



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education**

**DATE:** June 23, 2017  
**TO:** Division Superintendents  
**FROM:** Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**SUBJECT: Career Investigations Course Requirement**

During the 2016 legislative session, the Governor and the General Assembly supported the development of a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* through the introduction and adoption of legislation which directed the Board to redefine the expectations of high school graduates in the Commonwealth.

The Career Investigations course requirement is a component of the proposed Standards of Accreditation (SOA) regulations pending final review this month. Upon Board of Education approval, the SOA regulations will move through the Administrative Process Act Provisions. One of the proposed revisions included a Career Investigations course requirement in middle school to support the development of the Academic and Career Plan (ACP).

At its January 26, 2017 meeting, the Board of Education added language to provide flexibility for school divisions to seek alternate means of delivering the career investigation course, provided that it is equivalent in content and academic rigor.

The proposed language in 8VAC20-131-140.B.2 states: "To support development of the ACP, students shall complete a Career Investigations course selected from the Career and Technical Education state-approved list to support development of the ACP, or a school division-provided alternative means of delivering the Career Investigations course, provided that the alternative is equivalent in content and academic rigor."

The Department of Education conducted a one-day seminar for invited participants to review the proposed regulations for implementing the Career Investigations course in Commonwealth middle schools and to explore creative, innovative, and flexible options for content delivery. Representatives from the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, the Virginia Fine Arts Commission, Career and Technical educators, and school counselors participated in the seminar.

Discussion included current and revised curriculum, master scheduling overviews, current course delivery methods, teacher endorsement as well as concerns and potential roadblocks for divisions seeking a creative solution in offering the course.

Teams brainstormed a variety of delivery options for the Career Investigations curriculum which could include, but not limited to:

- a stand-alone Career Investigations course;
- inclusion of Career Investigations course curriculum in all content areas;
- delivering Career Investigations course curriculum through zero bell or homeroom options;
- partnering horizontally and/or vertically between course disciplines or grade levels;
- infusing Career Investigation curriculum into Health and P.E. classes with school counselor support; and
- utilizing community and business partners to assist in delivering content.

Additional information and guidance will be produced through Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and school division partners and will be available on the VDOE website in September 2017.

If you have questions, please contact Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer, Division of Instruction, by email at [steven.constantino@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:steven.constantino@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 225-2034; or Joseph Wharff, School Counseling Specialist, by email at [Joseph.Wharff@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Joseph.Wharff@doe.virginia.gov), or by telephone at (804) 225-3370.

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