



IMPLEMENTING WASHINGTON'S 24-CREDIT GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

- Insights from districts across the state
- Four snapshots illustrating how schools are meeting the graduation requirement

24-CREDIT

INSIGHTS OVERVIEW

By Jennifer Guerrero Flood

In 2014 the Washington Legislature passed SB 6552¹, implementing a 24-credit graduation requirement for the class of 2019 and beyond.

Eight years of research and stakeholder engagement led by the State Board of Education (SBE) helped to shape this law, which was designed to ensure every Washington student would be eligible for the college or career path of their choosing. Specifically, it aimed to address persistent barriers preventing students from being prepared for success in life after high school, including:

- Students discovering during their senior year of high school that they had not met the minimum course requirements to be eligible for Washington's public four-year universities,
- Students accruing debt to take classes in college or degree programs that they should have taken as high school students, and
- Students of color and from low-income households being tracked away from college given their disproportionate concentration in schools providing the fewest college-track classes and the least college counseling support.

The 24-credit framework was designed to be both rigorous and flexible, and to enable students to pursue the career path of their choice. It allows students to meet the admission requirements of a two- or four- year degree program, apprenticeship, or technical program. Seven of the 24 credits are flexible; these include 4 elective credits and 3 Personalized Pathway Credits chosen by students based on their personal interests and High School and Beyond Plans.

How are districts meeting the requirement?

As of December 2018, roughly two-thirds of districts (170 of 252 districts) will meet the requirement for the class of 2019¹, and one-third have delayed implementation under a two-year waiver.

While the 24-credit requirement was designed to allow districts to reimagine their programs entirely — including moving away from seat-time and towards competency-based credit options — many have focused on scheduling changes. The focus on scheduling is because the most prevalent schedule has been one of six-period semesters, and in that model if a student fails even one class, they will be off track from graduating on-time with 24 credits and will be dependent upon whether their district offers summer school or other credit-retrieval options.

Beginning in 2016 both the SBE and Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) offered 24-credit Implementation Workshops² to assist districts in redesigning their programs in collaboration with their staff and communities. The major changes adopted by districts currently on track to meet the requirement by 2019 fall into these categories:

Scheduling changes

- Five-period trimester
- 4 x 8 or A/B block semester
- Seven period day
- Incorporating an advisory period to support student success

Changes to crediting

- Competency-based Crediting: There are nine options³, the most commonly used are:
 - Online learning and personalized learning platforms driven by technology
 - Performance on a district-determined assessment
 - Alternative Learning Environments (ALE) and Work-Based Learning
- Course-equivalency: allowing a class to meet both a core subject & CTE requirement

Why and how is LEV studying implementation?

Since the law is intended to remove barriers to post-secondary education for all of Washington students — and only two-thirds of districts are currently implementing it — the League of Education Voters (LEV) sought to understand the slow path to full implementation. We undertook a research study to answer the following questions:

- For the one-third of districts not on track to meet the graduation requirement by 2019, why?
- For those implementing the requirements, how did they make changes and what lessons can be identified for other districts?

We conducted 21 key informant interviews between January through September 2018. This report provides an overview of varied approaches in a range of districts to this new state law requirement.

¹ Bill Report E2SSB 6552: <https://bit.ly/finalbillreport6552>

² SBE 24-Credit 24-Credit Implementation Workshops: <https://bit.ly/24creditworkshop>

³ SBE Competency-Based Crediting Handbook: <https://bit.ly/SBEhandbook>

Concerns raised by districts not on track to implement 24 credits.

Financial costs

Districts interviewed expressed concern about costs associated with adopting a new schedule (e.g., renegotiating new contracts with the union, cost of on-site licenses for online programs, etc).

- Rural districts noted they don't have the tax base to implement the changes and are struggling to recruit staff

Impact on students

- Districts who want to stay with a six-period schedule are concerned there is no room for kids to fail, it creates stress for students, and credit recovery options are difficult to implement.
- Districts exploring new schedules are concerned that adding classes will negatively impact already-struggling students who will be forced to master more content in less time, which will potentially lead to higher drop-out rates.

Methods Note: For question one we interviewed five Washington districts, representing varied student populations, who candidly shared reasons for not yet adopting changes on condition of anonymity.

Impact on CTE enrollment

Districts also expressed concern that students will be forced to take fewer Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes (for schools on a 6 period semester) and that the requirements are focused too heavily on college entry requirements.

Staffing Difficulties

Small, rural districts shared that it will be challenging to add more classes because middle and high schools share the same teachers in core classes, and even some electives.

- Moving to a block schedule or more periods requires more staff and districts are already struggling with recruitment and retention.
- Additionally, rural areas might need to cut some electives (e.g. an art or language teacher might only be able to teach the required classes, not any advanced courses).

What are the characteristics of the spotlighted districts/schools?

Two shared characteristics across all the schools

Leadership and teacher conviction: Of those we interviewed, similar characteristics include districts with vision driven staff who exhibited high expectations, conviction that every student should have the opportunity to graduate college and career ready, dissatisfaction that students were not being served well under their existing system, and urgency to make changes.

Intentional and collaborative: These districts used an intentional approach to collaborating with teachers, families, and the community to study various options, make decisions, and to enable a successful transition. They also provided professional development to support teachers in adjusting their instruction to the new schedule they adopted.

Methods Note: For question two we interviewed staff from three districts and a public charter school that have made changes to meet the 24-credit requirement. These spotlights represent a range of geographic locations, schedules/ programmatic structures adopted, student populations served, and graduation rates.

Characteristics unique to each school

Staff culture: Sunnyside's culture, grounded in staff belief systems, results in extraordinary student outcomes despite 84% of students being from low-income families.

Change Management Process: Bellingham used a thoughtful change management process over two years to build community support and to accrue the \$1.4M to make the change.

Technical Assistance as a lever: Pasco, with the support of a technical assistance provider, identified the risks associated with delaying the change, studied other districts and adopted a new system that will also support their robust CTE programming.

Competency-Based Approach: Summit Sierra is using the flexibility in the requirements in conjunction with their personalized learning technological platform to provide credits on the basis of demonstrated competency, not seat-time.

SPOTLIGHTED DISTRICTS & SCHOOLS

that are meeting the 24-credit requirement



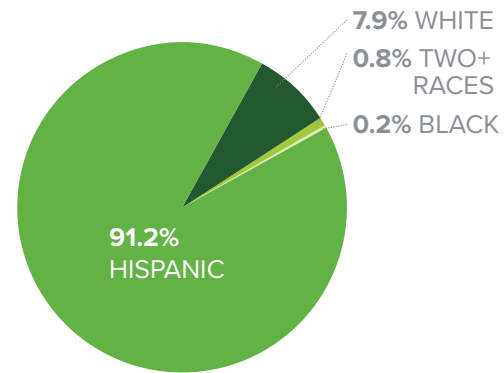
	SCHEDULE ADOPTED	WHEN	UNIQUE ASPECTS
SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT 1,920 Students 79.2% Qualify for FRPL* 90% Grad rate (4-year)	5 period Trimester	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School culture and data-driven improvement cycles • Nearly doubled graduation rate over 8 years
SUMMIT SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL 380 Students 47% Qualify for FRPL 95% on track to graduate	Block A/B ¹ & Advisory Semester	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Basecamp Personalized Learning Platform for course/ credit completion
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT 4 high schools // 3,629 Students 35% Qualify for FRPL 82% Grad rate (4-year)	Block A/B & Advisory Semester	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change management process used • CTE enrollment expanded concurrent with new schedule
PASCO SCHOOL DISTRICT 3 high schools // 4,385 Students 63.1% Qualify for FRPL 75% Grad rate (4-year)	5 period Trimester	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated transition to new schedule despite applying for 2-year waiver • Maintained expansive CTE offerings

*Free and Reduced Price Lunch
¹Use of extended block periods that typically alternate days

SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

1 HIGH SCHOOL

- Implemented in 2010
- Five period trimester
- 24 credits to graduate

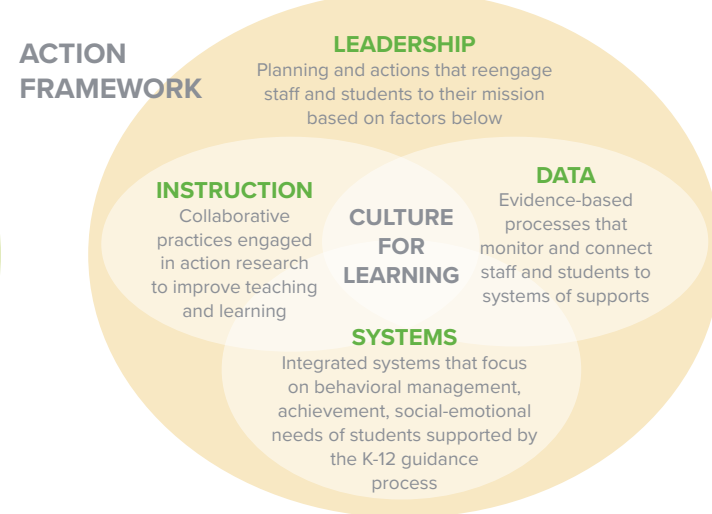


1,920 STUDENTS ¹	13.6% MIGRANT
12.1% RECEIVE SPECIAL ED.	79.2% QUALIFY FOR FRPL
18.9% LEARNING ENGLISH	90% 4-YEAR GRAD RATE

How did Sunnyside change to support college and career-ready graduation?

Ryan Maxwell, Sunnyside's Principal since 2013, believes that Sunnyside's success enabling 90% of students to graduate meeting college-ready requirements lies not in any specific schedule adopted or tactics used, but in how all staff are grounded in the same conceptual framework for the school.

They built a school culture focused on student learning by aligning *relational trust*, *academic press*, and *social support*, then adopted an action framework focused on systems, instruction, and data use.



Because of the shared conviction among staff, they've successfully implemented these structural changes that support the graduation requirements:

Extended time: Extended the school day by one hour, extended class periods, and adopted a trimester system.

Focus on college: Added an advisory period with lessons centered around planning for college, and require all kids go to a college campus before they graduate. Increased college-in-the-high-school classes; over 100 students per grade take these or AP classes.

Life skills: Every senior takes a senior capstone class that teaches skills like how to fill out a job application and how to pay taxes.

Data systems: These include an "All Hands on Deck" Color Identification Monitoring System to identify progress towards graduation (early warning system) and data-driven 45-day plans using multiple metrics.

¹ OSPI data from the 2016-17 school year

How did Sunnyside shape their culture to support rigorous graduation requirements?

Hiring practices

Principal Ryan Maxwell says that he hires teachers based on their core values; he believes that coaching can help them acquire the skills needed to improve their practice.

Leadership philosophy

"Any people in an organization... are a reflection of their leader. So here, when teachers fail in our building, we say 'It's because we didn't provide the support for them.'"

Empowering staff as experts

Professional Development time was replaced by Professional Learning Community time during which staff identify challenges and solutions from analyzing student-focused data. Staff review student failure rates every two weeks and use that information to drive where they target immediate interventions.

No excuses

"I don't see poverty as a barrier, at least in Sunnyside. I can look at any of our students in the top 5 percent of our graduating classes every year, and a majority of those kids come from poverty. I know the research says it has an effect, but it's an excuse. We don't buy that here. We're almost all poverty."

What results have they seen since changing their culture, programmatic framework and graduation expectations?

In terms of graduation rates, Sunnyside has been among the top 5% of the highest-improving schools in the state for the past three years in terms of graduation rate for all students and subgroups. In addition, their staff retention rate is 97%.

How much did it cost?

The school received a \$5 million state grant in 2010 to make sweeping changes that included moving from semesters to trimesters, implementing new attendance and disciplinary policies, and creating more opportunities for personalized attention from teachers.¹

Want to learn more?

To hear directly from students at Sunnyside about their experience, view the video interviews by AWSP.² Learn more about how Sunnyside carried out their holistic school transformation and to access the tools they used.³

"I BELIEVE ALL STUDENTS CAN MEET STATE STANDARDS"



"On the annual staff survey, staff are asked if they believe our students can meet state standards. The results have matched our graduation numbers almost exactly for the past 8 years. When teachers believe students can be successful, their behavior will match their belief."

Demonstrating new behaviors to change old beliefs



GRAD RATE

2008	49.5%
2009	49.7%
2010	64.8%
2011	70.9%
2012	78.4%
2013	85.1%
2014	84.7%
2015	89.2%
2016	90.2%

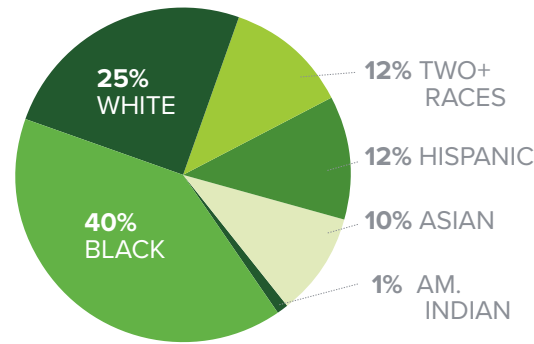
¹ Yakima Herald: <http://bit.ly/YakimaHeraldNoQuickFixes>

² AWSP Videos: <http://bit.ly/AWSP24CreditVideo>

³ LEV Blog: <http://bit.ly/LEVPowerlesstoPowerful>

SUMMIT SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL (SEATTLE)

- Established in 2015
- College-ready track
- Daily advisory & 45 min intervention



380 STUDENTS¹

17% RECEIVE SPECIAL ED.

7% LEARNING ENGLISH

0% MIGRANT

47% QUALIFY FOR FRPL

95% ON TRACK TO GRAD.

Key characteristics

Unlike the other districts and schools we profiled, Summit Sierra did not need to make changes to an existing system to meet the 24-credit requirement. All of Summit network's schools were designed from the outset to prepare every student for college, and their first Washington school launched with a 2019 graduating class. Summit's first school launched in California in 2003, and the charter network

now has 11 schools with its expansion to Washington in 2015. Although the network has had much success - with 96% of students being accepted to at least one four-year college - they've continually evaluated and refined their model with a focus on supporting students in developing the self-direction and skills needed for college persistence.

Staff expectations

Regardless of what classes a student has taken prior to attending Summit, they begin a college-ready track in 9th grade. In addition, all students take 6 AP classes: Literature, Language and Composition, History, Government, Environmental Science, and Calculus. Most students also take AP Computer Science and some take AP Spanish.

"What makes our school effective is not just our schedule, the personalized learning platform, or the number of credits - it's also **the mindset that every teacher at this school has about our kids**. We believe every single one should have the opportunity to attend college, and **it's up to us** to ensure that's a choice they can make because we've prepared them." — **Aubree Gomez, 9th grade Math teacher**

"My courses are challenging, but what keeps me going is the **nonstop support I receive from teachers like my mentor Mr. Sobiek**, who on the very first week of school made a trip to each of his mentees' homes, just to meet us, and learn how to best support us." — **Jalen Johnson, junior at Summit Sierra**

Personalized Learning Focus

Mentor Teacher + Peer Group

Every student has an assigned mentor teacher and peer group who they stay with all four years. Each mentor supports 18-20 kids whom they see daily and they have at least one 1:1 check-in with each student weekly.

Intervention Classes

Students attend four 60 minute intervention classes each week to receive differentiated math and literacy instruction in small groups.

Community Time

One hour of community time each week provides 9th and 10th graders with mentoring time and 11th and 12th graders with dedicated time for college readiness.

Daily Advisory

One hour of advisory each day focuses on personalized academic growth and building students' habits of success, including self-advocacy and self-directed learning, and provides time for students to work on content.

SCHEDULE

Six Class Semester

Students take six classes per semester in addition to their Personalized Learning Time (PLT) and Advisory.

90 min Teacher Prep Period

Each teacher has a 90-minute prep period daily; it's largely used for planning curriculum differentiation based off the student mastery data continually available through Summit's personalized learning platform.

Mon. / Tues. / Thurs. / Fri.

8:05 AM	Optional Breakfast
8:20 AM	Mentor PLT / Advisory
9:25 AM	Passing
9:30 AM	Class Block 1
10:55 AM	Passing
11:00 AM	Class Block 2
12:25 AM	Lunch
1:00 PM	Class Block 3
2:25 PM	Passing
2:30 PM	Summit Reads / Solves

Wed.

8:05 AM	Breakfast
8:20 AM	All School Meeting
9:05 AM	Community Time
10:05 AM	Mentor PLT / Advisory
1:00 PM	Optional Lunch or Dismissal

What uncommon strategies are enabling 95% of Summit students to be on track to graduate in four years?

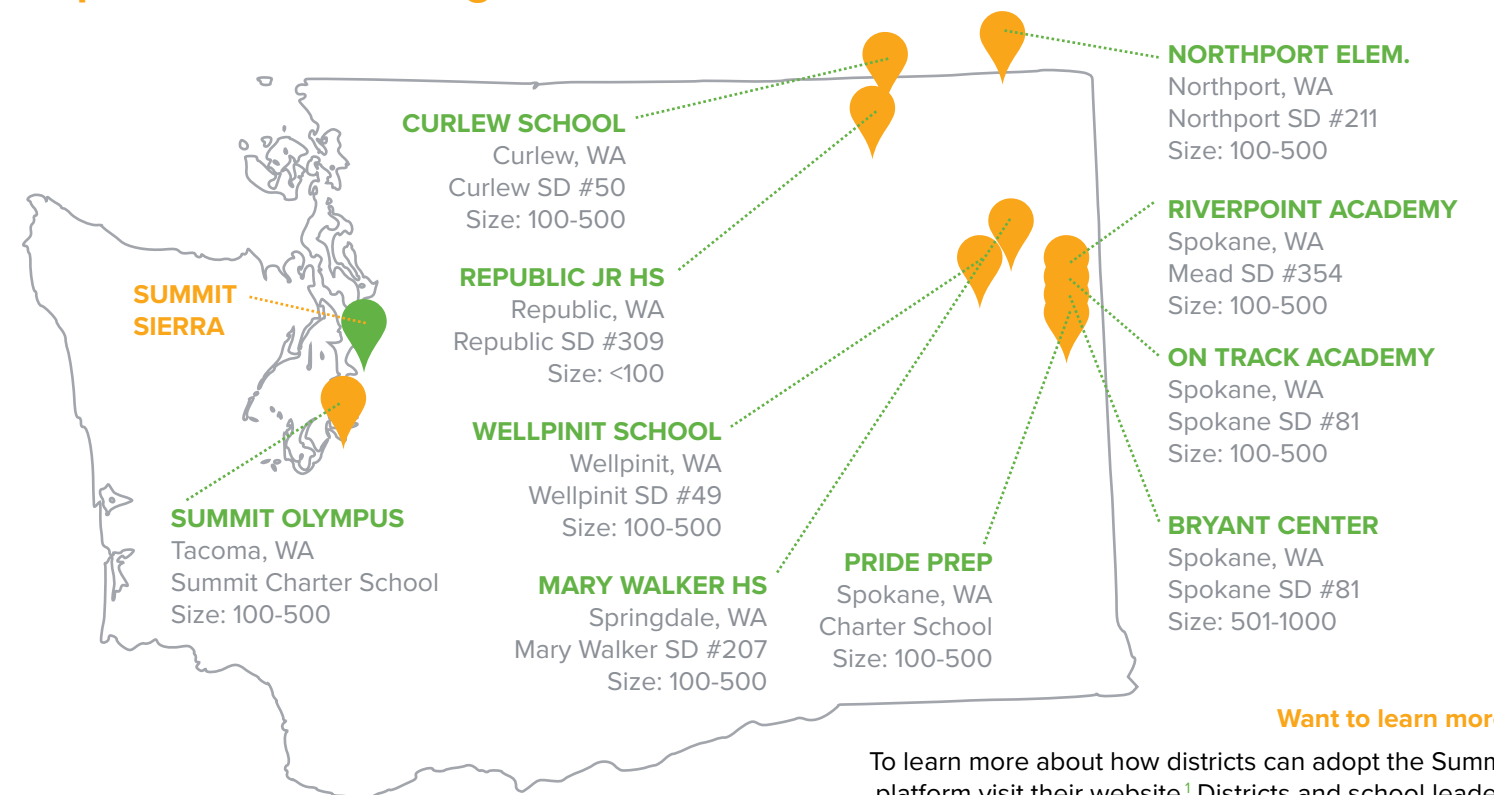
Because of the mastery-based grading system, students never need to retake an entire class, they instead focus on the specific skills and content they didn't master. This can be done during the school year during advisory period or over the summer. As a result, typically 95% of students have passed all of their classes by August of each year to stay on track towards graduating on time.

What are the drawbacks of Summit's approach?

None of the staff or students interviewed could identify drawbacks of Summit's personalized learning platform, the schedule, or other programmatic aspects tied to ensuring students graduate college-ready with 24 credits. However, students who've attended traditional public high schools noted that as a small school, Summit Sierra offers a limited number of electives (14) and extracurricular activities.

What schools and districts have adopted Summit's Learning platform in Washington?

The Summit network's personalized learning platform, curriculum, and professional development is available at no cost to any district or school and more than 330 schools across 40 states are now using it.



Want to learn more?

To learn more about how districts can adopt the Summit platform visit their website.¹ Districts and school leaders can contact Summit for learning visits.²

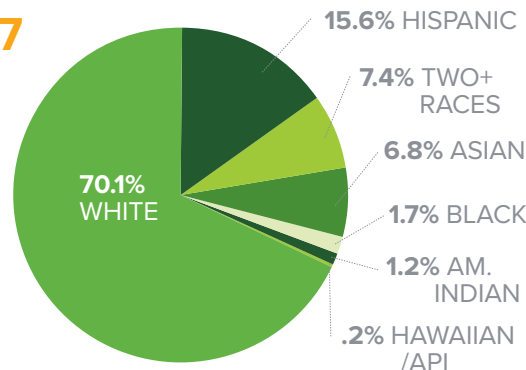
¹ OSPI data from the 2016-17 school year

¹ Summit Learning Implementation: <http://bit.ly/SummitImplementation> ² Contact Summit Public Schools: <http://bit.ly/ContactSummitPS>

BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

4 HIGH SCHOOLS

- Implemented in 2017
- Block A/B
- Daily advisory
- 24 credits [Class of 2018]
- 30 credits [Class of 2021]



3,629 STUDENTS¹

1.8% MIGRANT

13.6% RECEIVE SPECIAL ED.

35% QUALIFY FOR FRPL

6.7% LEARNING ENGLISH

82% 4-YEAR GRAD RATE

What changes did Bellingham make to implement the 24-credit requirement and support college-ready graduation?

Meeting the credit requirement was just one objective of a broader school redesign effort that included many changes:



Among the 64 CTE courses offered are Aerospace, Drivers' Ed and a required freshman class in Technical Literacy.



Consistent with the research on how much sleep teens need, high school start times were moved 45 minutes later: 8:30-3:15 p.m. and zero period blocks were eliminated.



The "Bellingham Promise," which is continually being re-evaluated, grounds all their efforts. Recently a 17th goal was added in 2018 on growing artisans and technicians.



Added an advisory class led by a certificated teacher who does a mini-lesson on executive function or study skills and provides homework support. Occurred 2x per week in 2017-18 and increased to daily in 2018-19.



Two more periods and an additional 15 minutes were added to the day. Students can take classes offered at any of the four high schools.



Tripled the number of teen parent programs, created a truancy board for kids with chronic discipline issues, added Student Success Coordinators who connect struggling students with tutors, peer-to-peer supports, and more. Through the CTE program, juniors and seniors who are at risk of dropping out can get credits for the jobs they hold.²

What was the impact on the budget?

The district spent two years saving \$1.4M to be able to expand the instructional day by 15 minutes and implement the new schedule

in 2017-18. This includes costs associated with staff, instructional materials, and equipment.⁴ More information available at bellingshamschools.org.

SCHEDULE

After trying a schedule with advisory twice a week in 2017-18, the district adopted daily advisory, at the end of each day, in 2018-19. This allows for students to have daily contact with their advisory teacher around homework help and keeping up to date, and also help with early dismissals for athletes to attend sports competitions.

A + B Days	
8:30 AM	Period 1 & 5 — 90 min
9:55 AM	Passing/snack — 10 min
10:05 AM	Period 2 & 6 + announcements — 90 min
11:35 AM	First Lunch — 35 min
	Passing
	Periods 3 & 7 — 90 min
	Dismissal
1:45 PM	Passing
1:50 PM	Periods 4 & 8 — 85 min
3:15 PM	Dismissal

Advisory: Wed. + Thurs.	
8:30 AM	Period 1 & 5 — 80 min
9:50 AM	Advisory + announcements — 30 min
10:20 AM	Passing/snack
10:25 AM	Period 2 & 6 — 80 min
11:45 AM	1 st Lunch — 35 min
	Passing
	Periods 3 & 7 — 85 min
	Dismissal
1:50 PM	Passing
1:55 PM	Periods 4 & 8 — 80 min
3:15 PM	Dismissal

FEEDBACK SURVEY

Bellingham surveyed all students and teachers in March of 2018 for their feedback on the new schedule and shared the following themes. Feedback is also visible on the Superintendent's blog.¹

What do STUDENTS say about the changes?

Advantages

- More class options, including the option to take classes at other high schools
- Additional time between classes allows for more preparation
- Mornings feel more relaxed and they get more sleep

Disadvantages

- Some students took on more AP classes and felt burdened by the homework
- Sports and other activities now occur later in the evening, requiring facilities changes (adding lighting, more gym space)
- Some students feel the AP classes don't maintain the previous level of rigor as a result of lost lecture time

What do TEACHERS say about the changes?

Advantages

- More prep time: Previously teachers taught 5 out of 6 periods. In the new system they teach 6 out of 8; the additional planning time is valuable
- Opportunity to teach new electives: many teachers are energized by the opportunity to develop new classes in their content areas

Disadvantages

- Overall contact time with students is down by 12-15%
- AP teachers report it has required cutting out some content and tough trade-offs
- World language teachers miss having daily contact with students

How has the new schedule impacted CTE opportunities?

The percent of students participating in at least one CTE course jumped to 64% in 2017-18, from 29% the preceding year, and includes new courses such as Aerospace Technology and "Living on Your Own." In addition, equity and access has improved, as visible in the proportionality snapshot. Proportionality reports are used by administrators and teachers to identify when student groups are proportionally over- or under- represented.



How did the district manage the process of adopting a new schedule and program?

Bellingham took an intentional approach to engaging a broad range of stakeholders over two years. They brought together all stakeholders under the direction of a veteran (retired) senior administrator who oversaw the process for a full year: Visit the BPS website for details of the process and meeting minutes.² They also studied a variety of systems and schedules and did site visits to districts. Finally Superintendent Baker's blog provided an important forum for communication with the community and opportunity to vet ideas.³

¹OSPI data from the 2016-17 school year

²BPS: CTE Classes: <http://bit.ly/BPSCTE>

³Superintendent Baker's Blog on Schedule: <http://bit.ly/BPSBakerBlog>

²Schedule Advisory Group: <http://bit.ly/BPSScheduleAdvisory>

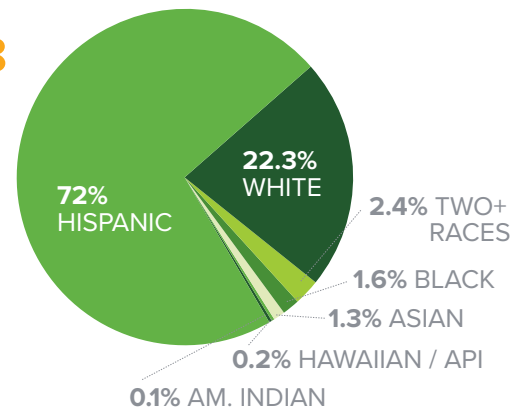
³Superintendent Baker's Blog for Input: <http://bit.ly/BakerInputWanted>

⁴BPS Budget Highlights: <http://bit.ly/BPSHighlights>

PASCO SCHOOL DISTRICT

3 HIGH SCHOOLS

- Implemented in 2018
- Five period trimester
- Credit recovery options
- 24 credits [Class of 2021]



5,239 STUDENTS¹

7.6% MIGRANT

11.6% RECEIVE SPECIAL ED.

64.9% QUALIFY FOR FRPL

21.3% LEARNING ENGLISH

73.6% 4-YEAR GRAD RATE

Why did Pasco decide to make changes in 2018 to meet the 24-credit requirement despite having a waiver to delay?

Pasco, like one-third of Washington districts, applied for a two-year waiver from the 24-credit requirement. However, after conducting a projection of outcomes if staying on a 6-period day in a semester system – and discovering that on-time graduation would be cut by 50%, with a disproportionately negative impact on under-achieving students — they decided

to make changes on an accelerated timeline. Although the timing for taking on a big change felt daunting, given that it was just one year after a strike by the teacher’s union and in the midst of a superintendent search, they felt they simply could not wait.

What was Pasco’s process for identifying the changes they should make?

In 2016, Suzanne Hall, Pasco’s Executive Director of Curriculum & Professional Development, reached out to Education Northwest², one of the 10 Regional Education Labs in the U.S. that provides technical assistance to school districts. With Ed Northwest’s support, they:

- Pulled together a large stakeholder group composed of teachers, administrators, and students that created a vision statement, guiding principles, and articulation of what they wanted as a transforming experience for kids, with a focus on their highest need students first.
- Formed a steering committee composed of teams from each of the high schools, who identified the major changes and schedules they should consider.
- Created projections related to various scheduling models and evaluated the pros and cons of each.
- Solicited community input through two community forums — one in English and one in Spanish.
- Conducted site visits to districts including Kelso, Sunnyside, and Bellingham. “Those districts were candid in sharing what they learned along the way; the most helpful advice we heard was to stay focused on our data on the projected impact on students — and to be willing to try new things as we went along.”

What were some of the challenges and how did Pasco overcome them?

At one point there was disagreement among stakeholders related to proposed scheduling changes and implications for staff contracts. They sought advice from other districts that

had navigated similar situations and ultimately they were able to move forward, in large part due to positive relationships between key administrators and members of the workforce.

SCHEDULE

SLIGHT VARIATIONS EXIST ACROSS HIGH SCHOOLS

7:45 AM	1 st Block
8:50 AM	Passing
8:56 AM	Intervention / Advisory
9:21 AM	Passing
9:27 AM	2 nd Block
10:32 AM	Passing
10:38 AM	3 rd Block
11:43 AM	Lunch
12:13 PM	Passing
12:19 PM	4 th Block
1:24 PM	Passing
1:30 PM	5 th Block
2:35 PM	Dismissal

What schedule and changes did Pasco adopt, and why?



Added 10 minutes to the school day and switched to a 60 day, 5-period trimester to eliminate time lost in passing periods

- Because Pasco has the two largest comprehensive high schools in the state, they decided a block schedule would not be feasible.
- They offer zero and 6th periods for band, athletics and intervention



Added 25 minutes of advisory intervention and post-HS planning, 4 days/week



Created 28 new courses, such as Sports Literature, Medical Chemistry, and Nuclear and Radiation Science



Students will be able to earn 7.5 credits each year, instead of 6



Added flexible course options such as online and competency-based courses.

How is Pasco supporting teachers in making the transition?

- Each teacher had 24 additional hours to collaboratively develop and revise courses, trimester-based curriculum, and pacing guides. In addition, professional development throughout the year during early release days and tier days focused on the trimester transition.
- Professional development focused on teaching in longer periods, in a trimester-based system. Instructional coaches continue to guide PLC work focused on ensuring students achieve proficiency on identified priority standards.
- Teachers meet in PLC teams weekly to analyze data and identify students in need of interventions and extensions. The advisory cohort model provides “walk-to-learn” RTI time 3 days per week.

How much did the changes cost?

Costs associated with the changes were limited; there were none associated with staffing.

The main costs were:

- \$190K for curriculum development and materials for the new class offerings - although many of the new classes used existing materials.
- \$86K for the technical assistance to do the visioning and planning, as well as to manage the community engagement process and events.

How are the changes designed to maintain Pasco’s robust CTE programming — and to expand it?

Under the new schedule Pasco offers 71 unique career and college ready courses across all the high schools and the Tri-Tech Skills Center.

- They’ve planned the changes associated with the 24-credit requirement in two phases: the first being the adoption of the new schedule in 2018-19, and the second phase to expand connections to CTE and career and vocational opportunities in the region. In the second phase, they will explore and define a range of career pathways for kids in conjunction with partners and identify the additional coursework that needs to be added. They are aiming for a total of 10 new career pathways over 5 years.
- CTE is comprised of four major occupational areas: Agriculture Science, Business and Marketing Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Education, and Technology Education. They have 26 equivalent courses, where students receive credit both for a core-course (e.g. math, art) and for CTE.
- Pasco’s existing CTE framework was helpful for the entire process of moving to a trimester; teachers have had to zero in on their standards and outcomes in a manner that is similar to how their CTE program has always functioned.

¹2017-2018 school year

²<http://educationnorthwest.org/areas-of-work/college-and-career>

CONCLUSION

The adoption of the 24-credit graduation requirement was a critical step towards ensuring every Washington student, regardless of zip code, receives a high-school education that allows them to be eligible for the post-secondary path of their choosing. Given our state's college counselor-to-student ratio of 482:1¹, this requirement is essential. Without it, we know thousands of students will fail to take the necessary high school courses to achieve their post-secondary goals. Yet only 67% of districts (170 out of 252) will meet the 24 credit requirement for the Class of 2019² – and we know that many of the students who won't have access to these more rigorous credit requirements are concentrated in high-poverty districts.

Changing an existing system is difficult – this was a clear theme from our interviews. However, it was also clear that it IS possible – and that approaches to doing so look different depending on local needs, opportunities, and funding. Even so, we consistently observed the following four characteristics in districts that successfully made changes:

1. They are committed to preparing their students for postsecondary opportunities.
2. They partnered with the community to design a new program.
3. They were willing to be creative, consider new ideas, and visit other districts.
4. They used student-focused data to make decisions.

In addition, our research suggests that our state can do more to support districts and accelerate full implementation of the college-ready requirement.

Key strategies include facilitating knowledge-sharing among districts about successful models adopted and the change management strategies they used. In addition, the state could support the availability of technical assistance and help identify any financial resources necessary for implementation. Interestingly, money was not necessarily a barrier – some districts did not spend significantly more to implement a new program while others did.

There will be an estimated 740,000 projected job openings in Washington state by 2021³ – and we know Washington students will need a degree, apprenticeship, or certificate to be competitive candidates for these opportunities. Let's work together to guarantee every Washington student gets a high school education that allows them to pursue the post-secondary credential of their choice and sets them up for successful, productive lives. We don't have time to waste.

¹Student-to-Counselor: <http://bit.ly/studentcounselor>

²Preliminary data from SBE, Dec 6 2018

³Pathways to Great Jobs in WA: <http://bit.ly/WKWJreport>