



SBE RULES UPDATE

July 2020

Graduation Requirements Rules

At the July meeting, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted proposed changes to graduation requirements rules.

The proposed permanent rules:

- Clarify that districts can award credit based on demonstration of mastery.
- Recognize that districts may offer courses that meet more than one subject area graduation requirement.
- Increase flexibility for districts to waive Washington state history for students impacted by school closures or other disruptions due to COVID-19 or other emergencies.



Upcoming public comment opportunities

The State Board staff will host a [webinar](#) on August 6 from 12:30 – 2 to briefly describe these proposed changes to graduation requirement rules and answer questions from the field.

This is part of public comment period to collect input to inform rules. The Board will hold a public hearing on August 27 from 2 – 4 ([Zoom](#) participation available) and will consider adoption of final rules at the September 15-17 meeting.

Private School Rules

Rules regarding emergency waiver authority and private schools. The Board adopted rules to allow flexibility for private schools to open online in the fall if needed due to health concerns.

The rules:

- Clarify that approved private schools may open in the fall 2020 with an online program.
- Allow private schools approved under provisional status to operate an online program, provided they plan to have a physical facility when it is safe to do so.

Reach out to the State Board's private schools contacts by emailing privateschools@k12.wa.us.

Basic Education Rules

Rules regarding instructional hours and days. The Board adopted rules to ensure that distance learning time counts toward the total instructional hours and days required under the program of basic education. Rulemaking was needed to allow for the delivery models recommended in reopening guidance to count towards total instructional hours.

For the 2020-2021 school year, “instructional hours” as defined in RCW 28A.150.205 are not limited to in-person educational services. Local education agencies (LEAs) may count as instructional hours towards the minimum district-wide annual average those hours of educational activity planned by and under the direction of school district staff that are delivered through learning modalities which may include but are not limited to distance learning, hybrid classrooms, rotating schedules, or other methods that allow for delivery of basic education services during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Rules highlights:

- LEAs submit reopening plans to SBE and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
- Funding allocation requirements still apply
- Days in which hours are provided, including at a distance, count toward 180 minimum
- LEAs must implement a system consistent with OSPI attendance rules
- SBE will revisit rule by July 2021

Contact the State Board at sbe@k12.wa.us if you have questions about graduation requirements, private schools approvals, or basic education rulemaking.