

**Salem High School
High School Innovation Planning Grant**

The Salem High School Innovation Planning Grant strives to better prepare students for postsecondary education, training, and employment through the creation of personalized learning opportunities centered on Career Pathways. In order to fully benefit from the advanced knowledge and skills available within each pathway students will need alternative and/or additional opportunities to obtain credits, including asynchronous learning, proficiency-based credit attainment, and workplace-based learning. In addition, Schools will need the flexibility to provide students with the experiences they need to ensure the successful acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary for success in their chosen pathway.

While creating a more personalized system of instruction will require a significant break from the traditional high school model, the result should be programs of study and even graduation requirements based on specific career pathways that better engage and prepare students for their postsecondary lives, so that every student graduates with a diploma and a plan for future employment.

Innovations

1. Career Pathways
2. Pathway Specific Graduation Requirements
3. Proficiency-Based Credit Accrual
4. Non-Traditional Scheduling
5. Advanced Learning Opportunities
6. Workplace Based Learning Opportunities

Impediments to Change

The Commonwealth has a huge responsibility to provide a world class education to its children. Anytime any organization sets out to accomplish such a monumental task involving millions of people they typically create volumes of policies, procedures, and regulations to bring about some level of consistency. This history of regulation makes change a difficult, if not impossible, proposition. The Salem High School Innovation Planning Grant Steering Team has begun to identify current regulations that will make implementing any real change in the Commonwealth's schools difficult.

1. Pathway Specific Graduation Requirements- At some point the VDOE will need to develop a process whereby school divisions submit pathway specific graduation requirements for approval. The current model with standard and advanced studies diploma options does not provide for individualized learning paths that meet the unique needs of every child.
2. Teacher Certification/licensure/Teacher of Record- There will need to be some process by which school divisions "certify" the teacher of record. This might include classes in an industry setting being taught by industry professionals.
3. Course Approval Process- There will need to be a process that allows school divisions to propose new Va. High School courses offered through a variety of business, industry and post-secondary education partners based on local, regional, and national employment trends.
4. The current agreements that exist between the community college system and the high schools in their service areas will need to be revised to allow for additional learning opportunities from other post-secondary education and training providers and industry partners. (ITT Tech-ANU)
5. School Calendar- School Divisions will need flexibility to start and end based on what is in the best interest of students. While the VDOE is making progress with regard to the relationship between clock hours and credits, the 990 clock hour requirement might continue to be problematic.
6. Proficiency Based Credit Accrual- There will need to be some process by which school divisions submit a plan or an assessment for review that will "Verify" course credit. This process cannot be overly burdensome.
7. Flexible SOL Testing Windows- School divisions will need the flexibility to test students when they demonstrate readiness as opposed to specific points in time.
8. Attendance – Some thought will need to be given to the fact that student attendance might look very different in the future. These differences should not adversely affect students and or schools as long as students are progressing toward their pathway goals.
9. Insurance Coverage for Workplace Based Learning Opportunities- Insurance coverage should follow the student into school approved job shadowing placements, internships, and apprenticeships.
10. Teacher Contracts- Current language outlining specific limitations on teacher days, hours, and students might need to be reviewed as the "typical" teacher workday begins to change.
11. NCAA Eligibility- As individualized graduation pathways for every student begin to emerge, the impact on students' NCAA eligibility will need to be examined. If a student graduates from a Va. High School with an approved diploma, they should be immediately eligible for NCAA participation.
12. Funding-The Commonwealth needs to commit to fully funding K-12 education at the level required by the Standards of Quality. Additional funding should also be made available to support High School Innovation Implementation Grants.