

Dear stakeholders:

I wanted to let you know that, at its January 9 meeting, the State Board of Education adopted flexibility provisions to its 24-credit graduation requirement framework. By law, the Legislature must authorize and fund the requirements before they can take effect.

The provisions were intended to provide greater flexibility in the 24-credit framework originally proposed by the Board in 2010. Today, the Board made clear that it embraces a multiple pathways approach designed to prepare all students for post-secondary education and training. This represents a shift for the Board, which previously supported a default pathway approach tailored to 4-year university admission standards. The intent is to provide more flexibility, and greater integration of Career and Technical Education programs into the framework.

Key changes include:

- Increasing the number of electives to 4 (up from 2 in the previous framework). This provides more flexibility for students to pursue individual interests and experiment with different educational experiences;
- Developing legislation to expand course equivalency options for students to fulfill math and science credit requirements while pursuing career and technical education coursework;
- Creating ‘personalized pathway requirements,’ which are personalized credit requirements associated with each individual student’s post-secondary pathway, as expressed in their High School and Beyond Plan; and
- Replacing the occupational education credit requirement with a Career and Technical Education credit requirement. The implementation rules preserve the flexibility of taking occupational education or other non-CTE courses to fulfill the requirement, consistent with current practice.

In light of today’s Supreme Court order in the *McCleary* case, we expect to see renewed attention and scrutiny to the funding and basic education program requirements promised by the Legislature in 2009 (ESHB 2261). These requirements include an opportunity to earn 24 credits and a meaningful high school diploma that prepares students for gainful, living-wage employment opportunities.

The materials from today’s meeting, including packet materials, and highlights, will be available in a few days. For now, I have linked to resolution that passed at today’s meeting:

<http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/GradRequirements/2014GraduationRequirementResolution.pdf>.

Thanks your support of this important work,

Ben Rarick