Washington Office of Superintendent of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

UPDATE: Graduation Pathways, Class of 2025

2025

Authorizing Legislation: RCW 28A.230.720

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the passage of House Bill 1599 in 2019, graduation pathways were established as one of the requirements for high school graduation. Students can meet the requirements of graduation pathways in multiple ways, including test-based, course-based, and performance-based options. The pathway must be aligned with a student's post-secondary goals as described in their High School and Beyond Plan.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required by RCW 28A.230.720 to collect and report on graduation pathways data annually. This report includes which pathways students accessed, a data summary, and disaggregated pathway completion data.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Legislature established different graduation pathway options as part of statewide high school graduation requirements through House Bill 1599. Graduation pathways focus on providing evidence that a student is ready for their next step after high school, whether that be employment, post-secondary education or training, or a military career. The graduation pathway(s) a student completes must be aligned with their postsecondary goal as described in their High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP).

The Class of 2020 was the first graduating class required to meet one or more graduation pathways. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to report annually:

- Which pathways students are utilizing at each school district and State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) school.

- Student participation in each pathway disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and income status (as defined by their eligibility for free or reduced-price meals).

To meet all statewide graduation requirements, students must complete at least one graduation pathway aligned with their postsecondary goals, earn 24 credits, and complete their HSBP.

Graduation Pathways

Graduation pathways are aligned with the entry requirements of employers, postsecondary education or training institutions, or the military. Depending on how a student wants to work toward their postsecondary goals, any one of these options could likely support their goal.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduation pathways are a sequence of rigorous, related CTE courses that include dual credit options, industry-recognized credentials, or a Core Plus program. Students completing a CTE pathway may plan to enter an apprenticeship or employment directly after high school or enroll in a training program, college, or university.

English language arts (ELA) and math pathway options include courses and/or exams. Students must complete an ELA component and a math component. Options include dual credit courses or exams (Running Start, College in the High School, CTE Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International), college transition courses, college entrance exams (SAT or ACT), the Performance-based pathway, and the statewide summative high school assessment (Smarter Balanced or WA-AIM). Students completing these pathways are likely planning for post-secondary education as their first step after high school.

The **military pathway** uses the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), an assessment required for entry into any of the military branches. Students who complete this pathway are prepared to pursue their career goals across occupational fields through military service.

Pathway Data Collection

Reporting on graduation pathways requires compiling data from multiple data sources. The State Board of Education's (SBE) 2024-25 Washington State Basic Education Data Tables captures self-reported information about pathway availability from each school district/STEC. This is the most complete source for understanding pathway availability because it collects information on district/STEC-sponsored testing events and course offerings. To report on the count of students using each graduation pathway for graduation, OSPI compiles data across multiple sources, including:

- Course-based pathways (including college transition courses, dual credit, and CTE course sequences), identified using OSPI's student-level data collection.

- SAT exam and AP test score pathways, identified using files obtained from the College Board, the proprietary exam company offering those assessments.

- ACT, IB, and Cambridge International exam-based pathways identified using files from ACT, IB, and Cambridge, respectively.

- Performance-based pathway completion provided by school districts/STEC and submitted to OSPI.

- ASVAB Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score provided by school districts/STEC and submitted to OSPI.

From these sources, OSPI can tell which graduation pathways a student completed. However, because of the flexible nature of these pathway options, many students may complete more than one pathway option, and OSPI cannot tell which one was identified in the student's High School and Beyond Plan and used for graduation.

GRADUATION PATHWAYS DATA SUMMARY

Number of Students Completing Each Graduation Pathway

The determination of which pathways are indicated in a student's HSBPs happens at the local level. OSPI's data reporting encompasses all completed graduation pathways rather than what was indicated for each student's plan.

The graduates in the Class of 2025 completed the pathways at the following rates. Some students completed more than one pathway, and thus there is some duplication across categories.

64%	**64.3%**	**7.2%**
ELA and Math Courses/Exams	CTE Graduation Pathway	Military Pathway (ASVAB)

Pathway Completion, Disaggregated

Users can explore the graduation pathways to see how student groups completed the different graduation pathways or completion by pathway. Disclosure Avoidance Techniques (DAT) have been applied to both sources to ensure student privacy.

Table 1: Graduates in the Class of 2025 cohort, by student group*

	Completed ELA/Math Pathway	Completed ASVAB Pathway	Completed CTE Pathway	Locally Verified/No Pathway	Number of Graduates in Class of 2025
All Students	**64%**	**7.2%**	**64.3%**	**7.9%**	**74,636**
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	45%	7.3%	56.9%	20%	785
Asian	86.7%	3%	59.7%	3.2%	7,017
Black/African American	58.9%	3.9%	59.7%	10.8%	3,505
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	49.9%	6.5%	71.3%	9.5%	18,666
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	43.5%	5.4%	66.8%	16.9%	949
Two or More Races	67.1%	6.9%	63%	7.2%	6,295
White	67.7%	8.8%	62.4%	7.4%	37,416
Students with Disabilities	28.1%	4.3%	72.4%	15.0%	7,896
Low-Income	51.9%	7.5%	67.1%	10.8%	38,999
English Language Learners	35.5%	2.4%	66.7%	15.9%	7,274
Female	64.7%	6.3%	61%	8.5%	36,590
Male	63.4%	8.2%	67.7%	7.3%	37,490
Gender X	68.2%	4.5%	53.1%	11.3%	556

Note: Data is sourced from the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) and the Graduation Pathways Database. In some circumstances, districts/STECs locally verify a graduate's pathway completion(s), such as when a student completed any part of a pathway while in another state or country. Because those completions are not reflected in OSPI's own standardized data collections, OSPI considers them as part of a "Locally Verified Pathway/No Pathway" category.

*Includes all students in the Class of 2025 who graduated.

NEXT STEPS

In the future, data collected in the HSBP platform will reflect students' graduation pathways and how it aligns with their post-secondary goals.

OSPI will continue to monitor graduation pathway completion and, in collaboration with the SBE, consider future policy recommendations to accelerate the growth of meaningful and useful graduation pathways, as well as focus on eliminating gaps in access for historically underserved student groups.

LEGAL NOTICE

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