



UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Utah State Board of Education

FROM: Brad C. Smith
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: January 8, 2015

ACTION: Graduation Initiative Recommendations

Background:

In 2012, the Board directed USOE staff to form several task forces to study and gather information on graduation standards. In the spring of 2014, the Board received and reviewed a report on the recommendations of the various graduation task forces.

Key Points:

Though the Board reviewed the recommendations of the graduation task forces, some issues still need discussion and clarification.

Anticipated Action:

The Board will receive the information, discuss it, and take action on it, if necessary.

Contact: Sydnee Dickson, 801-538-7515

Graduation Initiative

A refresher of Board considerations - January 8, 2014

During the February 2014 Board meeting, the Standards and Assessment Committee heard the recommendations from the Computer Literacy, Financial Literacy, and Graduation Task Force chairs. Deputy Superintendent Brenda Hales then compiled these findings and presented an overview of recommendations at the March 2014 Board meeting. The Board did not take formal action at that time, (other than allowing advanced computer science to count as a science credit), but provided commentary for future action.

Since that time, there has been some confusion among educators as to the direction of the Board. Some have taken action assuming there are new requirements. Others are requesting changes. In order to prepare for registration for the 2015-2016 school year and prepare a statewide system for other possible changes to graduation requirements, staff is requesting clarity and direction for statewide graduation and digital literacy. In addition, staff will provide updates to changes that have already occurred.

The following documents will be used to guide the review and discussion:

- Computer Literacy Task Force Comparison
- Graduation Task Force Comparison
- Board Gateways

Utah State Board of Education Graduation Computer Technology

Task Force Comparison

March 7, 2014

Board Committee Recommendations	Computer Literacy Task Force
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current Computer Technology course more appropriate at an earlier grade level• New middle school course with emphasis on Digital Literacy• Digital literacy standards integrated through all curricular areas and all grades (K-12)• Consider Computer Science as a high school science discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Require keyboarding instruction in elementary schools• Require competency exam end of 5th grade with remediation coursework available in 6th grade• Introduce beginning coding to elementary students• Revamp CTE intro course to include more digital literacy including intro to coding and production (spreadsheets, word processing, presentations)• Move required high school computer literacy course to 8th grade using updated course standards (.5 graduation requirement)• Require an additional .5 digital literacy course 9-12 grade and expand offerings.• Phase in implementation of requirements due to current pressures of new core standards, new computer adaptive assessments, new educator evaluation systems, and grading schools issues

Utah State Board of Education Graduation/Grading Task Force Comparison

March 7, 2014

Board Committee Recommendations	Graduation/Grading Task Force
<p>Clarify Graduation Credits</p> <p>Proposal: Credits</p> <p>13 Essential Credits: 4 English 3 Math 3 Science 3 Social Studies .5 Another Social Studies Topic</p> <p>5 Needed Credits: 2 PE/Health 1.5 Art (Possible .5 Humanities) 1 CTE .5 Financial Literacy (Civic/Consumer/Life Skills)</p> <p>6 Required Electives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduation and Grading Task Force recommended that there be an increased emphasis on the SEOP process for defined course selection. Flexibility on required courses should be addressed through the SEOP process on foundation skills/credits (e.g., require three to five credits rather than the five currently required for PE/Health, Art, CTE, and Financial Literacy), which allows more flexibility with electives (e.g., permits six to eight elective credits rather than the six currently allowed). • The Task Force recommend the following revised credit proposal, but acknowledges that by maintaining the total number of required credits and the 13 “Essential” credits, there remains only two additional credits of flexibility: Revised Proposal (August 2013) Individualized/Focused Track driven by SEOP • 13 Essential Credits: (what does this mean? What courses are included? What skills will be learned?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 English ○ 3 Mathematics ○ 3 Science ○ 3 Social Studies ○ .5 Another Social Studies Topic • 11 Foundation Credits include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3-5 Credits from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § PE/Health (recommended 2 credits) § Art (Possible .5 credits Humanities) (recommended 1.5 credits) § CTE (recommended 1 credit) § Financial Literacy (recommended .5 credits) (Civic/Consumer/Life Skills) § 6-8 Elective Credits from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional classes based on student SEOP • Balanced coursework leading to an outcome • Total 24 Credits
<p>Clarify Graduation Gateways</p> <p>Proposal: Three Gateways <u>Early</u> 13 Essential Credits 11 Defined credits with state and/or district identified competency opportunities, a clearly defined SEOP with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduation and Grading Task Force recommended two state pathways to graduation with a regular high school diploma. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Studies Diploma (24 credits) with 13 essential credits, five essential foundation credits, and six elective credits. 2. Individualized/Focused Studies Diploma (24 credits) with 13 essential credits, and 11 elective credits. This option requires additional state-level decisions regarding the amount of desired available flexibility for the 11 elective credits; determine which, if any, of the 11 elective credits should require exposure to specific coursework (i.e., PE, art, etc.); and still be flexible enough to demonstrate the student’s intent to work towards a specific area of focus. It must

Utah State Board of Education Graduation/Grading Task Force Comparison

March 7, 2014

<p>post-secondary, early graduation plans, and no need for remediation.</p> <p><u>Standardized</u> 13 Essential Credits 5 Needed Credits 6 Elective Credits</p> <p><u>Specialized</u> 13 Essential Credits 11 Completely flexible based on well-defined SEOP and post-secondary plan.</p>	<p>be part of a College and Career Readiness (CCR) plan and link to post high-school options. (See Recommendation #3 for example of revised graduation credit requirements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both pathways are essential to providing students, families, and LEAs with flexibility to meet student needs, while allowing for changes in priorities and preferences throughout secondary experiences (i.e., middle school/junior high and high school). • Credits towards graduation may be accrued in a variety of methods including traditional classes, online or distance learning, and/or demonstration of knowledge and skills through competency assessments. • These two pathways rely on focused Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) planning starting in grade 7 and continuing through graduation, necessitating additional school counselor training and changed responsibilities to ensure all students receive ongoing appropriate course planning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Middle school/junior high (7-8): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Rigorous courses aligned with Utah Core Standards and 21st Century Skills § SEOP process with guidance counselors with adequate time for student discussions and planning (e.g., decreased student to counselor ratio, planning tools and assessments that provide for efficiency, relevance, and individualization) ○ High school (9-12): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Rigorous courses aligned with Utah Core Standards and 21st Century Skills § SEOP process continues with ongoing discussion and decisions regarding diploma pathway and timeline options. Planning occurs with guidance counselors with adequate time for student discussions and planning (e.g., decreased student to counselor ratio, planning tools and assessments that provide for efficiency, relevance, and individualization) • Both state diploma pathways (General Studies and Individual Studies) have timeline options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ extended time (greater than 4 years) ○ standard time (4 years) ○ accelerated time (less than 4 years) • There is an understanding that an extended timeline may not count in federal cohort graduation calculations, but should be included in state graduation calculations. There should be compelling reasons for using the alternate timelines, either accelerated or extended options, directly linked to legitimate student needs. • In addition to the two state diploma pathways listed above, LEAs could offer an LEA-enhanced diploma with additional requirements, such as a senior project or additional course/credit requirements, including the use of a citizenship grade. If this is the case, all three diploma options would be available to all students in the LEA. This will address mobility and equity concerns.
<p>Clearly define early graduation within Board Rule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not address

THREE POSSIBLE GRADUATION GATEWAYS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Require 24 State Level Credits

13

Essential credits with strictly defined competency opportunities

"Early"

11 Credits
5 defined
6 elective
Defined credits with state and/or district identified competency opportunities; a clearly defined SEOP with post secondary plans and no need for remediation

Graduate early

"Standard"

11 Credits
5 defined
6 elective

Graduate with class

"Specialized"

11 Credits
Completely flexible based on well-defined SEOP and post-secondary plan

Graduate with class

College/Career Readiness