| **Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item** | **Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia** |
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# Agenda Item: B

## Date: January 23, 2020

### Title: Final Review of Requests for Renewal of Alternative Accreditation Plans from Albemarle County Public Schools, Town of Colonial Beach Public Schools, Craig County Public Schools, Highland County Public Schools, Scott County Public Schools and York County Public Schools for High Schools with a Graduation Cohort of Fifty (50) or Fewer Students

#### Presenter: Dr. Michelle Wallace, School Quality Coordinator, Office of School

#### Quality

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## Purpose of Presentation:

Action required by Board of Education regulation.

## Executive Summary: The following school divisions request approval of an alternative accreditation plan for the high schools indicated below to meet the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) benchmark for schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students. Below are the GCI benchmarks for these schools:

| **Name of School Division** | **Name of School(s) Submitting Alternative Accreditation Plan** | **GCI Index****2019** | **Attachment Reference** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Albemarle County | Murray High | 89.5 | Attachment A |
| Town of Colonial Beach | Colonial Beach High | 100 | Attachment B |
| Craig County | Craig County High | 89.3 | Attachment C |
| Highland County | Highland High | 100 | Attachment D |
| Scott County | Twin Springs High | 97.5 | Attachment E |
| York County | York River Academy | 92.9 | Attachment F |

Due to the small cohort size, one student can make a significant difference in the GCI. For this reason, the GCI alone is not an appropriate measure for these schools; additional criteria are needed to determine accreditation. Each school division is requesting a waiver to 8VAC 20-131-380 of the Standards of Accreditation so that adjustments may be made to the accreditation calculations for accountability purposes. The following are being requested by each school division for the accreditation cycles for three years beginning in 2019-2020:

1. The proposed alternative accreditation plan will be used only if the school fails to meet the GCI benchmark for full accreditation AND the cohort size for the graduating class is less than 50.
2. The maximum number of GCI bonus points allowable for alternative accreditation will be based upon the size of the Virginia On-Time Graduation Rate cohort as follows:
	* 0-14 students, no bonus points assigned: the school division will submit a written appeal to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
	* Maximum of 5 points for cohorts of 15-20 students
	* Maximum of 4 points for cohorts of 21-40 students
	* Maximum of 3 points for cohorts of 41-50 students
3. The division will submit a written appeal of the accreditation rating to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for cohort sizes of less than fifteen students or in cases where special circumstances warrant explanation and consideration in addition to the maximum point values outlined above.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction will make the final determination if the school division appeals the GCI due to cohort sizes of less than fifteen students or in cases where special circumstances warrant explanation and consideration.

Each school division has determined additional criteria and measurable thresholds for achieving bonus points based upon individual school data. Each school has submitted between three and six additional criteria, each of which is worth one bonus point if the benchmark is met. Descriptions of the additional criteria fall into the following categories:

* Advanced Diplomas earned by graduating cohort
* Advanced Placement course enrollment and/or Advanced Placement examination scores
* Completion of internships/mentorships
* Completion of service learning programs
* Career and Technical Education program completion, certification, and/or credential awards
* Dual Enrollment course enrollment
* Enrollment in higher level courses such as chemistry, calculus, and physics
* Post-High School status – postsecondary education, joining the military, full-time employment
* SOL pass rates and/or SOL pass advanced pass rates

The proposed school plans are included as Attachments A-F.

Previous plans were approved May 25, 2017. The current requests for renewal of alternative accreditation plans address the revisions to Graduation and Completion Index in the *Standards of Accreditation.*

This aligns with the following Board of Education Goal from the 2018-2023 Comprehensive Plan: Priority 3: Ensure successful implementation of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and the accountability system for school quality as embodied in the revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation.*

## Action Requested:

Final review: Action requested at this meeting.

Superintendent’s Recommendation:
The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the requests for renewal of alternative accreditation plans.

## Rationale for Action:

The schools submitting the renewal applications represent high schools with small graduating classes of fifty or fewer. One student can make a significant difference when calculating the Graduation and Completion Index. The approved alternative accreditation plans will provide the opportunity for schools to meet the GCI using an alternative calculation method, if needed.

## Previous Review or Action:

Previous review and action. Specify date and action taken below:

Date: October 25, 2012: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Albemarle County Public Schools: Murray High

Date: March 27, 2014: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Town of Colonial Beach: Colonial Beach High

Date: March 27, 2014: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Craig County: Craig County High

Date: March 27, 2014 Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Highland County: Highland High

Date: March 27, 2014: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Scott County: Twin Springs High

Date: March 27, 2014: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for York County: York River Academy

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Albemarle County Public Schools: Murray High

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Town of Colonial Beach: Colonial Beach High

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Craig County: Craig County High

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Highland County: Highland High

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for Scott County: Twin Springs High

Date: May 25, 2017: Action: Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plan for York County: York River Academy

Background Information and Statutory Authority:
8VAC20-131-380. Measurement of school quality for accreditation.

A. School quality for the purposes of accreditation shall be measured for each school using multiple indicators as provided for in this part. School quality indicators include student academic outcomes and other factors that are associated with student learning.

Designation of school quality indicators for accreditation purposes by the board is based on the following criteria:

1. Research demonstrates that the indicator is related to academic performance;

2. Standardized procedures exist across schools and school divisions for collection of data used for the indicator;

3. The data about the indicator is reliable and valid;

4. Performance in the indicator can be positively impacted through division and school level policies and procedures;

5. The measure meaningfully differentiates among schools based on progress of all students and student reporting groups;

6. The indicator does not unfairly impact one type or group of schools or students; and

7. The indicator is moderately to strongly correlated with school-level pass rates on state assessments.

B. Specific indicators designated by the board for accreditation purposes and defined in subsection F of this section include the following:

1. Academic achievement for all students in English (reading and writing), mathematics, and science as measured through board-approved assessments, including measures of student growth in English (reading and writing), mathematics, and English learner (EL) progress;

2. Academic achievement gaps in English (reading and writing) and mathematics for designated reporting groups, as determined through the performance of each reporting group against the state standard;

3. Graduation and school progress for schools with a graduating class as measured by the

Graduation Completion Index;

4. Dropout rates in schools with a graduating class;

5. Student participation and engagement as measured by chronic absenteeism in schools; and

6. College, career, and civic readiness in schools with a graduating class.

8VAC20-131-420. Waivers and alternative accreditation plans.

D. Alternative accreditation plans. Subject to the provisions of subsection B of this section, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in § 22.1-26 of the Code of Virginia, Governor's schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment may seek approval of an alternative accreditation plan from the board. Schools offering alternative education programs, schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students as defined by the graduation rate formula adopted by the board may request that the board approve an alternative accreditation plan to meet the graduation and completion index benchmark. Special purpose schools with alternative accreditation plans shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8VAC20-131-50 or 8VAC20-131-51.

As set forth in the Standards of Quality and according to department procedures, any school board may request the Board for release from state regulations or, on behalf of one or more of its schools, for approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of one or more of its schools as authorized for schools enumerated in this subsection, based on special circumstances.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:
Alternative Accreditation Plan applications will be up for renewal again in 2021-2022.

## Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

None