

***WSPTA recognizes that today's high school students need a meaningful diploma that prepares them for college and career by allowing equitable access to innovative coursework, opportunities to show content mastery, and a variety of relevant graduation pathway options.***

## **Background**

- The Washington State Board of Education (SBE) recently created a “Profile of a Graduate”<sup>(1)</sup> that defines a graduate as someone who:
  - cultivates personal growth/knowledge
  - solves problems
  - communicates effectively
  - sustains wellness
  - embraces differences/diversity
  - masters life skills/self-agency
- Current graduation requirements<sup>(2)</sup>, pathways<sup>(3)</sup>, and class offerings will need to be aligned with these goals, and families and students must be part of the process. The SBE has heard from students wanting more options that embrace ethnic and cultural differences and, to be relevant, graduation pathways and class offerings need to align with a student’s High School and Beyond Plan<sup>(4)</sup>.
- Today’s learning environment is expanding to include not only testing and seat time, but also evidence of content mastery and relevance to post-secondary plans. The state legislature is working with the SBE and OSPI to craft mastery-based learning standards that students can use to earn credit in a meaningful way<sup>(5)</sup>. Content mastery is already used to award credit for foreign language proficiency and expanding this to other subjects will allow students more flexibility to attain credits and satisfy graduation pathways.
- The introduction of the Profile of a Graduate, and proposals for mastery-based learning standards and other flexible graduation pathways, adds to the existing array of state and local graduation requirements. Families and students may have difficulties navigating this complex and changing system. Unless equitable communication and counseling strategies are put in place, this may create inequities and enlarge opportunity gaps for students.

## **Proposed Solutions**

Washington State PTA shall advocate for legislation or policies that prepare students for college or career including:

- Graduation requirements that support a meaningful diploma.
- Opportunities to attain credits through evidence of content mastery and dual credit course options.
- Innovative and student-centered class offerings using culturally responsive curricula and teaching practices.
- Equitable access to, and family engagement about, relevant graduation pathways, high school and beyond plans, and college and career counseling.

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### **For More Information**

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***For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website.***

## Citations

- (1) "Profile of a Graduate." *Washington State Board of Education*, Washington State Board of Education, 2018, <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/our-work/profile-graduate> .
- (2) SBE graduation requirements - [Graduation Requirements | SBE \(wa.gov\)](#)
- (3) SBE Graduation pathways - [Graduation Pathway Options | SBE](#)
- (4) SBE High School & Beyond Plan - [High School and Beyond Plan | SBE \(wa.gov\)](#)
- (5) Mastery-based Learning Work Group. *Mastery-Based Learning in Washington State 2021 Report*. 2021. <https://www.sbe.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/GradRequirements/2021%20MBL%20Work%20Group%20Report.pdf>