



May 29, 2026

Dr. Antoinette Mitchell
State Superintendent of Education
Office of the State Superintendent of Education
1050 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Superintendent Mitchell,

The D.C. State Board of Education (State Board) advises the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) on state regulations and approves high school graduation requirements recommended by OSSE.¹ The State Board is therefore pleased to provide the following feedback on the draft revisions to high school graduation requirements, which OSSE shared at the State Board's working session on September 30, 2025. The feedback in this letter is informed by the recommendations of the High School Graduation Requirements Task Force (task force) convened by the State Board, as well as by public testimony, public engagement sessions, and a public feedback survey. This letter also includes a section on implementation considerations. The State Board looks forward to collaborating with OSSE to refine and modernize the District's high school graduation requirements, positioning local students for postsecondary success.

Feedback on OSSE's Draft Revisions to High School Graduation Requirements

1. ***Postsecondary Planning***: The State Board **supports** adding an additional required postsecondary planning touchpoint between each student and an advisor, for a total of at least four postsecondary planning touchpoints. The State Board recommends that students meet with an advisor at least once in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.
2. ***Capstone Project***: The State Board **does not support** adding a requirement for all students to complete a capstone project. Members are concerned that a required capstone project may create a barrier to graduation for some students, and that some schools lack the resources and staff to implement this requirement with an appropriate level of support for students.
3. ***Endorsement Options***: The State Board **supports** the proposed endorsement options. Members support separating the advanced coursework endorsement into three separate endorsement options and changing the GPA requirement for the Advanced Placement endorsement to an unweighted 3.0 to match the International Baccalaureate endorsement.
4. ***Core Content Updates***: The State Board considered proposed changes to the core content requirements individually. Cumulatively, these suggestions raise the credit requirement for

¹ D.C. Code § 38–2652(a)





graduation by 0.5 credits. The State Board has no feedback on how to address this increase, but one suggestion is to reduce the elective requirement by 0.5 credits.

- **Mathematics:** The State Board **supports** maintaining required mathematics credits at 4.0 and offering an equivalent integrated math course as an alternative to Algebra II. The State Board supports specifying that the equivalent integrated math course should be Integrated Math III to ensure it meets the same rigor as Algebra II.
 - **Science:** The State Board **does not support** reducing required science credits to 3.0. The State Board received feedback expressing concerns that reducing requirements may limit course options for some students, citing the example that many schools offer only the minimum number of world language courses to meet the required 2.0 credits.
 - **Health/PE:** The State Board **supports** the proposed clarification of Health/PE credits as 1.0 credit of physical education and 0.5 credits of health education.
 - **Financial Literacy:** The State Board **supports** adding a required 0.5 credits of financial literacy.
 - **Career Preparation:** The State Board **does not support** adding a required 0.5 credits of career preparation. Members suggest developing state standards and creating an elective course in career preparation.
5. **Community Engagement:** The State Board **supports** both the reduction of required hours and the expanded definition of community engagement.
6. **Practical Studies Diploma:** The State Board **does not support** the creation of a practical studies diploma. The State Board received feedback expressing concerns that this diploma would not be seen as a valuable credential by employers and higher education institutions, and that students may be tracked into this option without understanding the impact on postsecondary options. Members would like more data on students with disabilities who do not graduate, and on how this proposed option would impact them. Members ask that OSSE continue to research alternative options to support students with disabilities in graduation.

Implementation Considerations

The State Board offers the following implementation considerations to guide a smooth and equitable rollout of the updated graduation requirements. These points incorporate concerns raised by stakeholders, highlight areas where additional clarity from OSSE would improve implementation, and identify opportunities to ensure students across all LEAs can fully benefit from the new set of requirements.





- **Postsecondary Planning:** In response to concerns from the task force, the State Board is requesting clarification that touchpoints require an in-person conversation between the student and advisor and cannot be fulfilled solely through advising software.
- **Mathematics:** The State Board asks that OSSE ensure students will not lose access to Algebra II, in response to concerns that Algebra II is an admissions requirement for some higher education institutions.
- **Endorsement Options:** Members support suggestions from the task force to require LEAs to offer at least one endorsement option, to ask OSSE to ensure all students have access to four years of one world language to be able to access the Seal of Biliteracy, and to ask OSSE to review more endorsement options over time.
- **Financial Literacy:** Members support a suggestion from the task force that LEAs should be allowed to incorporate this course into a math or economics course.
- **Community Engagement:** The State Board asks that OSSE create a clearer definition of community engagement and provide guidance and training for those approving hours at the LEA and school levels. The State Board also supports a proposal from the task force to allow community engagement hours earned in the summer before 9th grade and hours earned during the school day, if not for a grade.
- **Credit Accommodations:** The State Board supports two proposals put forth by the task force on alternative ways to earn credit. The State Board **supports** a proposal to allow students to earn competency-based credit for the world language requirement, so that those who learn a language outside of school can earn credit through assessment. This proposal was suggested to address inequitable language offerings across schools. The State Board also **supports** a proposal to allow students to earn elective credit through out-of-school-time programs approved by OSSE.

The State Board again thanks OSSE leadership and staff for the time and effort they have invested in reimagining the District’s high school graduation requirements and in developing a proposal that will prepare the District’s future graduates for an ever-changing postsecondary landscape. Although we must continue collaborating to finalize these requirements, the State Board is excited to fulfill our statutory duties and to vote on finalized high school graduation requirements at the public meeting on August 19, 2026.

Sincerely,

The D.C. State Board of Education

