

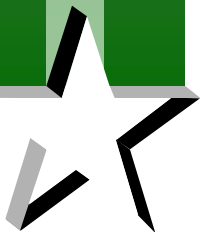
Standards of Accreditation

Overview of Current Provisions and Emergency Amendments

Anne Wescott

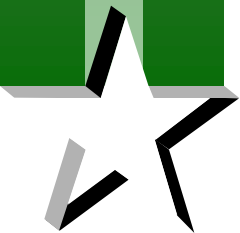
*Assistant Superintendent for Policy and
Communications*

May 22, 2013



Part I: Purpose

- **The standards for the accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools.**
- **The Standards of Quality, 22.1-253.13:3 of the Code of Virginia, require the Board of Education to promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation.**



Part II: Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

Each school shall have a philosophy, goals, and objectives that serve as the basis for policies and practices and:

- Are developed with advice of professional and lay representatives of the various populations served by the school,**
- Serve as a basis for the biennial school plan,**
- Are consistent with the Standards of Quality, and**
- Include measurable objectives to raise student and school achievement, improve attendance, reduce drop-out rates, increase graduation rates, and increase the quality of instruction.**

The school shall review annually whether it has met its goals and objectives.

Part III: Student Achievement Expectations

Promotion and retention policies:

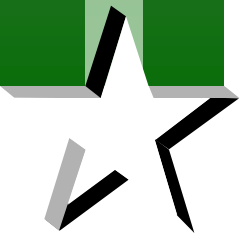
- Each student should learn the relevant grade level/course subject matter before promotion to the next grade.
- In K-8, each student shall be expected to take the applicable Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.
- Schools shall use SOL test results in K-8 as a part of a set of multiple criteria for promotion/retention policies.
- Each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL following instruction.
- Participation in the Virginia assessment program by students with disabilities is prescribed by the students' IEP or 504 plan.

Options for Completing High School

- **Standard Diploma**
- **Advanced Studies Diploma**
- **Special Diploma**
- **Certificate of Program Completion**

Beginning with the 9th grade class of 2013-2014, the Modified Standard Diploma will be folded into the Standard Diploma.

The Standard Technical Diploma and the Advanced Technical Diploma are eliminated.



Standard Diploma Course Requirements

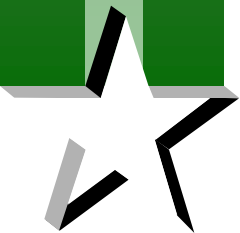
Discipline Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits
English	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History & Social Science	3	1
Health & Physical Education	2	
Foreign Language, Fine Arts, CTE	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	4	
Student Selected Test		1
CTE Credential		
Virtual Course		
Total	22	6

Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements

Discipline Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits
English	4	2
Mathematics	4	2
Laboratory Science	4	2
History & Social Science	4	2
Health & Physical Education	2	
Foreign Language	3	
Fine Arts of CTE	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	3	
Student Selected Test		1
Virtual Course		
Total	26	6

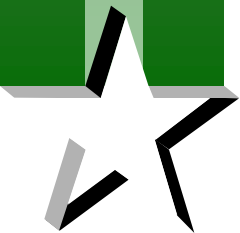
Special Diploma and Certificate of Program Completion

- **Students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas shall be awarded Special Diplomas.**
- **Students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board, but do not qualify for diplomas shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion.**



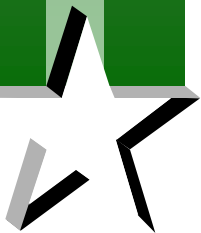
Awards for Exemplary Student Performance: Diploma Seals

- **Governor's Seal**
- **Board of Education Seal**
- **Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal**
- **Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology**
- **Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education**
- **Seals or awards for exemplary performance defined by the local school board**



Transfer Students and Credits: Standard Diploma

- **10th or the beginning of the 11th grade - four verified credits: one each in English, mathematics, history, and science**
- **11th or the beginning of the 12th grade - two verified credits: one in English and one of the student's choosing**
- **Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma. DOE may grant waivers in accordance with Board guidelines.**



Transfer Students and Credits: Advanced Studies Diploma

- **10th or the beginning of the 11th grade - six verified credits: two in English; one each in mathematics, history, and science; one of the student's choosing**
- **11th or the beginning of the 12th grade - four verified credits: one in English and three of the student's choosing**
- **Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma. VDOE may grant waivers in accordance with Board guidelines.**

Part IV: School Instructional Programs

- Each school shall establish learning objectives to be achieved by students at successive grade levels that meet or exceed the knowledge and skills contained in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science adopted by the board and shall continually assess the progress of each student in relation to the objectives.
- Instruction shall be designed to accommodate all students, including those identified with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, those identified as gifted/talented, and those who have limited English proficiency.

Elementary Schools

- **Elementary schools shall provide a program of instruction in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.**
- **Elementary schools shall provide instruction in art, music, and physical education and health, and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness in accordance with Board guidelines.**
- **A minimum of 75% of instructional time shall be in English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.**
- **Students who are not successfully progressing in early reading proficiency shall receive additional instruction in reading.**

Middle Schools

- **Middle schools shall provide a program of instruction in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.**
- **Each school shall provide instruction in art, music, foreign language, physical education and health, and career and technical exploration, and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness in accordance with Board guidelines.**
- **Level one of a foreign language and an Algebra I course shall be available to all 8th grade students.**
- **Students who are unable to read with comprehension shall receive additional instruction in reading.**

Secondary Schools

The secondary school shall provide a program of instruction in English, mathematics, science, and history/social science to meet the graduation requirements.

Students shall have opportunities to pursue studies in academics, fine arts, and career and technical areas:

- ✓ Career and technical education (CTE) choices to be a program completer in one of three or more occupational areas;
- ✓ Access to at least three advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge courses, or college-level courses for credit; and
- ✓ Opportunities to study and explore the fine arts and foreign languages.

Standard and Verified Units of Credit

Standard unit of credit:

- **A minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, and**
- **Successful completion of the course requirements.**

Verified unit of credit:

- **A minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction.**
- **Successful completion of the course requirements, and**
- **The achievement of a passing score on the end-of-course SOL test or a Board-approved substitute test for that course.**

Waivers of the 140 clock hour requirement may be granted by the division superintendent upon demonstration of mastery of course content and objectives.

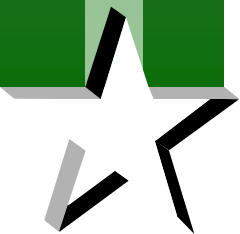
Substitute Tests

The Board may approve additional tests for awarding verified credit:

- **The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school division in which the test is given;**
- **The test must be knowledge-based;**
- **The test must be administered on a multistate or international basis; and**
- **The test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the Standards of Learning content in the course for which verified credit is given.**

Additional Flexibility

- **Expedited retakes – opportunities for students who have passed the course to retake the end-of-course test to earn a verified unit of credit.**
- **Locally awarded verified unit of credit – opportunities for students who have passed the course, but not the SOL test, to earn a verified unit of credit.**
- **Remediation recovery – opportunities for students to participate in a remediation program and then retake tests in English, mathematics, or both. Placing a student in a remediation recovery program does not penalize a school if the student is not successful on the retake of an SOL test.**



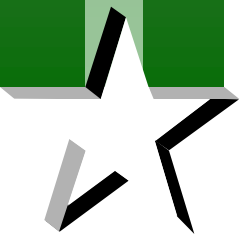
Dual Enrollment

Students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit (dual enrollment):

- 1. The high school principal must give written approval;**
- 2. The college must accept the student for admission to the course or courses; and**
- 3. The course or courses must be given by the college for degree credits.**

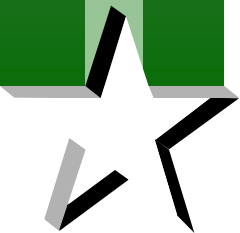
Academic and Career Plan

- **Beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, all schools shall begin development of a personal Academic and Career Plan for each seventh-grade student with completion by the fall of the student's eighth-grade year.**
- **The plan shall include the student's program of study for high school graduation and a postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests.**
- **The plan shall be reviewed and updated before the student enters the ninth and eleventh grades.**



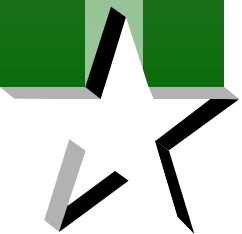
Standard School Year and School Day

- **The standard school year shall be 180 days.**
- **The standard school day for students in grades 1 through 12 shall average at least 5-1/2 hours, excluding breaks for meals, and a minimum of three hours for kindergarten.**



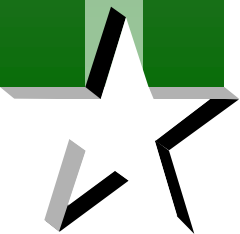
Offsite Instruction

- **Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance, as certified by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist.**
- **Schools are encouraged to pursue alternative means to deliver instruction to accommodate student needs through emerging technologies and other similar means.**



Extracurricular activities and recess

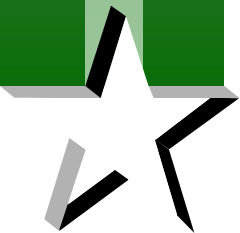
- **School sponsored extracurricular activities shall be under the direct supervision of the staff and shall contribute to the educational objectives of the school.**
- **Extracurricular activities and eligibility requirements shall be established and approved by the superintendent and the school board.**
- **Each elementary school shall provide students with a daily recess during the regular school year as determined appropriate by the school.**



Part V: School and Instructional Leadership

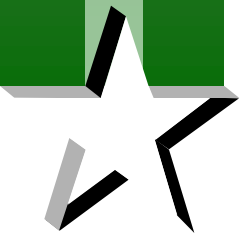
Role of the Principal

- **The principal is recognized as the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for effective school management that promotes positive student achievement, a safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn, and efficient use of resources.**



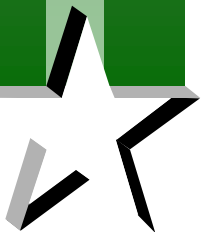
Role of the Professional Teaching Staff

- **The professional teaching staff shall be responsible for providing instruction that is educationally sound in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy, which is conducive to learning, and in which all students are expected to achieve the objectives of the Standards of Learning for the appropriate grade level or course.**



Staffing Requirements

- **Each school shall have at a minimum the staff as specified in the Standards of Quality, with proper licenses and endorsements for the positions they hold.**
- **The middle and secondary classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more than $5/6$ of the instructional day with no more than 150 student periods per day or 25 class periods per week.**



Part VI: School Facilities and Safety

- **Each school shall be in compliance with USBC, and shall have regular safety, health, and fire inspections.**
- **Each school shall have contingency plans for emergencies and staff certified in CPR, the Heimlich maneuver, and emergency first aid.**
- **The physical plant shall be accessible, barrier free, safe, and clean.**
- **There shall be suitable space for classrooms, library and media services, and physical education.**
- **There shall be adequate, safe, and properly-equipped laboratories for science, technology, fine arts, and career and technical programs.**

Part VII: School and Community Communications

Each school shall:

- **Involve parents and the community in developing the biennial school plan; on advisory committees; in curriculum studies; and in evaluating the educational program;**
- **Provide annually to the parents and the community the School Performance Report Card;**
- **Cooperate with business and industry in formulating career and technical educational programs; and**
- **Encourage and support the parent-teacher association or other organization and work cooperatively with it.**

Communications with Parents

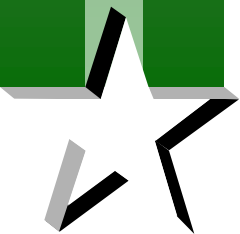
Each school shall provide to parents or guardians:

- **The learning objectives to be achieved at their child's grade level or a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses, and a copy of the school division promotion, retention, and remediation policies;**
- **A copy of the Standards of Learning applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date of the child's next SOL testing;**
- **An annual notice of the requirements for Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas.**

Part VIII: School Accreditation

Schools are accredited annually based on compliance with:

- **Pre-accreditation eligibility requirements,**
- **Student performance on SOL tests, and**
- **For schools with a 12th grade, the percentage of students graduating from or completing high school, based on the Graduation and Completion Index.**



Graduation and Completion Index

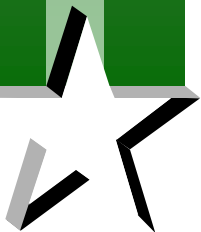
The graduation and completion index includes weighted points for:

- Diploma graduates (100 points),
- GED recipients (75 points),
- Students still in school (70 points), and
- Students earning certificates of program completion (25 points).

The graduation and completion index accounts for all students in the graduating class's 9th grade cohort, plus students transferring in, minus students transferring out.

Accreditation Ratings

- **Fully Accredited** – The school meets the pass rate of 75% in English and 70% in mathematics, science, and history/social science and, for schools with a 12th grade, 85 percentage points on the graduation and completion index.
- **Accredited with Warning in (specific academic area or areas)** - The school fails to achieve full accreditation in one or more academic areas or the minimum threshold for the graduation and completion index. A school may remain in the Accredited with Warning status for no more than three consecutive years.



Accreditation Ratings

Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate – The school meets the SOL pass rates to be rated Fully Accredited and fails to achieve a minimum of 85 percentage index points on the graduation and completion index, but achieves the following minimum benchmarks for each year:

- **Accreditation year 2011-2012 - 80 percentage points**
- **Accreditation year 2012-2013 - 81 percentage points**
- **Accreditation year 2013-2014 - 82 percentage points**
- **Accreditation year 2014-2015 - 83 percentage points**
- **Accreditation year 2015-2016 - 84 percentage points**

Note: The accreditation year is the year the accreditation rating is awarded, which follows the year the accreditation rating is earned.

Accreditation Ratings

- **Conditionally Accredited-New** – A new school comprised of students from one or more existing schools.
- **Conditionally Accredited-Reconstituted** – A school that is approved by the Board to be reconstituted. A school with this rating will revert to Accreditation Denied if it fails to be fully accredited at the agreed upon term, or to have its application for renewal approved.
- **Accreditation Denied** – A school that fails to meet the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate for three consecutive years.

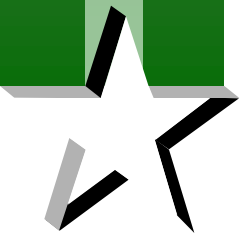
Actions Required for a School Accredited with Warning

- **Schools rated Accredited with Warning or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate must undergo an academic review in accordance with Board guidelines.**
- **Any school that is rated Accredited with Warning in English or mathematics must adopt an instructional method with a proven track record of success at raising student achievement.**
- **A three-year School Improvement Plan must be developed and implemented, based on the results of an academic review.**

Recognitions for School Accountability

Schools may be recognized by the Board by:

- **Public announcements recognizing individual schools;**
- **Tangible rewards;**
- **Waivers of certain board regulations;**
- **Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or**
- **Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.**



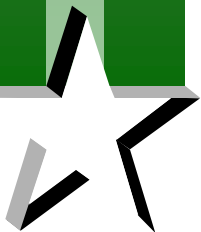
Special Provisions and Sanctions

- Any school in violation of these regulations shall be subject to appropriate action by the Board, including the withholding or denial of a school's accreditation.
- A school's accreditation rating may be withheld by action of the Board for any school in violation of test security procedures.
- Withholding of a school's accreditation rating shall not be considered an interruption of the three-consecutive-year period for receiving a rating of Accreditation Denied.
- The Board of Education may exercise its authority to seek school division compliance with school laws pursuant to relevant provisions of the *Code of Virginia* when any school within a division is rated Accreditation Denied.

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Waivers

- **Waivers of the requirements of these regulations may be granted by the Board on submission of a request from the division superintendent and chairman of the local school board. The request shall include documentation of the need for the waiver.**
- **In no event shall waivers be granted to the requirements of Part III of these regulations except that the Board of Education may provide for the waiver of graduation requirements in 8VAC20-131-50 upon the Board's initiative or at the request of a local school board on a case-by-case basis. The board shall develop guidelines for implementing these requirements.**



Revisions Required by Recent Legislative Actions

- **HB 642 and SB 514 (2012) would add three points to the Graduation and Completion Index for each student who earns a diploma and a CTE credential.**
- **HB 1999, SB 1167, and SB 1207 (2013) would require the Board to approve student growth indicators to be used in the Standards of Accreditation.**
- **HB 2028 and SB 986 (2013) would require students, beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2016-2017, to be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators to be awarded a Standard or an Advanced Studies Diploma.**

Revisions Required by Recent Legislative Actions

- **HB 2344 (2013) would require each school to have a school a threat assessment team. The threat assessment teams shall provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a threat to the community.**
- **HB 2346 (2013) requires at least two lock-down drills every year, one in September and one in January.**

