January 10, 2020

Dear Middle School Students and Parents/Guardians,

The Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1599 last spring which expands ways in which students can meet graduation requirements and demonstrate readiness for their next steps after high school. One section of the bill addresses high school courses that students take prior to entering high school. This new law affects all students currently in grades 6-8. Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 180-51 which defines high school graduation requirements and the section on high school courses taken prior to high school (030) was revised in December 2019 and requires:

1) A student who has completed high school courses with a passing grade before attending high school be automatically given high school credit that will be applied to fulfilling high school graduation requirements, unless requested otherwise by the student and/or the student's parent or guardian.

2) A student and/or parent or guardian, may request that high school credit earned before high school be assigned a “non-numerical grade”, such as "pass" or "credit." A non-numerical grade will not be included in the student's high school grade point average calculation.

3) If student and/or parent or guardian does not want credit for the course(s) taken before attending high school or wants to request that credit be transcribed with a non-numerical grade, they must make their request to the school before completion of the 11th grade year.

The intent of this letter is to make you aware of this significant change in advance of the transition to high school, since most Bellevue School District (BSD) students take at least one high school level course (i.e. Algebra 1 or World Language) course in middle school. For high school level courses taken prior to the current school year, credit and grades will only be posted to the student’s transcript upon student and/or parent or guardian request using the District form to request credit. For courses taken in the 2019-20 school and in the future credit and/or grades will be automatically posted when students enter high school.

At this point, families do not need to do anything. The District is in the process of developing a request form for students and/or parents and guardian’s families to indicate their specific request to either remove the credit and grade or post a non-numerical grade as well as a form for families who are leaving the district prior to high school to indicate the completion of a high school course(s) in the BSD. These forms will be available to families before the beginning of the 2020-21 school year.

If you have questions, please see your middle school counselor.

Yours in Partnership,

John Harrison
Executive Director of Schools
Bellevue School District