



GRADUATION REQUIREMENT ALIGNMENT PROJECT— STUDENT FEEDBACK

Submitted for the May 2022 Board meeting by Linda Drake, Director of Career- and College Readiness Initiatives

Introduction

As part of the State Board of Education's (SBE) work on alignment of graduation requirements with the Washington Profile of a Graduate, staff attended the Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL) student voice meeting on April 11, the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) Student Representative Network meeting on April 18, and a student listening session facilitated by SBE student members Pavan Venkatakrisnan and McKenna Roberts on May 3. The AWSL meeting had approximately 25 students and the WSSDA Student Representative Network had approximately 10 students. The student listening session had 26 students register, with about seven students participating in addition to the two student Board members.

At the May Board meeting, Board members will advance the alignment work by beginning to focus on topics for developing recommendations. Recommendations for alignment of graduation requirements are due in a report to the Governor and Education Committees of the Legislature in December 2022. No Board action is anticipated on this work at the May Board meeting.

This memo summarizes feedback from students. A separate memo was prepared for the May 2022 Board meeting that summarizes two additional listening sessions that did not focus on student voice.

Word Cloud Online Exercise

During the student listening session, participants were asked, **"What three words would you use to describe current graduation requirements?"** The following word clouds were created by participants in response to this question. The more commonly used words are displayed in larger font. Participants were then asked, **"What three words would you hope to use to describe graduation requirements in the future?"**

The most commonly used words to answer the first question were "stressful", "specific", and "overwhelming." In answer to the second question about possible future graduation requirements, participants hoped for "clear," "attainable," and "personalized" graduation requirements.

What three words would you use to describe current graduation requirements?

Mentimeter



What three words do you hope could describe graduation requirements in the future?

Mentimeter



Summary of Feedback from Meetings with Students

Table 1 summarizes live comments and comments in chat from the online meetings with students.

Table 1: A Summary of the Feedback from Students A check mark means a statement or similar statement was repeated; multiple checks means a statement or similar statement was made multiple times.

Theme or Topic	Comments, live and in chat
Subjects and Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health, fitness, and financial education should be more of a priority. • Valuing sports for PE. • Prefer more science and less PE. • Reduce PE to one credit. • Need room for electives including Leadership courses. • Students either meet graduation requirements easily, or they scramble to meet them. • Not a lot of room to fail, not enough options for making up credit. • Number of credits should go down.
Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more graduation pathways. Need more student awareness. Lack of knowledge is a problem when it comes to usefulness. • Relevance of pathways doesn't matter as long as the SBAC is emphasized. Until then pathways other than SBAC are seen as alternatives.

Theme or Topic	Comments, live and in chat
High School and Beyond Plan and counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students don't take the HSBP seriously. • Making it into a class, with financial education, would make it more helpful. • Too narrow in scope at my school. • My school has a lot of elective choices, but a lack of communication about which electives fit with your HSBP. • Need to strengthen the role of guidance counselors, should be a conversation between a counselor and a student—best to be one-on-one. • Only about one in three students actually meet with a counselor at my school. • Need more communication freshman year, and in the college application process; communicating about college requirements should come earlier. • Need more real-time follow-up with the counselor; in my school the HSBP is done in advisory class and ends up being a small group discussion with other students.
Career skills and life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School shouldn't be to train you to be a good employee, it should be about making great citizens. • My district has good access to CTE programs (through a skill center). But this is resource intensive and a challenge for small districts that don't have access. • More community-based projects
Ethnic Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be integrated into social studies.
Financial Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need financial literacy. ✓✓✓✓✓✓ • My district has an extra half credit for social studies in senior year. Get rid of that and do financial education (interest rates, credit scores, loans).
Advanced students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running Start students have challenges meeting graduation requirements because of scheduling. • IB program is very competitive and can lead to a toxic environment.
Small District Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few options for electives.
Profile of a Graduate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains wellness, emotional health, and embraces difference, are the least-addressed areas of the profile. ✓✓✓ • Wellness and mental health should be a higher priority. • At my school, life skills/agency struck out to me. Many students at my school are not accountable • Sustains wellness, emotional wellness, stigma around mental health. In my school they do a good job of reminding you to do work but don't check in about why students may be having trouble turning in work. Acknowledging need to turn in but not taking care of students
Flexibility and student choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution to this, some alternative learning environments that will allow you to choose the classes that you take. Through a survey, you choose what you want to take vs not.