



# **SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT**

**DATE:** December 11, 2018  
**FROM:** Denise Juneau, Superintendent  
**LEAD STAFF:** ~~Michael Tolley~~ Diane DeBacker, Chief Academic Officer, ~~mftolley~~ dmdebacker@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-001780; Kyle Kinoshita, Chief of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction, kdkinoshita@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-0050; Caleb Perkins, Director of Career and College Readiness; cbperkins@seattleschools.org, (206) 252-0062

**For Introduction:** January 9, 2019  
**For Action:** ~~January 23~~ February 27 May 15, 2019

## **1. TITLE**

Amending Board Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking Policy

## **2. PURPOSE**

This Board Action Report makes edits to Board Policy No. 2420 for the following reasons:

- a. To bring the policy into alignment with proposed changes to Superintendent Procedure 2024SP, Online Learning, regarding out-of-district high school credits for middle school students.
- b. To align with a change in required state tests for which students can earn high school credits;
- c. To bring grade level promotion criteria into alignment with the state 24 credit graduation requirement; and
- d. To align with current guidance on Running Start.

## **3. RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that the School Board amend Board Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking Policy, as attached to the Board Action Report.

## **4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **a. Background**

As noted in a separate Board Action Report regarding Policy No. 2024, changes are also planned for Superintendent Procedure 2024SP. Under those changes, middle school students enrolled in Seattle Public Schools will no longer be allowed to take out-of-district courses, including online courses, for high school credit beginning with summer term of the 2018-19 school year. Middle schools would still be able to offer alternative learning experiences like online classes for high school credit, if middle school staff oversaw the instruction, and the middle school administration consulted with the department of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction prior to offering the course. Therefore, Section 2B in Board Policy No. 2420, concerning high school credits for

middle school students, needs to be revised to align with proposed changes to Superintendent Procedure 2024SP, Online Learning.

In addition, given changes to state testing requirements in Math, English Language Arts, and Science, Section 2C in Policy 2420 needs to be updated. Policy 2420 currently specifies the names of tests which are no longer used, and should be changed to refer more generically to required state assessments.

Due to changes in state graduation requirements, which apply to Seattle Public Schools Students in the class of 2021 and beyond, Section 3 on promotion criteria also needs to be revised. Students need to earn 24 credits to graduate, which means that they should be promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> grade when they earn 6 credits, to 11<sup>th</sup> grade when they earn 12 credits, and to 12<sup>th</sup> grade when they earn 18 credits. In this way, they will be on track to finish 12<sup>th</sup> grade with the 24 required credits.

Finally, based on minor changes in guidance on Running Start, Section 5 also needs to be updated.

b. **Alternatives**

Do not approve these policy changes, which is not recommended, as it would lead to a misalignment with state policies and Superintendent Procedure 2024SP.

c. **Research**

We have reviewed relevant guidance from OSPI and the State of Washington in developing the proposed changes in this policy (e.g., <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/ESHB2224.aspx>, <http://www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements/Requirement-Credits.aspx>). We have also consulted with a variety of stakeholders regarding the changes to high school credit for middle school students. Stakeholders include high school principals, counselors, and academic intervention specialists, middle school counselors, and secondary school directors.

5. **FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

There is no fiscal impact to this action.

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

After approval of the change, the new policy will be posted, and the changes will be made known to middle and high school staff.

## 7. **EQUITY ANALYSIS**

Regarding the technical changes to align with state policies, this motion was not put through a formal racial equity analysis.

However, regarding the changes to high school credits for middle school students who take out-of-district classes, equity was strongly considered. When students take out-of-district courses, they must pay for them. Students from lower income families may not be able to afford these classes, and thus lose out on one of the ways to earn high school credits while in middle school. By deciding not to award high school credit for these out-of-district classes, we are taking a step towards leveling the playing field for students from different income levels.

## 8. **STUDENT BENEFIT**

The change regarding preventing middle school students from earning credits for out-of-district courses would benefit students in that it would protect them from taking online classes that may not sufficiently prepare them for the rigors of high school work. High school principals who were involved in recommending this policy change noted that students often take online classes in middle school, then move into more advanced classes when they enter high school. Often, the online class has not prepared them for the higher level high school course, and they struggle to do well in that high school course.

The changes regarding high school credits for passing state assessments would provide students with updated options for meeting state graduation requirements in Math, English Language Arts, and Science.

The change regarding number of credits required for promotion would put students into alignment with current graduation requirements. This may encourage students to work hard to pass their classes, so that they may be promoted with their peers.

The change regarding Running Start would put students into alignment with current guidance.

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **10. POLICY IMPLICATION**

This would result in changes to Board Policy No. 2420 as described above. Please note that on May 7, 2019, Governor Inslee signed House Bill 1599 into law. The new legislation significantly changes graduation requirements for students in the Class of 2019 and beyond. In order to align with this new legislation, further changes will need to be made to Board Policy No. 2420, as well as other Board policies. Staff anticipates working with Board to develop and bring a Board Action Report with recommended changes to the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee as soon as possible.

#### **11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

This motion was discussed at the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee meeting on December 11, 2018. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward for approval by the full Board. College and Career Readiness staff updated the Policy between introduction and action to clarify the math courses that students may recover credits for under section 2C of the Policy.


#### **12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon approval of this motion, Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking Policy, will be amended and the new version of the policy will be posted online, as attached to this Board Action Report.

Changes within subsection 2(B)(c) regarding courses taken outside of Seattle Public Schools during the middle school grades will become effective beginning with the summer term of the 2018-19 school year, as stated in the attached policy. Per the Board's action on this BAR, language in the attached policy that is applicable only through the spring term of the 2018-19 school year will be removed following that term, and Policy No. 2420 will be reposted as updated.

#### **13. ATTACHMENTS**

- Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking Policy – (Clean with changes since Intro noted in tracked changes (for approval)
- Policy No. 2420, High School Grade and Credit Marking Policy - tracked changes (for reference)

	<b>HIGH SCHOOL GRADE &amp; CREDIT MARKING POLICY</b>	Policy No. 2420  DATE  Page 1 of 4
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It is the policy of the Seattle School Board that its high school students receive grades and credits in a manner that is understandable, accurate, and consistent across the District.

1. Grades

The District shall employ a uniform eleven-point weighted grading system at the high school level, awarding the following marks:

A    A-    B+    B    B-    C+    C    C-    D+    D    E

A “D” mark is the lowest passing grade; an “E” mark indicates failure. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall establish and post a Seattle School District Uniform Grading Scale, which details the corresponding percentage grade range for each of the eleven grade marks, with Honors courses receiving an additional .5 Quality Point and courses eligible to receive college credit from an accredited institution, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College in the High School and Running Start courses receiving an additional 1.0 Quality Point. The marks of “P”, “N”, “W”, and “I” may be used only under specific circumstances in the manner set forth in the Counseling Services Manual.

If a student retakes a course to attempt to earn a higher grade, the highest grade received will be counted towards the student's grade point average. However, a record of all classes taken, including the grades received, will remain on the student's transcript and the student will receive credit towards graduation for only one of the courses.

2. Credits

- A. Students will be awarded high school academic credit for successful completion of a specified unit of study. Successful completion of a specified unit of study means the following:

- a. Earning a passing grade in a district-approved course, according to the district's relevant grading policies or Counseling Services Manual provision; and/or
  - b. Demonstrating competency and proficiency; and/or
  - c. Successfully completing an established number of hours of any planned alternative instructional activities as determined by the district; and/or
  - d. Successfully meeting the credit-earning requirements specified in Superintendent Procedure 2024SP, Policy 2409, and/or Policy 2413.
- B. Students enrolled in middle school may earn high school credit for:**
- a. Courses taken at a District high school if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for middle school, and the course is on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list.
  - b. Courses taken at a District middle school that meets or exceeds the requirements for the same high school course and which are on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list. For a middle school course to be eligible as a course equivalent to a high school course, it must be taught by a teacher qualified to teach the course at the high school level. Middle schools that wish to offer alternative learning experiences, such as an online or computer based program at the high school level, overseen by school staff, must contact the Department of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction for approval. Only students who demonstrate mastery of content standards by earning a passing grade in a middle school course deemed equivalent to a high school course will be eligible for high school credit.
  - c. Courses taken outside of Seattle Public Schools during the middle school grades are subject to the following conditions:
    - Through the spring term of the 2018-19 school year:
      - Courses must be on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list. For courses from another district to count for high school credit in SPS they must already be on a student's transcript when they transfer to SPS or the transferring student/family must provide a transcript and verification of existing policy allowing this credit in their previous district. Students wishing to receive high school credit for online courses taken during middle school must gain approval through

the completion of an Equivalency Course of Study Form prior to enrolling in the course.

- Beginning with the summer term of the 2018-19 school year:
  - Courses already on a student's transcript when the student transfers to Seattle Public Schools, or for which the family provides a transcript and verification of existing policy allowing this credit from the student's previous district, may be added to the Seattle Public Schools transcript for high school credit. Families must follow the process referenced in the Counseling Services Manual.
  - Courses taken outside of Seattle Public Schools by actively enrolled students are subject to Superintendent Procedure 2024SP.

C. Students who meet the standard on state exams required for graduation or on a state approved graduation alternative may recover credit for previously failed courses in the following ways:

- a. Math: Students may recover one-half (.5) credit for a previously failed Algebra 1 (or equivalent) or Geometry (or equivalent) course 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade level mathematics course by meeting the graduation standard on the state summative assessment or a state approved graduation alternative. Students with Individual Education Plans may recover credit for alternative courses.
- b. Science: Starting with the class of 2021, students may recover one-half (.5) science credit for a previously failed 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade science course by meeting the graduation standard on the state summative assessment or a state approved graduation alternative.
- c. Language Arts: Students may recover one-half (.5) Language Arts credit for a previously failed 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade required Language Arts course by meeting the graduation standard on the state summative assessment or a state approved graduation alternative.
- d. In all of the situations outlined above unique course codes will be created and will substitute for a course that was previously failed. Failed courses remain on transcript.

### 3. Grade and Credit Changes

A grade and/or credit change can only be made by the teacher of record for the specific course at issue or by the Principal of the school where the course was taken and the change is being requested due to either a math error or bias. If the

student has left the school where the course at issue was taken, any grade and/or credit change by either the teacher of record or the Principal must be reviewed and approved with signature by a director of schools P-12.

#### 4. Promotion and Retention

High school grade level standing is determined by a combination of credit attainment and/or chronology and, in the case of Home Based Instruction students, age. After each semester, standing will be updated according to the following table:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Promotion Criteria</b>
Grade 9	Successful Promotion from 8 <sup>th</sup> , 0.00-5.99 credits
Grade 10	6.0-11.99 credits or completion of one year of high school
Grade 11	12-17.99 credits or completion of two years of high school
Grade 12	18* credits or completion of three years of high school.

\*15 credit promotion applies for students in the classes of 2016-2020. For students in the class of 2021 and beyond, senior promotion will occur when 18 credits have been earned.

Being placed at a given grade level does not eliminate the need to complete all local and state graduation requirements if a student is attempting to earn a diploma through Seattle Public Schools.

#### 5. High School Enrollment for Home Based Instruction Students

Students for whom a “Declaration of Intent to Home School” form is on file with Seattle Public School shall be enrolled in high school according to the following schedule:

- Freshman/9<sup>th</sup> grade if age 14 by August 31 of the year wishing to enroll
- Sophomore/10<sup>th</sup> grade if age 15 by August 31 of the year wishing to enroll
- Junior/11<sup>th</sup> grade if age 16 by August 31 of the year wishing to enroll
- Senior/12<sup>th</sup> grade if age 17 by August 31 of the year wishing to enroll

Students will be assigned the appropriate grade level during the enrollment process. Being placed at a given grade level does not eliminate the need to complete all graduation requirements if the student is attempting to earn a diploma through Seattle Public Schools.

#### 6. Running Start

A student must have attained at least Junior/11<sup>th</sup> grade status in order to enroll in Running Start, per the Running Start regulations. For the purposes of Running Start enrollment only, a student may be considered a Junior/11<sup>th</sup> grade either by reaching age 16 and placing into 100-level or credit-earning college classes through the college placement exam. The college placement exam is given at the community colleges and students are responsible for paying the exam fee.



**The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee(s) shall maintain the Counseling Services Manual as the administrative procedures that further implement this Policy.**

**Adopted: December 2011**

**Revised: November 2017; February 2012; June 2012; November 2012, July 2014, Date**


**Cross Reference: Policy No. 2410; Policy No. 3114; Superintendent Procedure 2024SP; Policy No. 2140**

**Previous Policies: D15.00**

**Legal References: RCW 28A.150.240(g) Basic Education Act of 1977; WAC 180-51-068**

**State subject and credit requirements for high school graduation—Students entering the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2015**

**Management Resources:**

	<p>HIGH SCHOOL GRADE &amp; CREDIT MARKING POLICY</p>	<p>Policy No. 2420 <del>November 15, 2017</del> <u>DATE</u> Page <u>1</u> of 4</p>
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~~2.~~ 2. Credits

- A. Students will be awarded high school academic credit for successful completion of a specified unit of study. -Successful completion of a specified unit of study means the following:

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- b. Demonstrating competency and proficiency; and/or
- c. Successfully completing an established number of hours of any planned alternative instructional activities as determined by the district; and/or
- d. Successfully meeting the credit-earning requirements specified in Superintendent Procedure 2024SP, Policy 2409, and/or Policy 2413.

B. Students enrolled in middle school may earn high school credit for:-

- a. ~~a.~~—Courses taken at a District high school if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for middle school, and the course is on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list.-
- b. ~~b.~~—Courses taken at a District middle school that meets or exceeds the requirements for the same high school course and which are on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list. -For a middle school course to be eligible as a course equivalent to a high school course, it must be taught by a teacher qualified to teach the course at the high school level. Middle schools that wish to offer alternative learning experiences, such as an online or computer based program at the high school level, overseen by school staff, must contact the Department of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction for approval. Only students who demonstrate mastery of content standards by earning a passing grade in a middle school course deemed equivalent to a high school course will be eligible for high school credit.-
- c. ~~e.~~—Courses taken ~~in another district or online~~ outside of Seattle Public Schools during the middle school grades, if are subject to the courses are following conditions:
  - Through the spring term of the 2018-19 school year:
    - Courses must be on the Seattle Public Schools approved course list. For courses from another district to count for high school credit in SPS they must already be on a student's transcript when they transfer to SPS or the transferring student/family must provide a transcript and verification of existing policy allowing this credit in their previous district. Students wishing to receive high school credit for online courses taken

during middle school must gain approval through the completion of an Equivalency Course of Study Form prior to enrolling in the course.

- Beginning with the summer term of the 2018-19 school year:
  - Courses already on a student's transcript when the student transfers to Seattle Public Schools, or for which the family provides a transcript and verification of existing policy allowing this credit from the student's previous district, may be added to the Seattle Public Schools transcript for high school credit. Families must follow the process referenced in the Counseling Services Manual.
  - Courses taken outside of Seattle Public Schools by actively enrolled students are subject to Superintendent Procedure 2024SP.

C. Students who meet the standard on state exams required for graduation or on a state approved graduation alternative may recover credit for previously failed courses in the following ways:

a. Math: Students may recover one-half (.5) ~~Algebra~~ credit for a previously failed Algebra 1 (or equivalent) or Geometry (or equivalent) course ~~Algebra course by meeting standard on the Algebra EOC Exam, Algebra Makeup exam or Algebra Collection of Evidence.~~ Students may recover one-half (.5) Geometry credit for a previously failed Geometry 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade level mathematics course by meeting the graduation standard on the ~~Geometry EOC Exam, Geometry Makeup exam~~ state summative assessment or Geometry Collection of Evidence. a state approved graduation alternative. Students with Individual Education Plans may recover credit for alternative courses.

b.a. ~~Science: Students~~ Starting with the class of 2021, students may recover one-half (.5) science credit for a previously failed 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade science course by meeting ~~standard on the Science HSPE or may recover one-half (.5) credit in a previously failed Biology class by meeting standard on the Biology EOC Exam or Biology Collection of Evidence.~~ the graduation standard on the state summative assessment or a state approved graduation alternative.

e.a. Language Arts: Students may recover one-half (.5) Language Arts credit for a previously failed 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade required Language Arts course by meeting the graduation standard on ~~both the Reading and Writing HSPE~~ state summative assessment or Reading and Writing Collection of Evidence ea state approved graduation alternative.

~~d.a.~~ 3. In all of the situations outlined above unique course codes will be created and will substitute for a course that was previously failed. -Failed courses remain on transcript.

3. 3. — Grade and Credit Changes

A grade and/or credit change can only be made by the teacher of record for the specific course at issue or by the Principal of the school where the course was taken and the change is being requested due to either a math error or bias. -If the student has left the school where the course at issue was taken, any grade and/or credit change by either the teacher of record or the Principal must be reviewed and approved with signature by ~~the Regional Executive Director of Schools~~ director of schools P-12.

4. 4. — Promotion and Retention-

High school grade level standing is determined by a combination of credit attainment and/or chronology and, in the case of Home Based Instruction students, age. After each semester, standing will be updated according to the following table:

**Grade Level**                      **Promotion Criteria**

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Grade 10—~~5~~ 6.0-911.99 credits or completion of one year of high school

Grade 11—~~9.99-14~~ 12-17.99 credits or completion of two years of high school

Grade 12—~~15~~ 18\* credits or completion of three years of high school.

\*~~14~~15 credit promotion applies for students in the classes of ~~2014-2015~~2016-2020. For students in the class of ~~2016~~2021 and beyond, senior promotion will occur when ~~15~~18 credits have been earned.-

Being placed at a given grade level does not eliminate the need to complete all local and state graduation requirements if a student is attempting to earn a diploma through Seattle Public Schools.

5. 5. — High School Enrollment for Home Based Instruction Students

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- Senior/12<sup>th</sup> grade if age 17 by August 31 of the year wishing to enroll

Students will be assigned the appropriate grade level during the enrollment process. -Being placed at a given grade level does not eliminate the need to complete all graduation requirements if the student is attempting to earn a diploma through Seattle Public Schools.-

## 6. Running Start

A student must have attained at least Junior/11<sup>th</sup> grade status in order to enroll in Running Start, per the Running Start regulations. -For the purposes of Running Start enrollment only, a student may be considered a Junior/11<sup>th</sup> grade either by reaching age 16 ~~as described above or by taking the English and Mathematics Compass exams~~ and placing into 100-level or credit-earning college classes- through the college placement exam. The ~~Compass~~college placement exam is given at the community colleges and students are responsible for paying the exam fee.

The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee(s) shall maintain the ~~K-12~~ Counseling Services Manual as the administrative procedures that further implement this Policy.

Adopted: December 2011

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Management Resources:-

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