

Advance Notice
January 9, 2008

High School Graduation Requirements - Rasmussen/Gallagher

Action to be taken: I move that the Board adopt credit and graduation requirement changes as presented by the administration.

The administration recommends the following changes be made for inclusion in the 2008-2009 High School Student Course Guide.

1. Add one additional year of math (1.0 credit) to be completed at the senior high school level (i.e. does not include high school credits earned via the Choices Legislation in middle school) effective for the class of 2012;
2. Decrease the number of Occupational Education credits by 1.0 thereby making our District Occupational Education requirement equal to the State's requirement (1.0) – effective beginning in the 2008-09 school year.
3. Cease the practice of granting credit for school-directed athletics (.25 credit per athletic season up to .5). In place of this practice, we will grant a .25 waiver for school-directed athletics (.25 per athletic season, up to a total of .5) – effective for the class of 2012 (RCW 28A.230.050).

Further background on these recommendations:

1. MATH.

This month, the State Board of Education will announce a change in the math graduation requirements for graduation from high school. The State will move from the current two years, (2.0 credits) to three years (3.0 credits). Essentially, this will align us with new State law.

2. OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

- a. The ISD Board has authority to match or exceed State graduation requirements (they do not have authority to set graduation requirements *lower* than the State requirements).
- b. With our past practice of cross-crediting, students have been able to meet the district requirements via three and four years of a World Language, four years of music, etc. With the advent of new State cross-crediting requirements (equivalency) and State requirements on courses used for graduation purposes meeting

GLE standards, students will no longer have access to cross-crediting options to the same extent beginning with the class of 2012. These are typically the same students who are on the college-prep track and are intent on four years of math, three to four years of science, three to four years of music, etc. They find it difficult to meet their educational goals and the current ISD occupational requirements.

- c. With the advent of WASL and supporting courses to help students meet that standard, we are requiring students to double-up on courses such as math. This, in effect, makes it difficult for students to meet both the current ISD standard of 2.0 Occupational Education credits and this new WASL standard.
- d. One year (1.0) of Occupational Education can be earned via our Software Technology and Health courses.

4. GRANTING PE CREDIT FOR SCHOOL- DIRECTED ATHLETICS

- a. In 2006, the Tacoma School District was cited in an OSPI Audit for granting PE credit for school-directed athletics.
- b. We sought clarification from both OSPI and our district attorney. Both advised that we end the practice of granting PE credit for school-directed athletics.
- c. Specifically, Lisa Rakoz of OSPI was asked:

If the ISD practice of granting .25 PE credit for school directed athletics is ruled to be illegal according to the State Auditor and ASB Law, what would be our timeline to change this practice? Currently, our Student Course Guides all have published this as school district policy and we have a hand-full of students who have already planned this into their four-year schedule. In addition, we have some students who are on the credit bubble to graduate, and will need to count on the school directed athletics for the needed credit.

Response: “There would be no time-line for correcting the problem. Students cannot earn “credit” for athletics. They can only be waived from having to have the credits for physical education”.

- d. The main reason students seek credit for school-directed athletics is to avoid utilizing a credit opportunity for PE. A waiver will accomplish this same purpose.
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