

Graduation Requirements Review: Relevant BCTF policies and procedures

Mandate and goals of education

9.A.01—The Mandate

The broad prime aim of the public school system should be to foster the growth and development of every individual, to the end that she/he will become and be a self-reliant, self-disciplined, participating member with a sense of social and environmental responsibility within a democratic, pluralistic society. (1994 AGM)

9.A.07—Provincial Education Goals

Provincial educational goals should be directed towards ensuring:

1. for each student the opportunity for successful participation and for the enhancement of his/her self-esteem regardless of aptitude or background
2. equal opportunity for all regardless of age, learning disabilities or abilities, or interests and aspirations
3. protection from discrimination on the basis of place of birth, place of residence, gender identity, age, race, religion, socioeconomic status, disability or sexual orientation
4. that action be taken to reverse the effects of past discrimination
5. provision of lifelong access to public education
6. provision of programs that increase students' options rather than limit them
7. equal opportunity for all students to develop capacity for intellectual and cultural growth, recreation and leisure activity, happy family relationship, productive community life, and participation as citizens in a democracy
8. opportunities for parents, students and members to develop objectives and programs
9. adequate teacher education programs in universities
10. adequate funding for the continued professional development of members
11. opportunities for students of any age to further their education (Feb 85 Ex, p. 12)
(90 AGM, pp. 26-27)
12. the right of all students to have access to public education and opposition to any action to limit access of so-called "illegal immigrants." (Jan 95 Ex, p. 23)

Principles of learning

9.A.15—Intermediate/Graduation Programs

1. The BCTF supports the Ministry of Education's three Principles of Learning:
 - a. Learning requires the active participation of the student.
 - b. People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
 - c. Learning is both an individual and a group process. (June 06 RA, p. 7)

Social justice lens

Please see attached.

Specific BCTF policies on graduation requirements

- 9.A.15—2. The study of an Aboriginal language or any language that a board decides on in consultation with members of the communities concerned should be an option as an addition to or to replace any second language for students in the proposed intermediate and graduation programs. (1990 AGM, pp. 26–32)
3. Meaningful work experience should be an option but not compulsory for all students. (1990 AGM, pp. 26-32)

4. That the BCTF supports the belief that a general education should include opportunities for career education. (08 AGM, p. 11)
5. That the BCTF favors the issuance of an appropriate certificate to every student (showing the level of education completed) when she/he leaves school. (69 AGM, p. 34)
(Oct 80 RA, p. 3)
6. That there should be no permanent recording of failure on the senior secondary school graduation statement (Dogwood Certificate). (June 81 Ex, p. 4)
7. That the French Immersion Dogwood continue to be awarded to students who have completed Grade 12 French Immersion. (Aug. 02 Ex., p. 8)
8. The graduation transitions program should be implemented in such a way that students fulfill the requirements of the graduation transitions program of 80 hours of physical activity by taking courses in their public schools. (Sept. 07 Ex., p. 3)
(10 AGM, p. 11)
9. Any decision about a student challenging a course should be made by teachers in consultation with the student and, as appropriate, her/his parent(s)/ guardian(s). (1990 AGM, pp. 26–32)
- 9.A.19—8.** That the BCTF support the use of letter grades and percentages on both term and final student progress reports for Grades 10, 11 and 12. (May 12 RA, p. 15)
9. That the Ministry of Education and the BCTF reassess the purpose and impacts of the provincial examination program through research and dialogue, including holding a provincial forum on assessment and evaluation. (May 12 RA, p. 15)
10. That the BCTF’s long-term objective continue to be elimination of provincial examinations in BC public schools. (May 94 RA)
(Nov. 07 RA, p. 12)
11. That the use of any kind of external secondary school leaving examination would be incompatible with the practice of the school’s accepting responsibility for determining whether or not its students had met graduation requirements. (May 72 Ex, p. 13)
(Reviewed Dec 79 Ex, p. 19)
12. That the BCTF is opposed to provincial exams at the Grade 10 and Grade 11 level. (04 AGM, p. 39)
- 9.B.03—**That the BCTF believes that public schools should be primarily concerned with general education, not with training for specific jobs. (69 AGM, p. 34)
(Reviewed Dec 79 Ex, p. 14)
- 9.C.03—**That the development and approval of courses at the local level should be encouraged. (Feb 71 Ex, p. 3)
- 9.C.05—**That locally developed courses numbered 11 or 12 that have been evaluated and approved by the local school board and local teachers’ association, and registered with the Ministry of Education, should be recognized for credit for graduation on the same basis as provincially prescribed courses. (June 75 Ex, p. 25)
(Reviewed Dec. 79 Ex, p. 19)
- 9.D.01—5.** That the provincial government should continue to provide the Dogwood Diploma, the BC Secondary Regular Graduation program and tuition-free education for adult students through programs offered by school boards. (1996 AGM p. 11)
(Nov. 01 RA, p. 14)

9.G.01—That the BCTF supports maintaining and/or introducing the teaching of essential consumer education skills within existing required courses.

(Feb. 82 RA, p. 16)

9.G.03—That the BCTF opposes separate compulsory courses in consumer education in the secondary school program.

(Feb. 82 RA, p. 6)

22.B.05—That the BCTF encourage the provincial government to reallocate its present budget for government scholarship examinations on an equitable basis to schools that wish to reward graduating students for any kind of excellence.

(Oct 74 RA, p. 18)

(Reviewed Dec 79 Ex, p. 18)

22.B.07—That the BCTF promote structures and processes to the end that the secondary school staff recognize and reward, from a provincial fund, secondary school students who are prepared to undertake practical, creative and self-initiated projects that will advance personal career goals and/or benefit society in some tangible manner.

(Oct 74 RA, p. 18)

(Reviewed June 80 Ex, p. 14)

22.B.09—That the BCTF seek a more equitable distribution, based on a broad variety of specialty areas, in the presentation of special government bursary awards to graduating secondary students.

(Feb. 86 RA, p. 13)

Additionally, the following sections of the *Members' Guide to the BCTF* www.bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/public/AboutUs/MembersGuide/guide.pdf may be helpful in framing your discussions:

Section 1: Aboriginal Education, p 22–24

Section 3: Bargaining, subsections I. – L. on working and learning conditions, p 32–36

Section 9: Education Policy, p 47–66

Section 41: Social Justice, p 147–151

Section 42: Social Responsibility, p 151–152

Section 51: Technology, p 161–162

The BCTF took the following positions in the previous graduation requirements review in 2002:

- That the government maintain the current mission statement and definition of an educated citizen, and develop concrete plans to further implement the aims articulated in those policies.
- That the government develop and implement concrete plans to improve equity of access in the public education system, with special attention to socio-economic questions.
- That the ministry develop policy to ensure that external courses offered in schools be taught by certified teachers who are employees of the board, members of the teachers' union, and members of the College of Teachers.
- That the ministry ensure that the prescribed curriculum and recommended learning resources for online courses, and external courses offered in school settings, go through the same review and approval processes as provincially prescribed curricula.
- That online learning only be utilized in situations where it is educationally appropriate or the only option for access.

- That students be required to take four credits of Fine Arts OR Applied Skills, OR Physical Education in the Graduation Program.
- That the ministry encourage schools to extend the exploratory courses common in Grade 8 to Grade 9 and 10, and make appropriate revisions to provincial curricula to facilitate this delivery model.
- That the ministry and the Federation work collaboratively to develop criteria for the approval of locally-developed courses.
- That the government carry through on its election promise to fully fund the arts, Music, and Physical Education.
- That the ministry make CAPP be a single four-credit course in the Graduation Program at the Grade 11 level.
- That the ministry revise the existing CAPP 8-10 course, reducing it to a single course that schools would offer in (a) grade(s) of their choosing.
- That the ministry rescind the requirements for student learning plans to be filed, transferred to a new school, and made available to parents.
- That schools have the option of requiring service learning (community service) rather than work experience.
- That a Mathematics 11 course remain a graduation requirement.
- That the ministry continue the work of the Math Task Force by convening a meeting of secondary math teachers, school counsellors, principals of secondary schools, and representatives from universities, colleges, and institutes, to discuss ways to make all the "pathways" in the secondary Mathematics curriculum meaningful, broadly accepted, and recognized as part of a progression to post-secondary education.
- That the ministry implement the recommendation of the Addressing Student Differences group that would allow schools the option of reducing the number of subjects a student was required to take in order to provide the student additional instructional time in the area of reading, writing, numeracy, or social responsibility.
- That the ministry accept for credit only those external courses that are relatively inexpensive for credit.
- That the required number of credits needed for graduation remain 52.
- That the graduation requirements specify only required courses and not categories such as "foundation studies" and "selected studies."
- That a Grade 11 Social Studies course and a Grade 11 Science course remain graduation requirements.
- That the government terminate the provincial examination program, and students' marks be based solely on their school mark.
- That there be a single graduation certificate, the "Dogwood," and that it be awarded at the successful completion of Grade 11 and 12.
- That the School Completion Certificate remain an option for some students.
- That only Grade 11 and 12 courses count towards graduation requirements.