

High School Graduation Requirements

Publication of Graduation Requirements

Prior to registering in high school, and each year thereafter, each student and his/her parents or guardians will be provided with a copy of the graduation requirements in effect for that student (those in effect when the student enrolled in ninth grade unless 10 years have elapsed). Graduation requirements shall also be included in the school-student handbook.

High School Plan

Each student will develop and have on file a high school completion plan approved by the parent. Counselors will provide assistance to incoming ninth graders and their families in developing educational plans. Changes in plans should normally reflect parent consent and should be submitted to the appropriate counselor. At the conclusion of each year, the school will provide the student and his/her parents or guardians with a report which reflects the progress that has been made toward satisfying the graduation requirements. If progress is not normal, the school will recommend alternative programs and/or courses that can be accessed to correct the deficiencies.

Waiver of Graduation Requirements

The following procedure shall be followed in graduation waiver requests:

- A. The principal is responsible for evaluating educational experiences of individual students and recommending graduation to the superintendent when requirements have been met.

An individual student may be granted an exemption from any course requirement in this policy if such requirement impedes the progress toward graduation provided there is a direct relationship between the failure to meet the requirement and the student's ability.

When a 12th-grade student transfers from another high school, the student may be permitted to graduate with a lesser number of credits provided that minimum state course and credit requirements are satisfied and the student successfully passes a full schedule of classes during his/her 12th year of school.

- B. Waiver of graduation requirements is determined by the principal, but shall not alter the total credit requirements established by the board of directors. The procedure for processing requests for waiver shall be as follows:

1. Request shall be initiated by the parent or the eligible student.
2. The principal shall investigate the request for waiver of graduation requirements.
3. The principal shall make a determination in writing based upon appropriate data and upon conclusions of the investigation.
4. The principal shall develop appropriate record-keeping procedures for storage of all pertinent data relating to each waiver request.
5. The parent or eligible student shall be notified that an appeal to the decision on waiver requests may be made in writing to the superintendent no later than 30 days prior to the anticipated graduation date.
6. All state statutory requirements must be satisfied, provided they are in accordance with the laws and regulations of the state of Washington. Waivers will be considered for Washington history and government for second-semester-status students entering from another state who have satisfied previous state requirements.

Waiver of Physical Education Requirement

The following procedures shall be followed in physical education waiver requests:

- A. Students and parents must complete the Tacoma Public Schools “Application of Waiver to Meet High School Physical Education Requirement” form by May 1st for students who would like to waive their physical education requirement in the first semester or by January 1st for students, who would like to waive their physical education requirement in the second semester. This form is available at the high school sites and must be processed through the student’s counselor.
- B. The following is a sample of activities and organizations in which students may participate that may qualify for waiver of a physical education credit. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. WIAA athletics
 2. Tacoma School District athletics
 3. Organized dance lessons
 4. JROTC
 5. Marching Band
 6. Organized recreational programs
 7. Athletic Club teams
 8. Athletic Camps
 9. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
 10. Outward bound programs

An individual student may also be excused from participation in physical education on account of physical disability, employment or religious belief.

- C. The organization is responsible for verifying the student has completed 55 hours of active participation during the activity to receive waiver of a .5 credit for physical education. The student must complete the hours within the semester that the waiver is being requested. Hours must be honestly documented and approved by the organization with which the student is participating. All documentation will be kept in the student's cumulative file.

Credit for Work Experience

The use of work experience as a part of the educational program of students should be regarded as part of the secondary school curriculum rather than just a device to relieve a manpower shortage. The following are the bases upon which credit may be granted for work experience:

- A. The work program shall be reviewed and approved by the school.
- B. The work experience shall be specifically related to the school program of the student.
- C. Credit given for work experience shall represent growth in the student, and the type of work done should have definite educational value.
- D. The job in which experience is gained shall provide varied experience.
- E. A work experience program shall be supplemented by an adequate program of guidance, placement, follow-up and coordination between job and school by the career placement counselor.
- F. Work experience as a planned part of a school subject may be included in the credit given for that subject (e.g., sales training class).
- G. One work credit may be granted for not less than 405 hours of work experience related to a student's school program.
- H. A student participating shall be legally employed and must have passed his/her 16th birthday.
- I. An employer's report of the student's work record, indicating satisfactory progress on the job, shall be filed with the school.
- J. The regular state apprenticeship program, where the training is worked out cooperatively with the school and meets the standards for graduation requirements, is acceptable.

Home School Credit

Guidelines for granting high school credit for home schooling are as follows:

- A. To gain credit for a course of study, a student shall provide:
 - 1. A journal which reflects the actual work completed during a home-study course of study;
 - 2. Exhibit(s) of any specific projects completed (e.g., themes, research papers, art and/or shop projects); and/or;
 - 3. Any such other performance-based exhibits of specific course-related accomplishments.

- B. To gain credit for a course of study, a student shall demonstrate proficiency at a minimum of 80 percent of the objectives of the course. Such testing shall be available as an ancillary service of the district if it is regularly available to all students. If not, the parent may engage district-approved personnel to conduct such an assessment at a cost to be determined by such personnel.

If a parent and/or student believes that the above process is excessively burdensome, the student, if eligible, may apply to take the test of General Educational Development.

Distance Learning

Credit for distance-learning courses may be granted, provided the following requirements are met:

- A. Prior permission has been granted by the principal and the Curriculum and Instruction Department;
- B. The program fits the educational plan submitted by the student;
- C. Credit is granted for the approved schools:
 - 1. Schools approved by the National University Continuing Education Association or accredited by the National Home Study Council;
 - 2. Community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, four-year colleges and universities and approved private schools in the state of Washington, and;
 - 3. Other schools or institutions which are approved by the district after evaluation for a particular course offering.

Graduation Ceremonies

A student who fulfills all graduation requirements by the end of the last term of his/her senior year may participate in the graduation ceremony unless the student's misconduct warrants his/her

exclusion from the ceremony. Each student shall be awarded a diploma and/or transcript after satisfactorily completing local and state requirements. However, a student's diploma and/or transcript may be withheld until the student pays all outstanding fines for any school property that has been lost or willfully damaged. Upon payment of fines for damages, or the equivalency through voluntary work, the diploma and/or transcript will be released.

Graduation requirements in effect when a student first enrolls in high school shall be in effect until that student graduates unless such period is in excess of 10 years.

Graduation ceremonies will be conducted in the following manner:

- A. Each participating student must participate in the graduation ceremony rehearsal. Each student who participates will purchase or rent the proper cap and gown as designated by the school administration and the class advisor and officers.
- B. Caps and gowns will be worn in the proper manner, as designated by the school administration and class advisor.
- C. Students who participate will be expected to demonstrate proper decorum.
- D. Each student who participates will be expected to cooperate with the class advisor and to participate in all parts of the graduation ceremonies.
- E. Failure to comply with the above requirements may forfeit a student's privilege of participation in the graduation ceremonies.

Approved 3/5/02

Revised 1/25/07

Tacoma Public Schools

Application of Waiver to Meet High School Physical Education Requirement

Please read this form carefully, complete and return to the main office prior to the semester beginning.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Telephone: _____

One credit of physical education is required for graduation. You are requesting to waive a .5 credit of the physical education requirement for the _____ semester. Complete the form and submit a copy of the registration if using an alternative program. A copy of the practices, lessons and/or games through the alternative program must also be submitted.

Please explain your reason for applying for the waiver: _____

Directed Activity participating in: _____

Organization: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand this process will fulfill a PE requirement but will not result in credit and that my student must still earn 23 total credits to graduate. This waiver cannot be substituted for Health 1 or Health 2. The organization is responsible for verifying that the above named student has completed a minimum of 55 hours of active participation during the activity to receive a .50 waiver. The student must complete the hours within the semester that the waiver is being requested. District sponsored activities are already established which will allow students to meet the waiver criteria (ie WIAA athletics). The district does not endorse a specific alternative program. The district is not responsible for the safety of the activity, venue or supervision in which your son/daughter partakes with the alternative program. The district is not responsible for providing transportation to and from the alternative program. This is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Coach/Activity Supervisors Name: _____ Title: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

I agree to supervise this student in this alternative program to meet the PE requirement. I will participate in the process and honestly document and approve all activities and/or hours the student participated in. I agree to attach the documentation with the dates and times for the number of hours the student participated in the activity. I attest that I am at least 18 years old and not the parent guardian or sibling of the student.

PE Department Chair's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed at the end of the semester

The student has met _____ of the PE requirement. The student has not earned actual credit.

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Copy to student and student file