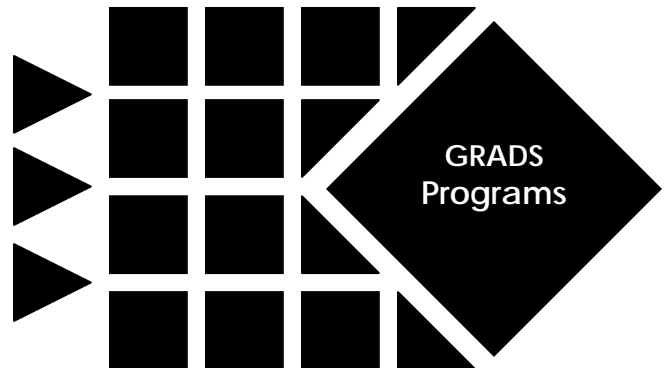


# **Career and Technical Education**

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## **GRADS Program** **(Graduation, Reality and Dual Skills)**

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***



**Graduation, Reality and Dual Skills (GRADS)** is a program for pregnant teens and/or young parents that focuses on work and family foundation skills of significance to these students. A GRADS program includes student demonstration of skills leading to high school graduation and economic independence. The GRADS program curriculum is developed at the local level using standards from the Work and Family Foundation areas of study in the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education (FACSE). The program requires a FACSE certified teacher, who has also completed GRADS training. The program includes on site child care and practicums, as well as coordination of learning activities outside the classroom. Further information regarding the required elements in a GRADS program and the approval process is included in this planning guide.

The National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences were adopted as the curriculum framework for Family and Consumer Sciences programs in Washington State in May of 1998. Among other projects the implementation plan includes on-going training in the use of these standards as well as program, course and curriculum planning. This work supports the philosophy and fundamental beliefs of Washington Family and Consumer Sciences Educators as expressed in the *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences document, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1998*. Special thanks go

to the original National Standards Implementation team comprised of Project Director, Deborah J. Handy, Washington State University, Barbara Pearson, Omak School District, Teresa M. Stone, North Mason School District, and Roxanne Trees, Seattle School District.

This GRADS program planning guide is the result of dedication and teamwork of Family and Consumer Science Education teachers who specialize in GRADS programs. These teachers and the Career and Technical Education Administrators, who have participated in and supported the development of the GRADS program concepts, procedures and GRADS teacher training are listed below.

- Dr. Debbie Handy, Washington State University Family and Consumer Sciences Education Teacher Educator
- Peggy McNabb, FACSE and GRADS Teacher, and Susan Dixon, CTE Director, Evergreen SD
- Denise Milesen, FACSE and GRADS Teacher, and Jerry Ringwood, Director, Tri-Tech Skills Center
- Dottie Record, FACSE and GRADS Teacher, and Dan Murray, Wapato SD

#### **GRADS Program Validation and Effectiveness:**

The GRADS program has been validated by the U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, for all pregnant and parenting teens, male and female, grades 7-12, in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Evidence of effectiveness is determined by data showing that pregnant and parenting teens enrolled in the program are more likely to remain in school during pregnancy and after childbirth; are more likely to obtain early prenatal care; are less likely to deliver low birth weight babies; are likely to increase their knowledge of positive parenting practices; and are less likely to have a subsequent pregnancy while still in school.

# Health and Human Services Pathway GRADS (Graduation, Reality and Dual Skills) Program Planning Guide

**Program Title:**

GRADS

Family and Consumer  
Sciences Education

**CIP Code:**

19.0726

**Course hours approved for vocational funding: 90 hours**

☒ Foundation/Exploratory

☐ Occupational/Preparatory

**Program Description:**

GRADS is a program (series of courses) for pregnant teens and/or young parents focusing on work and family foundation skills of significance to these students. A GRADS program includes student demonstration of skills leading to high school graduation and economic independence. The GRADS program curriculum is developed at the local level using standards from the Work and Family Foundation areas of study in the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education. The program requires a FACSE certified teacher, who has also completed GRADS training. The program includes on site child care and practicums, as well as coordination of learning activities outside the classroom. Further information regarding the required elements in a GRADS program and the approval process is included in this planning guide.

**Teacher Certification Required:**

Family and Consumer Sciences Education (V200002)

For Further Teacher Certification Information go to [www.k12.wa.us/certification](http://www.k12.wa.us/certification).

**Additional Teacher Training:**

Required

☒

Teachers must complete the comprehensive OSPI GRADS Training once every five years. They must also attend two OSPI updating sessions during those five years and attend one other conference, locally determined, content specific to the needs of pregnant and parenting teens and related curriculum during that same five years. Content examples are: Connecting with community resources, early brain development, updates on human development in the early years, parenting strategies, working with at risk students, factors affecting families such as poverty.

Recommended

☒

A FACSE teacher with at least two years of experience in FACSE is recommended.

Work Based Learning Certification

Applied Math Certification

**Source/s for Content/Industry Standards:**

National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences document, available for purchase at [www.wa-acte.org](http://www.wa-acte.org).

**Model curriculum frameworks** used to plan curriculum modules and individualized learning agreements for GRADS are posted at [www.k12.wa.us/careerteched/hhs](http://www.k12.wa.us/careerteched/hhs). These include Nutrition and Wellness; Human Development; Career, Community, and Family Connections; Consumer and Family Resources; Family Systems; Interpersonal Relationships; Parenting.

**The GRADS Program Approval Process and Contract:**

Districts will request approval for GRADS, CIP Code 19.0726, which will be granted once the following have been verified.

1. The district has been granted approval for the following Family and Consumer Sciences Education Work and Family Foundation Courses. In most cases these will already be approved for the district.

- a. Nutrition and Wellness, CIP Code 19.0501
- b. Human Development, CIP Code 19.0701
- c. Career, Community, and Family Connections, CIP Code 19.0703
- d. Family Systems, CIP Code 19.0704
- e. Interpersonal Relationships, CIP Code 19.0710
- f. Parenting, CIP Code 19.0706
- g. Consumer and Family Resources CIP Code 19.0401

Particularly where courses are not already approved, districts are encouraged to use the model frameworks for these courses that are posted on the Health and Human Services Pathway web page. It is recognized that performance assessments and corresponding curriculum components will be developed for individual students. For GRADS programs districts are authorized to combine the standards from each of these courses to meet the developmentally appropriate individual needs of GRADS students. A composite curriculum framework separate for GRADS will not be required. For monitoring purposes districts may

be asked for evidence that students are achieving the standards from these approved courses, but organized in such a way as to meet the unique needs of GRADS students. If a course is initially approved for GRADS, it may be used at other district sites but the FACSE standards for that course must be taught as a complete set. If the standards for a course are used for GRADS but not taught anywhere else in the district, the course will be considered active.

2. The district has completed a separate set of assurance statements related to the unique elements of a GRADS program and submitted that to the Health and Human Services Pathway Supervisor at OSPI. This will be referred to as the GRADS Contract. The GRADS Contract can be found at the end of this GRADS Planning Guide.

For OSPI reporting purposes GRADS CIP Code 19.0726 will be used.

**GRADS Contract Information:**

The Grads contract is to be completed by districts wishing to provide this program for students. The contract will be renewed and submitted to OSPI every five years. The GRADS contract can be found at the end of this document.

If districts are currently unable to implement a GRADS program they are encouraged to offer a Teen Parenting class, CIP Code, 19.0716, until the required elements of a GRADS program can be established. The Planning Guide for Teen Parenting is available on the Health and Human Services Pathway webpage.

**Typical Certifications Available for Students and Where to Find Them:**

Certifications that are relevant to any of the FACSE Work and Family courses are possibilities for students enrolled in GRADS programs.

**Recommended CTSO Leadership Programs/Activities:**

While there will be specific challenges involving GRADS students in FCCLA organizational activities, these students have a right and an immediate need to develop leadership skills at the highest possible level. Using FCCLA programs and activities in class and involving GRADS students in FCCLA chapter activities at all levels is strongly recommended. Programs specifically suited to the needs of pregnant and parenting teens are: Power of One, Dynamic Leadership, Working on Working, Career Connection, Student Body, Families First, Financial Fitness, Community Service, STAR Events: Interpersonal Communications and Focus On Children.

**Optional Program Models:**

Field Study, lab periods, individualized learning plans, FACSE extended learnings, work-based learning activities and worksite learning (paid or non-paid), and regularly scheduled classes are all options in a GRADS program. All of these options must be supervised by the GRADS teacher. It is important to remember that all worksite learning rules apply when students are granted credit for worksite learning in a non-paid work of the family or community resource learning experience.

The ideal class size is 12 – 20 students and regularly scheduled daily classes will provide the most consistent educational opportunities as well as the support from other teenagers in similar situations. If alternative learning options are utilized, then all Washington State alternative learning regulations apply.

If the GRADS program for an entire district is located in one building then it is recommended that a GRADS contact person in the other buildings (including middle schools and Junior High Schools) is identified. Suggestions are a Family and Consumer Sciences teacher, a school nurse, counselor or social worker. This “GRADS Team” should all understand and promote the benefits of a GRADS program, the protocol regarding discussing this choice with students, and the process of GRADS program enrollment.

Cross credit granted to students will insure on time graduation and can be earned in a variety of subject areas. Cross crediting may be organized by groups of standards attained in regular class sessions. Standards may also be arranged in an individualized learning plan format and credit granted in various subject areas when competency is demonstrated, or some combination of both arrangements. Districts are free to create other systems as they can. Credits for nutrition and health, for example, plus maybe one for math, science, or English may be earned in the same amount of time. It is important to remember that competency is based on attainment of standards and not just on the amount of time in attendance. Standards attained can result in credits earned in a variety of subject areas such as: language arts, health, math, nutrition, science, psychology, interpersonal relationships, current world problems, social studies and others as the district determines.

**Example Course Sequences for CTE Completer Status:**

Students enrolled in GRADS programs will earn credits in a locally determined series of courses. Those courses can be included in a completer sequence just as they would for a student who earns credits in the courses when offered “outside” a GRADS program.

## **Additional Information for GRADS Program Development:**

### **Child Care:**

It is the district's decision as to requirements of the teen parents regarding the use of the child care program for care of their child/children. It is important to remember that students should be involved in regular lab experiences in a child care setting as part of their parenting education program. This should happen whether their child is cared for in the lab setting or not.

It is recommended that the child care program not limit enrollment to children of teen parents. A diverse group of children provide an optimal learning situation for both the teens and the children. Some districts contract with private child care businesses to provide the child care on the school site. The school facilities are rented to the private business and the business manages the facility, employment, equipment, employees, etc. If this is the case the private business needs to clearly understand that this program will be used as a lab setting for high school students.

### **Curriculum Development:**

The *Adolescent Parent Resource Guide* from Ohio is often used by GRADS teachers as a foundation for lessons. Ohio is responsible for updating that guide. In Washington GRADS teachers share new and related lessons regularly at the GRADS teacher trainings and updates. It is critical to remember that all lessons must support student attainment of the National Standards for FACSE. Information related to purchasing the *Adolescent Parent Resource Guide* is available under FACSE resources on the Health and Human Services Pathway web page.

### **Coordination of Learning Activities Beyond the Classroom and Year:**

Individual districts will want to review the numbers of pregnant and parenting teens (both male and female) in their district. This number should include those currently enrolled, those who are not enrolled but live within school district boundaries and an estimate of how many students may become pregnant (including the fathers) during the school year. Allowing reasonable time during the teacher's work day (which may be extended beyond the district contract on both a daily and yearly basis) to conference with individual student's and parents, and to coordinate the variety of learning activities is critical. This time is in addition to planning time they are allowed for other classes they teach. It is also important to note that many if not most GRADS students rely on district transportation and will only be able to work with the GRADS teachers during school hours. In addition, the GRADS teacher may be the only or strongest support person for students during this challenging time. It is often the GRADS teacher who is the student's connection to returning to school after the baby is born, especially if this is a summer months birth.



**Coordination of Learning Activities Beyond the Classroom and Year Continued:**

Arrangements for teacher contact with GRADS students during the summer months should be made. The annual summary of GRADS programs information is posted on the Health and Human Services Pathway web page under Program Planning for FACSE. The average number of contacts made by GRADS teachers is noted in that document.

**Role of the GRADS Advisory Board:**

The GRADS Advisory Board members are key elements in a successful GRADS program. This is the group who recognizes that the concerns of pregnant and parenting teens cannot be met through the school district resources alone. Community, government agency, faith based, school district, families and private resources must all work together to insure success for these students. Advisory Board members can help with case management strategies from the social services perspective, coordinate community and agency support, promote and evaluate the program, identify funding sources outside the school district, provide student recognition and other activities as identified at the local level.

**Policy Review:**

A review of the school district's enrollment, absence and tutoring policies should be made to identify any policies that create barriers to education for pregnant and parenting students. The policy review and revisions as needed should include but is not limited to the following:

- Enrollment and scheduling policies to be sure the GRADs program is accessible to pregnant and parenting students who wish to enroll, including those who wish to enroll during the school year and/or who may be enrolled at a different school.
- Absence, tardy, transportation and tutoring policies to identify any potential barriers to education for pregnant and parenting students.
- Policies which pertain specifically to pregnant or parenting students for compliance with the Title IX regulations.

**GRADS Classroom Facilities:**

Classrooms for GRADS programs should be at or above the same standard as all other FACSE classrooms in the district. If FACSE labs are shared, then students from the GRADS classes should have access to these same labs. If in the past they have not been shared, but GRADS classes are not held in the room with the labs, then the labs need to be made available to the GRADS classes. A teacher office or conference area, that can be private, should have a telephone, internet access and lockable storage space.

**GRADS Program Communication:**

Because the GRADS program deals with the sensitive issues of teen pregnancy and teen parenting, program communication is especially important. The GRADS teacher and CTE administrator should develop and implement a communications plan including but not limited to the following:

- Current GRADS program descriptions specify that potential program enrollees are teenage male and female pregnant and parenting students.
- Regular contact with identified individuals and groups to keep them informed of program activities and accomplishments. Target audiences should include principals, superintendent/s, school board, guidance counselors, FACSE teachers, career counselors and community and professional groups.
- Coordination of learning outside the classroom is a planned for responsibility of the GRADS teacher.
- A written plan to be submitted to the school administration for the activities to be conducted during any coordination time provided.

## Essential Elements for GRADS (Graduation, Reality and Dual Skills) Programs in Washington State School Districts

\_\_\_\_\_ school district assures that the following elements will be in place before implementation  
(Name of school district)  
of a GRADS program and that the district will continue to provide these elements for the duration of that program. The district understands that these essential elements of a GRADS program are in addition to all other assurances included in the OSPI/CTE course approval request process. The district has submitted a request for approval for GRADS program, CIP Code, 19.0726.

| Essential Element  | Critical for Implementation Recommendations  |   |
|--|--|---|
| The teacher is certified in Family and Consumer Sciences Education and has completed the initial GRADS training. | During the five years following this agreement:<br>The teacher will attend two annual updates and one conference or class specific to GRADS curriculum content.  | The teacher should have a strong background in Human Development, Parenting and the needs of at-risk students. They should have a thorough understanding of the GRADS program goals and activities and be able to communicate that to all stakeholders. Most likely the GRADS teacher will need to be certified in work-based learning. |
| Curriculum Standards   | The curriculum is based on the Work and Family Foundation standards from the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education.<br>Regular GRADS classes are scheduled daily or minimally 80 minutes per week. Lessons appropriate for GRADS students are regularly shared at GRADS trainings and updates. | FACSE Standards are combined as appropriate for individual students but may also be taught to a group. Standards learned should result in credits earned in a variety of areas such as; English, Health, Math, Nutrition, Psychology, Interpersonal Relationships, Behavioral Current World Problems.                                   |
| Advisory Committee   | A local advisory committee specific to the GRADS program meets regularly. Members include representative parents and social services professionals in the community.   | Suggested professional members: Representatives from groups or agencies concerned with teen pregnancy, parenting and job training. DSHS, WIC Head Start, local prenatal clinics, child care, school counselors, career counselors and administrators, doctors, nurses, lawyers, dieticians and clergy.                                  |

|                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Child Care                          | On-site child care or child care in easy access to the school is available to teen parents. This includes infant care.  | Child care should be licensed or meeting licensing requirements.   |
| Coordination of Learning Activities | Teachers have scheduled time to make family contacts and coordinate home, medical, and community learning experiences.<br>Teachers and school administrators have procedures in place to help students access support services. | The coordination of learning experiences outside the classroom, family contacts and procedures to promote student access to support services is essential to students remaining in school until their graduation. All rules related to work-based learning and work-site learning must be followed.                |
| Evaluation and Research             | Teachers and/or CTE Administrators submit annual OSPI GRADS year end reports.   | Completing a local annual program evaluation for continuous improvement is important as the needs of and support systems for teen parents changes continually. Including data regarding increased graduation rates relative to the GRADS program in district wide information and reporting is strongly suggested. |

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Signature of Superintendent and Date

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Signature of CTE GRADS Advisory Board Chair and Date

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Signature/s of Principal/s in buildings in which there will be a GRADS program and Date

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Signature of GRADS Teacher and Date

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Signature of Career and Technical Education Director and Date

Please return to: Family and Consumer Sciences Program Supervisor, Career and Technical Education, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Old Capitol Building, PO Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200