reach out to the students/families who are eligible for the Emergency Waiver and advise them on the implications of using the waiver.

It is expected that SPS’s Emergency Waiver application will be approved by the SBE very quickly. The waiver expires on July 31st, 2020.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Proposed Board Resolution No. 2019/20-33 (for approval)
- Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements – provisions to be temporarily suspended during the COVID-19 school closure are crossed out (for reference)

**Seattle School District #1
Board Resolution**

Resolution No. 2019/20-33



A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Seattle, Washington to waive necessary graduation requirements for students of the graduating Class of 2020 who were on track to graduate prior to the response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

WHEREAS, Chapter 28A.320 RCW authorizes local school boards to govern their respective districts, including adopting, revising, and suspending local board policies;

WHEREAS, Chapter 28A.230.090 authorizes the State Board of Education to set graduation requirements and authorizes local districts to decide whether a student has met the graduation requirements;

WHEREAS, the Seattle School Board (“Board”) has adopted Policy No. 2415, High School Graduation Requirements, which establishes that the board established graduation requirements that at a minimum satisfy those established by the State Board of Education (“SBE”) and also exceed the requirements of the SBE by adding district requirements and permitting schools to add requirements pursuant to following a waiver approval process;

WHEREAS, sections 10 through 12, chapter 7, Laws of 2020 (EHB 2965) authorized the State Board of Education to administer an emergency waiver program expiring on July 31, 2020, which is separate from, and in addition to, the school, district, and state requirements that may be waived as detailed in the Graduation Requirements Bulletins that Policy No. 2415 requires to be to annually created, posted, and distributed. The purpose of the emergency waiver program is to grant local school districts with flexibility so that students in the graduating Class of 2020 or earlier who were on track to graduate before the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, are not negatively impacted by the response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The emergency waiver may include both core credit graduation requirements and flexible credit graduation requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to ensure for any district students in the graduating Class of 2020 or earlier who were on track to graduate before the gubernatorial declaration of emergency and who would be negatively impacted by response to COVID-19, that the district comply with Chapter 180-111 WAC, which constitutes the State Board of Education’s emergency waiver program.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Seattle School Board of Directors hereby supports the application submitted by the Superintendent to the State Board of Education to implement a district emergency waiver program consistent with WAC 180-111 as the Superintendent or their designee determines appropriate. The district will demonstrate a good faith effort, as defined in

WAC 180-111-020, to help individual students meet credit-based graduation requirements through other options. The district will consult with the individual student, and make a reasonable effort to consult with a parent/guardian of the student, and will make a reasonable effort to provide information about this waiver in the preferred languages of the student, and of the parent/guardian of the student if applicable. This information includes what is being waived for the individual student, potential benefits and limitations that could result from receiving the waiver, including impacts on high school graduation and postsecondary plans, the option for the individual student to decline the waiver and for the student to be provided with the opportunity to earn the credits needed to complete graduation requirements through continued enrollment beyond the planned graduation date. The district will maintain a record of courses and requirements waived as part of the individual student record and will report to the State Board of Education.

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the district’s emergency waiver program, in addition to state credit-based graduation requirements, will also provide for the waiver of any and all school and district graduation requirements the Superintendent or their designee determines to be appropriate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that execution of this Resolution is conclusive evidence of the Board’s approval of this action and of the authority granted herein. The Board warrants that it has, and at the time of this action had, full power and lawful authority to adopt this instrument. This resolution expires in tandem with WAC 180-111, which is July 31, 2020, and the force of the resolution sunsets on that day.

Adopted and approved this _____ day of _____, 2020

Zachary DeWolf, President

Chandra N. Hampson, Vice President

Leslie Harris, Member-at-Large


Brandon K. Hersey

Eden Mack

Liza Rankin

Lisa Rivera-Smith

ATTEST: _____
Denise Juneau, Superintendent
Secretary, Board of Directors
Seattle School District No. 1
King County, WA

	<p>HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS</p>	<p>Policy No. 2415 March 11, 2020 Page 1 of 3</p>
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It is the policy of the Seattle School Board that ~~in addition to meeting all graduation requirements set forth by the State of Washington,~~ all District high school students meet the following requirements in order to graduate:

1. ~~Students in the Class of 2020 or earlier must have a minimum of 21 credits in order to graduate, which is one credit more than the state requirement.~~ Per state law, students in the Class of 2021 and beyond must earn 24 credits, but districts may put a policy in place to waive up to two of those credits. The Seattle School Board authorizes this two credit waiver for individual students, based on their circumstances. Credits defined by the State Board of Education as foundational/mandatory core credits may not be waived. The Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee is directed to develop a waiver process for this two credit waiver, which will be outlined in the *K-12 School Counseling Manual*.
2. Students are urged to examine their post-high school plans, and to take the appropriate credits that will allow them to achieve their postgraduate goals. Additionally, students are encouraged to gain proficiency in many areas of the curriculum.
3. ~~Individual schools may require additional credits for graduation; to do so, the school must receive a written waiver from the designated Director of Schools, the Chief Academic Officer, and the Superintendent.~~
4. ~~The Board recognizes the importance and is supportive of community service by requiring students to participate in service-learning activities, which are jointly developed by the District and school sites. Students are required to complete 60 hours of service learning before graduation.~~

Students Completing the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program

Beginning in Fall 2011, students who fulfill the requirements of an international baccalaureate (IB) program are considered to have met state high school graduation standards, so long as:

1. ~~The student meets state graduation requirements;~~
2. The student meets the provision regarding study of the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of

- Washington; and
3. ~~The student meets all graduation requirements required by Seattle Public Schools or by the student's school that are in addition to state minimum requirements, unless those requirements are waived by the student's principal or designee. Fulfilling the requirements of an international baccalaureate program means the student has:~~
 - A. Completed and passed all required IB courses as scored by the school;
 - B. Passed all internal assessments as scored by the school;
 - C. Successfully completed all required projects and products as scored by the school; and
 - D. Completed the final examinations administered by the international baccalaureate organization in each of the required subjects under the IB diploma program.

~~A student and his/her parent or guardian will be required to sign the "International Baccalaureate Option Form" indicating that the student and family understand that the waiver from state minimum graduation requirements only applies for students who fulfill the requirements of the IB program; should a student fail to meet the requirements, or if a student leaves the program prior to completion, he or she may be required to fulfill state and Seattle Public Schools minimum graduation requirements.~~

Graduation and Participation in Commencement

1. Students must be enrolled and attending a school for the semester immediately preceding graduation to be eligible to graduate from that school. Students who are participating in Running Start or who have properly obtained dual-enrollment in another school district or approved program may graduate from their affiliated District high school.
2. A student must have met ~~all~~ state graduation requirements or fulfilled the requirements of the International Baccalaureate program, ~~and have met or waived all District graduation requirements,~~ in order to participate in commencement, unless the student has a right to participate in commencement as a matter of state or federal law.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee(s) shall annually create, post, and distribute a *Graduation Requirements Bulletin* for each graduating class detailing all graduation requirements, including requirements set forth by the State of Washington, a breakdown of the areas in which students must earn credit, and a process by which district and state requirements may be waived. The *Graduation Requirements Bulletin* and the *K-12 School Counseling Manual* serve as the administrative procedures to further implement this Policy.

Adopted: February 2012

Revised: March 2020; November 2017; January 2017; June 2014; August 2013

Cross Reference: 2420; K-12 Counseling Services Manual, Graduation Requirements Bulletin

Related Superintendent Procedure: N/A

Previous Policies: C15.00, G10.00

Legal Reference: RCW 28A.155.045 Certificate of individual achievement; RCW 28A.230 Compulsory Coursework and Activities; RCW 28A.230.090 High school graduation requirements or equivalencies - Reevaluation of graduation requirements — Review and authorization of proposed changes — Credit for courses taken before attending high school — Postsecondary credit equivalencies; RCW 28A.230.120 High school diplomas — Issuance — Option to receive final transcripts — Notice; RCW 28A.230.170 Study of constitutions compulsory - Rules; 28A.320 Provisions applicable to all districts; ; RCW 28A.600.300-400 Running start program; RCW 28A.635.060 Defacing or injuring school property — Liability of pupil, parent or guardian — Withholding grades, diploma, or transcripts — Suspension and restitution — Voluntary work program as alternative — Rights protected; RCW 28A.655.061 High school assessment system — Certificate of academic achievement requirements — Exemptions — Options to retake high school assessment — Objective alternative assessment — Student learning plans;; WAC 180-51 High school graduation requirements; WAC 392-121-182 Alternative Learning Experience Requirements; WAC 392-169 Special service programs - Running Start program; WAC 392-348 Secondary Education; WAC 392-410 Courses of studies and equivalencies; ESHB 1412
Management Resource: *Policy News*, June 2013, June 2012