

Granting Equivalency Credit vs. Waiving Credit

During the reconfiguration process at the district level, several inconsistencies were discovered between individual school practice and state law. One of the inconsistencies is in regard to waiving credit. Schools do not have the authority to waive minimum state and district credit requirements. However, school principals do have the authority to grant credit for equivalent experiences under district policy (see pg. 3 of this document for details).

All schools in the district must ensure that all students meet both the minimum state and the minimum district credit-based graduation requirements. To earn a diploma from the Lake Washington School District, students must meet the minimum district credit-based requirements:

	Minimum State Credit-Based Graduation Requirements	District Credit-Based Graduation Requirements for the Classes of 2011 & 2012	District Credit-Based Graduation Requirements for the Classes of 2013 & 2014
English/Language Arts	3 credits	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	2 credits (3 credits for the class of 2013 and beyond)	2 credits	3 credits
Science	2 credits	2 credits	2 credits
Math/Science	--	1 credit	--
Social Studies	2.5 credits	3 credits	3 credits
Fine, Visual or Performing Arts	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
PE/Fitness	1.5 credits	1.5 credits	1.5 credits
Health	0.5 credit	0.5 credit	0.5 credit
Occupational Education	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
Electives	5.5 credits	6 credits	6 credits
Total	19 credits (20 credits for the class of 2013 and beyond)	22 credits	22 credits

Information regarding district credit-based graduation requirements can also be found on the LWSU website at:

<http://www.lwsd.org/Parents/Graduation-Requirements/Pages/default.aspx>

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There have been some questions about this, especially as it applies to PE and Health credit.

Both the state minimum credit-based requirements and the district credit-based requirements require students to earn 0.5 health credit and 1.5 PE/Fitness credits.

District policy IKF-R and WAC 180-51-066 both specify the following:

District policy language:

- The 0.5 health credit shall be met by a course covering the essential academic learning requirements at high school in health areas
- The 1.5 PE/Fitness credit shall be met by course work in physical education. Students may be excused from the physical portion of the fitness requirement under [RCW 28A.230.050](#). Such excused students shall be required to substitute equivalency credits in accordance with policies of the district, including demonstration of the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement.

WAC language:

(e) Two health and fitness credits that at minimum align with current essential academic learning requirements at grade ten and/or above plus content that is determined by the local school district. The assessment of achieved competence in this subject area is to be determined by the local district although state law requires districts to have "assessments or other strategies" in health and fitness at the high school level by 2008-09. The state superintendent's office has developed classroom-based assessment models for districts to use (RCW [28A.230.095](#)).

(i) The fitness portion of the requirement shall be met by course work in fitness education. The content of fitness courses shall be determined locally under WAC [180-51-025](#). Suggested fitness course outlines shall be developed by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. Students may be excused from the physical portion of the fitness requirement under RCW [28A.230.050](#). Such excused students shall be required to substitute equivalency credits in accordance with policies of boards of directors of districts, including demonstration of the knowledge portion of the fitness requirement.

(ii) "Directed athletics" shall be interpreted to include community-based organized athletics.

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Therefore, there are options for students to meet requirements by applying to substitute equivalency credit in accordance with district policy. District policy specifies:

Equivalency Credit for Alternative Learning Experiences, Non-High School Courses, Work Experience, and Challenges

It is the principal's responsibility to provide for the awarding of equivalency credit for alternative learning experiences, non-high school courses, work experience, and challenges. High school credits may be given and recorded on the transcript. The principal may grant high school graduation credit for planned learning experiences conducted away from the school. Examples of planned learning experiences are travel study, work-study, private lessons, distance learning, etc. One credit is awarded on the basis of 150 (60 minutes) hours of instruction. Persons requesting the granting of credit for out-of-school learning activities are to complete a written proposal (Appendix B) for approval of credit submitted to the principal. This proposal is to be submitted prior to the experience and contain the following:

- a. name of course/program,
- b. objectives,
- c. length of time,
- d. description of how credits shall be determined,
- e. content outline of program and/or major learning,
- f. description of how student performance shall be assessed,
- g. qualifications of instructional personnel, and
- h. plans for evaluation of program.

The professional judgment of the building principal or designee will determine whether or not an experience or a challenge meets the district's standard for recognition and acceptance.

The written proposal form for requesting equivalency credit referenced above (Appendix B) can be found on the LWSD website at:

<http://www.lwsd.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/About-Us/Administrative-Policies/IKF-R%20Appendix%20B%20Equivalency%20Credit.pdf>

IMPORTANT: Requests for equivalency credit are *not* limited to only PE and Health. This request process applies to all areas in which credit is required.