Graduation Requirements

How are state graduation requirements changing to respond to the impact of COVID-19?
Recently, the governor signed HB 2965, which allows further flexibility for districts on graduation requirements.

In response to this bill, the Washington State Board of Education (SBE) adopted emergency rules around a waiver for districts in response to COVID-19. Districts that receive the waiver will have the authority to waive credits on an individual basis for seniors who were on track to graduate this school year. For more information about this program, visit: https://sbe.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/CareerReadiness/waiver%20program%20one%20pager.pdf

Consult with your local district to see if they have applied for this waiver. If so, talk to your school counselor about your eligibility for waiving credits.

If you are concerned that you are not on track to graduate, make sure to contact your school counselor as soon as possible.

How will my GPA be affected?
The state has required that districts should make all grading decisions based on the philosophy of “do no harm”. Districts across the state are interpreting this and implementing it in very different ways. It is important to note that teachers will not assign “pass”, “fail”, or “no credit” grades.

Each school district has specific guidance for grading. If you have questions, visit your school website or ask your school counselor.

If you are not on track to earn credit for a course by the end of the semester, your teacher will assign an “Incomplete” as the grade.

What is an “Incomplete”?
An “Incomplete” means that you have not yet shown that you have mastered the course material. You can still show mastery in the future in a variety of ways that will be determined by your school or teacher. If you do not demonstrate mastery within your school’s set timeline, the “Incomplete” will change to a “failing” grade. Please note: if you are a senior and receive an “Incomplete” on your transcript, you will not earn your diploma until you complete that work.

Do I still need to complete my High School and Beyond Plan?
Yes. You need to complete any remaining components of this project and submit them in order to graduate. For templates and more information, visit https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/graduation/graduation-requirements/high-school-beyond-plan
Testing

What if I haven’t passed the SBA yet?
Passing the SBA (Smarter Balanced Assessment) or an equivalent alternative assessment is a graduation requirement; however, the SBA has been cancelled for the 2020 school year. Districts are still determining other ways students may be eligible to demonstrate competencies in Math and English.

What is the status of SAT and ACT testing?
SAT testing dates in March, May, and June were cancelled. Students who were signed up for those dates will receive a refund. Testing dates have been added and will be available every month through the end of 2020, starting in August. Students will have early access for these dates if they were already registered for the June testing date, or if they are in the high school class of 2021 and do not have SAT scores. For more information, visit: https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates

The ACT test scheduled for April 4, 2020 has been rescheduled to June 13, 2020. Students who were registered for the April test date will be able to reschedule to June. Students will not be automatically rescheduled and will have to follow directions sent in an email from ACT. For more information, visit: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/covid-19.html

What is the plan for World Language Credit testing?
Washington State has a World Language Credit Program which helps bilingual students earn world language credits by demonstrating language proficiency. However, during school closures, the proficiency testing in your district may have been postponed or rescheduled. Check your district website or ask your school counselor about specifics. To learn more about this program, visit: https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/world-languages/competency-credits-students

What is the plan for AP Exams?
AP Exams have been moved online this year due to school closures and social distancing guidance. According to the AP Exam website, you may take your AP Exam online on any device you have access to—computer, tablet, or smartphone. You will need access to reliable internet in order to complete your test. You’ll also have the option to write your responses by hand and submit a photo. There is more information as well as free resources here: https://apcoronavirusupdates.collegeboard.org/students

To prepare for your AP test, try out the demo at the link above. It can be stressful to learn a new interface while taking such an intense exam, so it’s better to be acquainted prior to your exam date.

If you decide not to take the AP Exam, notify the testing coordinator at your school. The $40 cancellation fee has been waived. Once the refund process has been initiated, it cannot be reversed.

College Admissions

What will attending college in the Fall look like?
Seniors are encouraged to be proactive in regards to finalizing their plans for the Fall. Many colleges and universities have not yet determined if they will be returning to in-person classes, providing a mix of in-person and online classes, or primarily providing online classes. The best way to find out the most up-to-date information is to contact the admissions office and check the website regularly.

Some students choose to delay starting their college career for various reasons. This is called a deferment, also known as a “gap year”. This means that a student can choose to start their classes at a future time without losing their spot at the school or having to re-apply. Usually the max deferment time is one year and requires a financial deposit. For more information, contact the admissions office at the college or university.