

Graduation Rate FAQs

What are the Graduation Requirements and Where do I Find Them?

To graduate from high school and earn a high school diploma, a student must earn credit, meet standard on state assessments, and complete a High School & Beyond Plan. [RCW 28A.230.090\(link is external\)](#) states that the WA State Board of Education establishes minimum state graduation requirements and the High School & Beyond Plan. ([WAC 180-51-061\(link is external\)](#), [WAC 180-51-066\(link is external\)](#), [WAC 180-51-067\(link is external\)](#), and [WAC 180-51-068\(link is external\)](#)). The Washington State Legislature establishes state testing requirements. OSPI Assessment has an overview of [state testing](#).

All public high school students are required to meet statewide [graduation requirements](#) in order to earn a diploma. The goal is that more students will be better prepared to meet 21st-century demands in their working and personal lives.

OSPI has created a [Graduation Toolkit](#) to help educators and families understand state graduation requirements.

What is the Graduation Rate Indicator in the ESSA Accountability Framework?

Graduation Rate is an Academic Indicator for high schools for the WA state [ESSA Accountability Framework](#). As students exit elementary and middle school and transition to high school, the system switches the focus from growth measures to a student's ability to demonstrate proficiency in student success indicators, and to meet the requirements of high school graduation. The long-term goals for high schools reflect more emphasis on meeting standard and closing the "graduation gap," by looking at data in each of the student groups. The groups include students who are experiencing poverty, students from different racial subgroups, students receiving special education services, and English language learners.

How is the Graduation Rate Defined?

The measure of [high school graduation is defined](#) as "four-year graduation rate, adjusted for relatively large increases in extended-year graduation rates". High Schools who have less than a 67% four-year graduation rate, using three years of combined data, in the multi-measures index will be identified for Comprehensive support. The base graduation rate will be a composite of the last three years combined, of the 4 -year cohorts. The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is the base for the high school graduation indicator. This process will combine three years



of data for graduates in each student group in a 4-year cohort. When the three years are combined the minimum number of students that will be included is 20. Because this approach is more inclusive, the outcomes for more student groups will be included in determining which schools need support.

How is the Extended Graduation Rate Beneficial to Schools in Improvement?

The goal for our state is 90 percent of each of the student groups to graduate on-time by 2027. The student groups include racial groups, as well as low-income and special-education students. Schools with a significant number of students who graduate, but not within four years, may receive an extra point or two. This approach acknowledges within the accountability framework that for some students a longer graduation timeframe is appropriate.

Specifically, a score boost system, where the changes in graduation from years 4-5, 5-6, and 6-7 are distributed and schools with the largest increases would see a boost in their graduation decile score. Schools with high 4 year graduation rates will have a high decile score and will not be penalized for having a smaller group of continuing students. The intention of the model is to recognize the hard work schools are doing to get to high 4 year graduation rates, but acknowledges that their corresponding extended graduation rates are also high. This model will recognize, with a point boost, those schools that have made significant gains in transitioning students in years 5, 6, and 7. [Consolidated Plan](#)

What Supports and Technical Assistance is Available to Help Schools Increase Graduation Rates?

The Office of System and School Improvement (OSSSI) can offer assistance. We will start with "Who Needs Support?" When providing support, we will ask "What tiered supports are available?" and finally, to serve, we will ask, "How will tiered supports be deployed effectively?" OSPI will continue our efforts to organize our supports using a multi-tiered system of support framework. With intentional work focused on data, responsive services, and family and community engagement, supports are delineated between foundational and self- directed, targeted and comprehensive. Resources for graduation can be found at: GATE: [Graduation-A Team Effort](#) and [High School & Beyond Plan/Career Guidance WA](#).

External FAQs

- [What are the Graduation Requirements?](#)
- [How does the implementation the 24-Credit Graduation Requirements for Class of 2019 and Beyond work?](#)
- [What is the High School and Beyond Plan?](#)
- [What is the Career Guidance WA curriculum?](#)
- [What State Tests are needed for graduation?](#)
- [How does High School Transcripts reflect graduation credits?](#)
- [What are Student Growth Percentiles?](#)
- [What are Dual Credit Programs in WA?](#)