

Application for Emergency Waiver of Certain Graduation Requirements

The authority for this waiver is Laws of 2021 (**EHB 1121**) which authorizes the State Board of Education to administer an emergency waiver program.

The purpose of the emergency waiver program is to grant Local Education Agencies flexibility so that students in the graduating Class of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and other applicable graduating classes under **Chapter 180-111 WAC** (see note below), are not negatively impacted by unforeseen disruptions resulting from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

District Written Plan for Granting and Declining Emergency Waiver for Students

1. Counselors will notify the Class of 2020, Class of 2021, Class of 2022, Class of 2023 and Class of 2024 about the emergency graduation requirement waiver. Counselors will make a good faith effort to help students earn the credit before students submit an emergency waiver.
2. Students may apply for the emergency waiver by filling out form 2418F2 and turning the completed form to the school principal for approval.
3. Building principal approves or denies application waiver and notifies the student (counselor is included in the communication) of the status of the request within two weeks of receipt of application. If a request is denied, the building principal will notify the student that they can appeal the decision by filling out an Appeal Form and sending it to the Teaching and Learning Department @ TLS@sno.wednet.edu.
4. For the purposes of data disaggregation, building principals will share information of waivers granted and denied with Teaching and Learning Services. TLS will disaggregate administrative waiver data by student subgroups as referenced in RCW 28A.300.042(3) and will conduct further disaggregation of subgroups if data is available to do so. If disproportionality is found, TLS will notify the Appeals Committee so they can ensure equitable administration of waivers.
5. The Appeal Committee will review appeal requests and recommend to the Superintendent whether to overturn or uphold denial of application. The Appeal Committee will fill out Appeal Committee Recommendation form and submit to the Superintendent. The committee will also review data provided by Teaching and Learning if disproportionality is found so they can ensure equitable administration of waivers.

The Appeal Committee consists of the following:

Deputy Superintendent
Executive Director of Special Services
Director of Equity and Inclusion
TLS Director (Committee Chair)
ELL Coordinator
School Counselor

6. The Superintendent will make final decision on the denied application waiver and communicate back to the principal. The principal will communicate back to the student.
7. Teaching and Learning will maintain records on the use of the waiver, and report administration data to the State Board of Education (SBE) in the annual basic education compliance survey, and report student-level data to Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) as determined by OSPI.

Student Application for Emergency Waiver of Certain Graduation Requirements

The authority for this waiver is Laws of 2021 ([EHB 1121](#)) which authorizes the SBE to administer an emergency waiver program.

The purpose of the emergency waiver program is to grant Local Education Agencies flexibility so that students in the graduating Class of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and other applicable graduating classes under [Chapter 180-111 WAC](#) are not negatively impacted by unforeseen disruptions resulting from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Please note the following.

- The waiver does not apply to the graduating class beyond the Class of 2024
- The waiver may be used for students who plan to graduate this summer
- A student must have at least 20 credits to graduate
- The waiver may be used for up to 2 credits for class of 2020-2023, including no more than one core credit in a core class
- Class of 2024 may only waive 1 credit
- The waiver may be used with the 2 credit student circumstance waiver

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Projected Graduation Year (Class of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 or 2024): _____

List up to two credits you are requesting to waive:

Course	Term	Amount of credit to be waived

Are you requesting a waiver of the graduation pathway (waiver for a graduation pathway is not available for class of 2024) _____

Reason for the request (Explain the impact of COVID on your schooling): _____

How many credits do you currently have? _____

I have spoken to my counselor about the following. Yes No

*Ways, other than applying for a waiver, that I could have earned the credit (Good Faith Effort).

Mastery Credit

World Language Proficiency Exam

Online Learning

Summer School Credit Retrieval

Other: _____

Briefly explain why above options are not feasible for you _____

*The potential limitations from receiving a waiver, including but not limited to:

- Minimum admission standards for Washington college and universities
- Preparation for intended majors (e.g. nursing, engineering, and other STEM fields)
- College course placement
- Employment eligibility
- Admission and transfer to out-of-state institutions

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Principal Use Only

This form must be completed and returned to the student two weeks after receipt of emergency waiver request.

Course	Term	Amount of credit to be waived	Approved/Denied	Rationale for Denial

Graduation pathway waived (Yes/No/Not Applicable for Class of 2024). Provide rationale.

I can affirm demonstration of postsecondary preparation Yes No

The student has completed a graduation pathway option in accordance with RCW28A.655.250 and WAC 180-51-230.

- The student has completed activities consistent with the criteria for “Career Prep” or has participated in an approved “Career Launch” program through Career Connect Washington.
- The student has completed a preparatory career and technical education course or a course that meets the preparatory standards as defined in RCW 28A.700.030.
- The student has developed and practiced leadership and employability skills through a job, volunteer position, or a Career and Technical Student Organization that would enable them to advance in their chosen career field and has obtained external validation from an employer, tribal elder, CTE business or industry advisory committee member, or other community member that can attest to the student’s preparation for their next steps.
- The student is a participant in a recognized apprenticeship preparation program or registered apprenticeship program or has signed an apprenticeship agreement with an employer.
- The student has earned college credit in a core subject area.
- The student has earned an industry recognized credential.
- The student has completed minimum college admission standards for four-year institutions of higher education, in accordance with RCW 28B.77.020(7)(a).
- The student placed into a college-level math or English course at an institution of higher education.
- The student completed a summer bridge program or a senior transition course (Bridge to College).
- The student has completed an option permissive under RCW 28A.655.065(5)(c)(i), including:
 - A college-level class in the relevant subject area;
 - Admission to a higher education institution or career preparation program;
 - Award of a scholarship for higher education; or
 - Enlistment in a branch of the military.

Date Waiver Request Received: _____

Principal Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Appeal Form

Turn this form into the Director of Academic Services , no later than two weeks after receipt of denied request from the principal.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Projected Graduation Year: _____

I would like to appeal the principal’s decision to deny my request for an emergency waiver.

I am attaching a copy of my original request submitted to the principal and the principal’s decision.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appeal Committee Recommendation to the Superintendent

After reviewing all pertinent information, the Appeal Committee is recommending the following:

Course	Term	Amount of credit to be waived	Approved/Denied	Rationale for Denial

Graduation pathway waived Yes No Not Applicable). Provide rationale.

Committee Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Superintendent’s Decision

Course	Term	Amount of credit to be waived	Approved/Denied	Rationale for Denial

Graduation pathway waived Yes No Not Applicable). Provide rationale.

Superintendent Signature: _____ Date: _____

FAQ from SBE

1. What is the purpose of this waiver program?

The emergency waiver program is intended to help prevent students from being unduly impacted by unforeseen disruptions to coursework and assessments resulting from an emergency or disaster. The waiver program will:

- Give districts authority to waive certain credit and graduation pathway option requirements for individual students who were unable to complete graduation requirements despite a good faith effort on the part of the district to help the student meet the requirements.
- Provide for a waiver of the hour or day requirement for private schools for the 2020-2022 school year; also states that the instruction hour requirement for private schools with an online education program is deemed met.

The waiver allows LEAs (school districts, charters schools, and tribal compact schools) and private schools to waive certain credit and graduation pathway option requirements for graduating students on a case-by-case basis.

- The waiver does not apply to local graduation requirements. Districts have the authority to waive their local requirements.
- Students awarded the waiver must have demonstrated preparation for their postsecondary plan according to their High School and Beyond Plan.

2. What does the Emergency Waiver Program mean for students?

The program is designed so that seniors expecting to graduate this year are not negatively impacted by pandemic-related disruptions to their learning and their ability to meet the graduation pathway requirement or earn credits needed for a diploma. The waivers are applied on an individual student-basis so the meaning of the rules may be a little different for each student.

The rules require that LEAs explore options to provide students the opportunity to meet the graduation pathway requirement or earn credit, since it is the first and preferred option that students meet the requirements they need to graduate. However, if students cannot earn graduation requirement credits or meet the graduation pathway requirement because of school disruptions due to the novel coronavirus, these emergency rules will permit the waiver of some graduation requirements so that eligible students can graduate.

3. How was it determined that emergency rules were needed?

The existing rules for graduation allow for a fair amount of flexibility in terms of how students meet state graduation requirements, but they don't provide enough flexibility in terms of waiving or reducing requirements in a situation such as exists now, with substantial disruption to the traditional education model. Legislation, emergency rules and permanent rules were required to

create increased flexibility, specifically focused on seniors, so that students could earn their diploma and move on to their next steps after high school.

4. Who is the waiver for? Individual students or districts?

The State Board of Education (SBE) will approve [applications from Local Education Agencies](#) (LEAs) (school districts, charter schools, and tribal compact schools). Once approved, the LEA is authorized to waive certain credit and graduation pathway requirements for individual students in the Classes of 2020 through 2024 who were reasonably expected to graduate this school year and who have demonstrated post-secondary preparation. The LEA is responsible for making waiver decisions on an individual basis at the local level, in accordance with [WAC 180-111](#). The Board will not review individual student waivers (although some reporting will be required).

5. The rules say that LEAs must provide information to students about the potential benefits and limitations that could result from receiving the waiver. What are some of the limitations?

There is a place for high school students among Washington's 50 public and private baccalaureate and community colleges. Students who intend to, or are considering enrolling in, a college or university are strongly encouraged to contact the higher education institution regarding potential impacts. Potential considerations may include:

- Minimum admission standards for Washington college and universities
- Preparation for intended majors (e.g. nursing, engineering, and other STEM fields)
- College course placement
- Employment eligibility
- Admission and transfer to out-of-state institutions

Washington's college and universities want Washington high school students! At the same time, it is important to ensure students are appropriately prepared for college, including college-level mathematics and writing, and can be adequately supported within our campus capacities. Many institutions have adopted flexibility in the admissions process during the pandemic, so if a student is interested in attending college after high school, they should connect with that institution to discuss a path forward:

- Council of Presidents (COP) is the association of Washington's six public four-year college and universities: [COP Member Campus contact list](#) and [COVID-19 resources page](#)
- Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW) is the association for Washington's private colleges and universities: [ICW Member Campus contact list](#) and [COVID-19 resources page](#)
- State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) coordinates and directs Washington's system of 34 public community and technical colleges: [SBCTC College Contact list](#) and [COVID-19 resources page](#)

6. Which graduating classes can access the waiver?

The emergency waiver may be granted to students in the 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 graduating cohorts.

7. Can districts provide enough instruction for students to pass a mastery/competency test and not use the waiver?

Yes. In fact, that would be preferred. The emergency waiver is an extra tool districts can use to make sure students graduate after the COVID-19 educational disruptions.

Schools should be working with students to earn the credit and meet their graduation pathway requirement through the strategies outlined in the good faith effort section of WAC 180-111-020 and their existing local authority (which includes [mastery-based credit](#)). After all appropriate options for receiving credit and meeting their pathway requirement have been exhausted, then an individual student may be granted a waiver.

8. What does the law mean by “demonstration of postsecondary preparation”?

“Demonstration of postsecondary preparation” means the student has demonstrated skills and knowledge indicating preparation for the next steps identified in their High School and Beyond Plan and for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and civic engagement.

“Demonstration of postsecondary preparation” may be determined locally, however, the rules include the following examples:

- The student has completed a graduation pathway option in accordance with RCW 28A.655.250 and WAC 180-51-230.
- The student has completed activities consistent with the criteria for “Career Prep” or has participated in an approved “Career Launch” program through Career Connect Washington.
- The student has completed a preparatory career and technical education course or a course that meets the preparatory standards as defined in RCW 28A.700.030.
- The student has developed and practiced leadership and employability skills through a job, volunteer position, or a Career and Technical Student Organization that would enable them to advance in their chosen career field and has obtained external validation from an employer, tribal elder, CTE business or industry advisory committee member, or other community member that can attest to the student’s preparation for their next steps.
- The student is a participant in a recognized apprenticeship preparation program or registered apprenticeship program or has signed an apprenticeship agreement with an employer.
- The student has earned college credit in a core subject area.
- The student has earned an industry recognized credential.
- The student has completed minimum college admission standards for four-year institutions of higher education, in accordance with RCW 28B.77.020(7)(a).
- The student placed into a college-level math or English course at an institution of higher education.
- The student completed a summer bridge program or a senior transition course (Bridge to College).
- The student has been awarded a scholarship for higher education.
- The student has enlisted in a branch of the military.

9. Can a waiver be used for a student who planned to graduate in the summer?

Yes. The waiver must be granted in the school year the student expected to graduate, which extends through August 31 ([RCW 28A.150.203](#)).

A possible student example is:

A student who planned to graduate in summer and receives the waiver for 1.5 credits attempted during the fall semester that was impacted by the novel coronavirus disruption. The district performed a good faith effort to help the student meet the requirement, but the student was unable to meet the requirement due to having to work to support their family. The student then comes back for summer school to finish a required course important to their postsecondary plan and graduates in summer.

10. How many credits can be waived and what type?

Under this waiver program, two credits may be waived for classes in 2021-2023, and one credit for the class of 2024. Other waivers may be used with this waiver program, including waiver of local graduation requirements and the two-credit waiver for student circumstances, provided a student earns at least twenty total credits. The limit on number of credits waived is based on what a student attempted during the COVID emergency or was planning to reasonably complete by the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Waived graduation requirement credits may include both core credit graduation requirements and flexible credit graduation requirements, as defined in WAC 180-51-210. Waived core credits are limited to one in each subject area.

11. Can a district use a two-credit waiver for student circumstances and this emergency waiver?

Yes, districts may use the two flexible credit waiver in addition to the emergency waiver, provided the student earns at least 20 total credits.

12. Can minimum state core credit requirements be waived?

Yes. A student with this waiver may graduate with fewer than the state minimum requirements. For example, a possible scenario is students graduating with 3.5 credits of English because they were unable to earn credit for the second semester. However, this must be applied on an individual student basis and the first priority is to try to help the student earn the credit. Also, credits in subjects most related to the student’s High School and Beyond Plan should not be waived.

13. Are there conditions for LEAs to receive the waiver?

In their application for authority to be able to grant individual student waivers, the LEA must certify the following:

1. The local education agency will adopt by resolution* a written plan, under WAC 180-111-040, that describes the district’s process for granting and declining emergency waiver for students, and provide for a panel with at least one counselor and educators with expertise

in trauma-informed instruction and culturally responsive education, and if appropriate, special education, instruction for multilingual/English Language learners, and a migrant graduation specialist or migrant student advocate to review and make recommendations to the district concerning any decision to decline a waiver. The resolution will also include a process for students to appeal within the school district a decision to not grant an emergency waiver. The plan must include culturally responsive ways, based on the school district's local community, to communicate with students and families about the waiver and the process to request, appeal, or decline the waiver.

2. The LEA will consider equity when administering the waiver. The LEA shall disaggregate administrative waiver data by student subgroups as referenced in RCW 28A.300.042(3) and will conduct further disaggregation of subgroups if data is available to do so. If disproportionality is found, the local education agency will take appropriate actions to ensure equitable administration.
3. The LEA will demonstrate a good faith effort, as defined in WAC 180-111-020, to help the individual student address credit deficiencies and meet core course and graduation pathway requirements prior to granting a waiver.
4. The LEA will grant waivers to eligible students in accordance with program rules (WAC 180-111)—on an individual, case-by-case student basis—after a good faith effort has first been made to help students earn the credit.
5. The LEA will maintain records on the use of the waiver, and report administration data to the SBE in the annual basic education compliance survey, and report student-level data to OSPI as determined by OSPI.

14. What does the law mean by “good faith effort”?

“Good faith effort” means the local education agency or private school considered and implemented options, determined appropriate by the local education agency or private school, to support individual students in meeting credit and graduation pathway requirements. This includes consideration of awarding and waiving of credits through the existing authority of local education agencies and private schools (e.g. providing [mastery credit](#) where appropriate). LEAs should consider all the options, determine which ones the LEA can provide, then examine individual circumstances and determine which of the available options are appropriate to implement with the student.

15. What specifically can be waived?

High school credit graduation requirements and graduation pathway option requirements may be waived.

High school graduation requirements or equivalencies established under RCW 28A.230.090, are credit-based graduation requirements. The waiver does not grant credits, but rather waives the need for the credits in order to earn the diploma.

Waived graduation requirement credits may include flexible credits and up to two core credits, with no more than one credit in each core subject area being waived, as defined in WAC 180-51-210. Students must graduate with no fewer than a total of 20 credits.

The high school graduation pathway requirement established under [RCW 28A.655.250](#) may also be waived for the class of 2023 only. This is not applicable for class of 2024.

16. What about other requirements for graduation, like the High School and Beyond Plan?

This emergency waiver program does not allow for the waiver of the High School and Beyond Plan. Also, this emergency waiver program does not extend to local graduation requirements.

17. Can Washington State History and Civics be waived under this emergency waiver program?

Civics, taught as a stand-alone course for credit, may be waived under this emergency waiver program.

Under existing law, districts may waive Washington State History for juniors or seniors who took a state history course in another state, or who missed taking Washington State History because of residing outside of Washington, or other circumstance due to an emergency ([WAC 180-51-210](#) for districts that are implementing the 24-credit graduation requirements).

Current middle school students who miss completing Washington State History because of school closures cannot use the current emergency waiver. Addressing the needs of students in the classes beyond the current year's graduating class is ongoing work of the State Board of Education, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and local districts.

18. What are the LEA's data and record-keeping requirements?

Document in the individual student record (in cumulative file, HSBP or in student management system):

- Steps taken to demonstrate good faith effort to help the student meet graduation requirements
- Courses, term, and amount of credit waived
- Whether the graduation pathway option was waived
- How the student demonstrated postsecondary preparation

Report on the student transcript:

- Any waived credit(s)
- Graduation pathway waiver

Collect data on:

- The number of waivers requested and not granted.
- Student demographics on waivers granted and not granted by student group to:
 - Disaggregate waiver data by student group for use by the district in evaluating equitable administration of the waiver
 - Report student-level data to OSPI (TBD*)

Report to SBE on:

- Districtwide good faith efforts

- Actions taken to ensure equity in administration of the waiver

*Exact reporting requirements and processes are yet to be determined by OSPI and SBE. The rules specify the LEA will maintain records on the use of the waiver, and report administration data to the SBE in the annual basic education compliance survey, and report student-level data to OSPI as determined by OSPI.

19. Can students in the Class of 2019 or before who have not yet earned their diploma access the emergency waiver?

No, the legislation that authorized the emergency waiver program limited the application of the emergency waiver to students starting with the Class of 2020.

We encourage working with students in earlier classes to consider existing flexibilities and ways of awarding credit for demonstrated knowledge and skills. Options could include:

- mastery- or competency-based learning*
- the [Expedited Assessment Appeals \(EAA\) Waiver](#) (students in the Class of 2018 need to have attempted another assessment before accessing the EAA)
- the [two-credit waiver](#) for individual student circumstances for schools implementing the 24-credit diploma requirements
- work-based learning credit
- waiver of local graduation requirements
- Special, Unavoidable Circumstance Appeal ([SUCA](#)) to waive SBA
- [WA-AIM Engagement Rubric](#) for an “Awareness Waiver” or the [CIA options](#) (Certificate of Individual Achievement) for students receiving special education services
- flexibility for PE and WA State History
- summer school or online credit recovery
- extended and expanded learning opportunities

***Additional Considerations around Mastery-based Learning**

- Through mastery- or competency crediting you may be able to award credit for languages, including a student’s native language if the student is bilingual or learning English.
- Students who are successful in a higher level course in a sequence of courses, but who were unsuccessful in the lower level courses, may be awarded competency credit for the lower level courses. Success in the higher level course is a demonstration of mastery of the learning standards addressed in the lower level courses.
- Course equivalency—one course that meets two graduation requirements, allows greater flexibility in student schedules, and accelerates students meeting graduation requirements. For courses that address learning standards in more than one subject, are the standards addressed sufficiently in two subjects that you could consider awarding two credits through mastery-based learning? Or, with an additional demonstration of skills and knowledge by the student, would it be possible to award additional credit?
- See additional information in the [mastery-based learning FAQ](#).

20. Can a student who is granted an emergency waiver use the waiver next year if the student is unsuccessful in graduating this year?

The emergency waiver is intended as a last resort for students to be able to graduate in the year the waiver is granted. If a student was granted an emergency waiver in 2023 but then was unable to complete requirements by August 31, 2023 and was not able to graduate, then the student and the school should review the student's High School and Beyond Plan, and make a plan for completing all graduation requirements in 2023-2024. If needed, as a last resort, and after a good faith effort to help the student meet requirements, the emergency waiver is available in 2021-2024.

21. Can students who want graduate early use the emergency waiver?

Students in the Classes 2023 who have met all other graduation requirements may have their graduation pathway requirement waived. These students may not receive an emergency waiver of credit requirements.