

Tips for Families on High School Graduation

For Families New to US High School System

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ISSAQUAH
SCHOOL DISTRICT 411

Agenda

- US High School Philosophy
- Post-High School Planning for students
- High School and Beyond Plan in the ISD
- Graduation Pathways from the Washington State
- Next Steps for Parents and Students

US Public High Schools

- Free to all students living in the attendance boundary of HS
- Guaranteed admission to the HS in your boundary area (no application process, registration process only)
- Time to explore interests as students prepare for post-high school plan
- Student choice – students choose classes based on their interests, career pathway &/or post-high school plans

US School System is based on providing students options and opportunities to explore their post high school goals and plans.

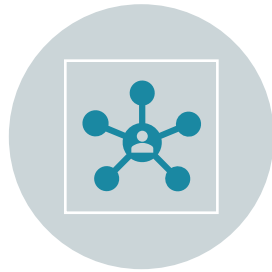
US High School vs some other countries

- In some countries, college pathway is very linear.
 - In high school, students need high scores in chosen courses to be accepted to college.
 - Kids cannot go to college or university unless they get a good “score” on an exam.
- US schools and students have more options and pathways to get into a university or college.
 - Students can work or take a gap year before attending a college/university.
 - Students can go to a 2 year college and then transfer to a 4 year university.
 - Colleges look at a wide variety of information about applicants, rather than a score on a specific exam.

Graduation Requirements



HIGH SCHOOL &
BEYOND PLAN



GRADUATION
PATHWAY



INSTRUCTION
(24-CREDITS)



MEANINGFUL
DIPLOMA

24 Credits – WA State Requirement

Students take a 7-period class schedule each year, which can earn a total of **28 credits**. Students need to pass **24 credits** to graduate:

- [17 of the 24 credits are mandatory core credits](#)
- 7 of the 24 credits are flexible; these include 4 elective credits and 3 Personalized Pathway Requirements that are chosen by students based on their interest and their **High School and Beyond Plans**.

Students will choose classes that meet these high school graduation requirements, AND plan for any additional requirements for post-high school education/college that match their plans.

High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP)



WHO Am I?

How do my interests, skills, personality and values connect to potential jobs, and to the classes I can and must take?



WHAT Can I Become?

What jobs align with my interests, skills, problems I want to solve and my dreams and hopes for the future?



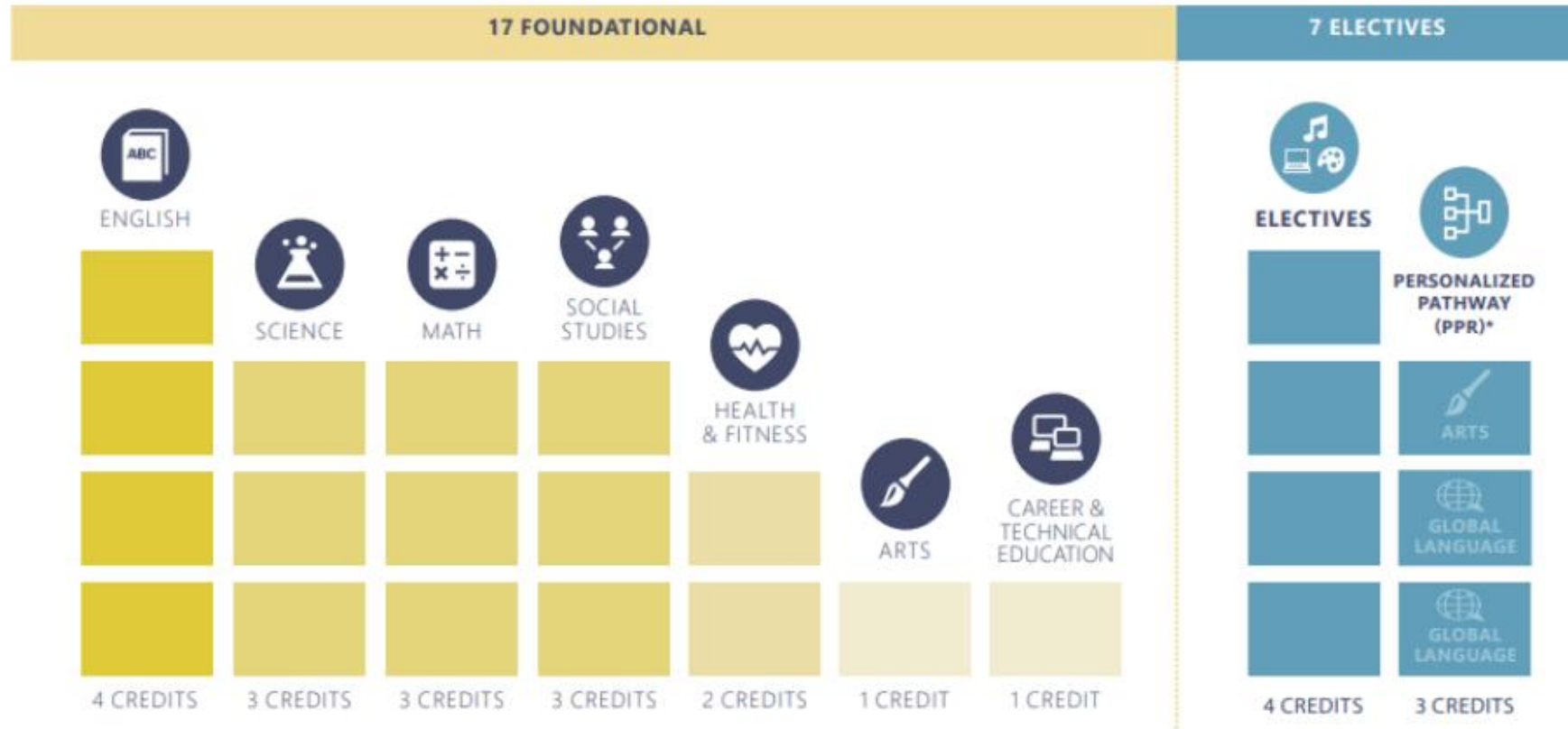
HOW Do I Become That?

Which classes, graduation pathway(s) and post-high school education and training can prepare me to reach my post-high school goals?

Why did WA state add the High School and Beyond Plan requirement ?

- Concern that graduating students weren't all sure what they should do after high school (what next...)
- High School classes alone did not prepare them for post-high school planning (resume writing, choosing a college, knowing what options exist beyond high school, etc)
- Added HSBP to help students drive their own exploration of what they want to do after high school
 - Connect student career interests with their courses
 - Connect courses with career pathways or college majors
 - Identify steps needed to reach post-secondary goals

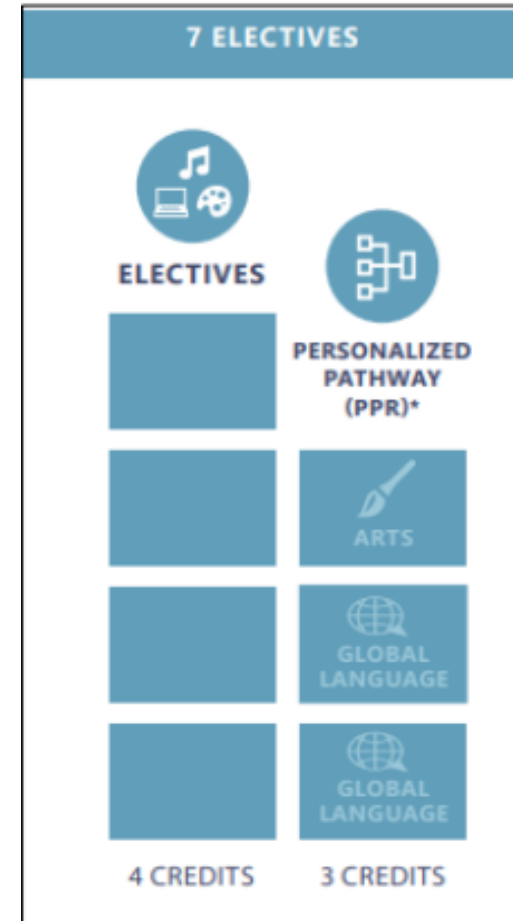
24-Credit Career and College Ready Diploma



* Personalized Pathway Requirements (PPR) are electives in any subject that align with the student's interests and their High School and Beyond Plan. The arts and world language credits can be replaced with other electives, based on the student's plan.

Personalized Pathway: Intentional Choices

- There are **multiple pathway options based on their career interests** for students that include to enroll in. Many of these options can start first with looking at the career clusters to see what they like.
- When students are **given individual guidance along the way**, they can discover, who they are, and what they want to become



High School and Beyond Plan in ISD

- **Completed during school time (Homeroom or Flex)**
- **1-2 Xello assignments per each year (time of year varies)**
- Senior Exit Interview at end of Senior year.
- Students complete various tasks on the Xello website in 6th-12th, including:
 - Career interest surveys
 - Exploring career matches
 - Explore educational options
 - College planning/exploration
 - Resume creation

Xello

- Web-based program used by students to complete HSBP
- Accessed via Classlink by students
- Parents can log-in to see what students have completed
- Students start accessing Xello in middle school
- Has a Course Planner tool to help 8th -11th students create a 4-yr plan for HS requirements, and to prepare for Course Request each year in March.

What is Course Planner?

- Course Planner is a tool within Xello that allows a student to explore and build a 4-year course schedule plan
- Tool matches ISD courses to graduation requirement areas and shows a student's progress toward earning their diploma.
- Each semester, the student's plan will be updated with the courses that appear within their high school schedule.
- After each semester, their earned credits are reflected in the tool.
- Students can update their Course Planner throughout high school.
- Students are encouraged to take courses that prepare them for their own post-high school plan. [\(Example lesson in 9th grade\)](#)

Xello for Families



- Xello Family via the parent email listed in Skyward. Click [here](#) for details about how to access your Xello Family account.
- Family should check in March as their child is getting ready to select courses for the next school year.
- Family and student can explore post-high school opportunities including careers and colleges at any time to better understand options for child.
- Possible Family-Child interaction – conversation starters and topics to have with your child
- Xello is available translated into 130 different languages

Four Year High School

**College
Readiness**

**Career
Readiness**

**Military
Readiness**

**Fulfilled Graduation Requirements
(24 credits , High School & Beyond Plan , Washington History)**

High School Diploma

Graduation Pathway to College

To demonstrate College Readiness for:

- 2-year degree in a college program or
- 4-year degree in a college/ university

Student must meet college readiness standard in English(ELA) & Math, via any combination of any of the following:

- **Dual Credit*** course: AP/IB, Running Start, College in the HS, CTE Dual Credit
- Passing Assessment score:
 - Washington State Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA)
 - IB/AP test
 - SAT or ACT

**Dual Credit: class that can earn both HS and college credit at the same time (nominal fee)*

Graduation Pathways for Careers

- Demonstrate career readiness by completing 2 Career and Technical Education (CTE) credits in a single program area that includes either a dual-credit course or lead to a certification.

Or

- Complete the requirement for College Graduation Pathway
 - Show Career Readiness by demonstrating college readiness in ELA and Math standard listed in “**Graduation Pathway to College**”

Connections: Career and College Readiness

- Career readiness pathway can also help prepare students for colleges.
- Many CTE (Career and Technical Education) courses are considered rigorous by college admission offices.
- Students can use Career Readiness pathway in preparation for college (in addition to other college prep planning)
- Transcript shows THAT Grad Pathway requirement is met, not HOW it was met.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

- Courses that help students explore various fields and careers during high school
- Prepares high school students with technical, academic and employability skills for success in the workplace and in further education.
- 6 broad CTE program areas recognized by Washington state:
 - Agriculture
 - Business & Marketing- includes Computer Science
 - Family & Consumer Sciences
 - Health Sciences
 - Skilled & Technical Sciences
 - Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- [CTE Program Courses offered at the ISD high schools](#)
- [CTE Graduation Pathway](#)

Graduation Pathway for Military Pathway

Demonstrate readiness to join the military for job training and education.

- For students who plan to join the military for career training and education at some point.
- Take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test and earn a score of 31 or higher.

ASVAB score is not shared with the military unless requested by the student.

Suggestions for students

Plan broadly

- Paths may change
- Keep mind open for new interests

Explore options

- Do your homework
- Make use of the Xello tools and features

Check out school resources

- Visit the College and Career Center (many resources and college visits)
- Visit the College and Career Center website – resources on scholarships, apprenticeships*, internships, colleges, other resources

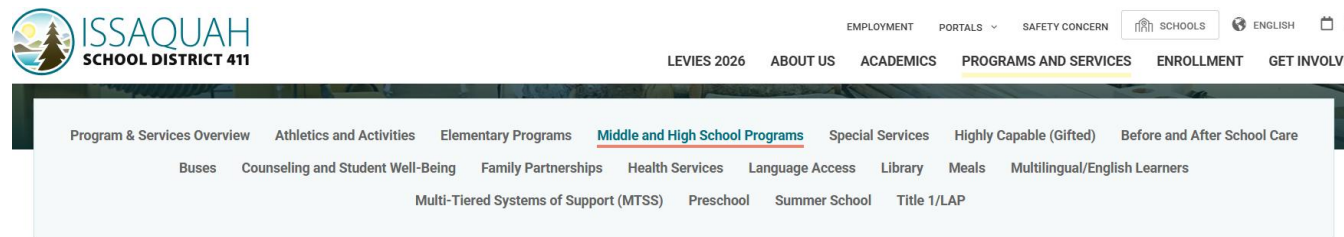
Seek help from staff

- [School Counselor](#) – meet with school counselor in 10th &/or 11th grade.
- College and Career Specialists ([Issaquah](#), [Liberty](#), [Skyline](#))

*Apprenticeships are on-the-job training programs that combine paid work with instruction and study.

Where To Find More Information

- Your child's [school counselor](#)
- Find Information on the [District Web Page](#) Including:
 - [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#)
 - [Running Start](#)



HOME > PROGRAMS AND SERVICES > MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Middle and High School Programs

We offer a number of programs at the middle and high school levels to enhance student learning and experience. To view those programs, please see the navigation menu on this page.

- Advanced Placement (AP)
- Career and Technical Education
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Online Learning >
- Running Start



Next Steps



Students take the *Matchmaker* assessment to explore career interests as part of their High School and Beyond Plan.

- Caregivers can take the *Matchmaker* as a demo student through Xello Family if they want to experience what students are doing (or explore careers!)
- Students may begin to plan for courses they want to take in high school.

Use Xello Course Planner

- In your student dashboard under “Goals & Plans”
- Updated course offerings for 2026-27 school year available.
- More information in the High School Course Guide (coming soon)
 - Your high school’s home page, under the Academics Menu, click “Course Guide”

Great Careers Expo

- The goal of the event is to educate high school students about careers they can pursue through on-the-job training, the military, certification, apprenticeships, or two-year college programs.
- Held every year for high students (grades 9-12) only.
- Students need to complete Field Trip permission form by March 3rd (Parent signature needed)
- More information and permission form on [Great Careers - Issaquah School District 411](#)

Upcoming Events

8th Grade Transition Information Night

Information for families who have not attended US Public High Schools to learn more before the presentations by the high schools.

[8th Grade Transition event](#) on January 26, 6:30-8:30pm on Zoom

[8th grade Transition Night January 26, 2026 – Fill out form](#)

Sessions by school counselor for students.

Check the Middle School Schools' bulletins for more information regarding parent/guardian sessions.

8th grade Transition Night January
26, 2026



Thank you!

- Please complete the following survey for feedback on this event. Your feedback helps us plan and improve our information events.
- [Feedback for Graduation Pathways Information Event Jan 12, 2026 – Fill out form](#)
- Please contact your child's school counselor if you have specific questions regarding your child's graduation plan (Grades 10-11) .
- Contact your school's Family Liaison if you would like more clarification or have questions regarding this presentation.
 - Lina Marin – Liberty High, Cougar Mountain Middle and Maywood Middle
 - Liliana Medina – Issaquah High, Issaquah Middle and Pacific Cascade
 - Wenli Mithal – Skyline High, Beaver Lake Middle and Pine Lake Middle

Feedback for Graduation Pathways Information Event Jan 12, 2026



Additional Resources

<https://wsac.wa.gov/college-admissions>



<https://www.apprenticeship.gov/career-seekers>

