



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: December 8, 2017
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Transmittal of Statement of Administrative Impact and Projected Costs of Implementation for the Promulgation of Amendments to the Proposed Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia**

As part of its responsibility for promulgating new regulations or revisions to existing regulations, pursuant to § [22.1-17](#) of the *Code of Virginia* (Code), the Board of Education (Board) is required to develop a statement of the administrative impact and projected costs to school divisions related to implementing and complying with such regulations. In addition, the Board and Department of Education are required to send a copy of the statement to each division superintendent.

Section 22.1-19 of the *Code* requires the Board to prescribe standards for the accreditation of public elementary, middle, and high schools. Section 22.1-253.13:3 of the *Code* requires the Board to promulgate Standards of Accreditation for Virginia's K-12 public schools. The *Code* states:

...The Board of Education shall promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), which shall include student outcome measures, requirements and guidelines for instructional programs and for the integration of educational technology into such instructional programs, administrative and instructional staffing levels and positions, including staff positions for supporting educational technology, student services, auxiliary education programs such as library and media services, requirements for graduation from high school, community relations, and the philosophy, goals, and objectives of public education in Virginia...

The [Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia](#), commonly referred to as the Standards of Accreditation(SOA), provide the foundation for the provision of a high quality public education system within a system of accountability and continuous improvement. The proposed revisions are the result of an in-depth comprehensive review of the SOA in its entirety. Since 2014, the Board has conducted a section-by-section evaluation of these regulations, including extensive public outreach and participation through public comment, nine public hearings, and roundtables with more than 20 stakeholder groups, including division superintendents, parents, and practitioners.

The [proposed revisions to the SOA](#) provide for the implementation of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* as required by the 2016 General Assembly (HB 895, SB 336), and a new school accreditation system designed to provide a comprehensive picture of school quality, drive continuous improvement, build on the strengths in the existing accreditation system, and inform areas of technical assistance and support to schools. The amendments also further policy changes identified by the Board as part of its comprehensive review.

Proposed changes also include the following:

- Revising the philosophy and goals to reflect expectations for preparation of a Virginia public school graduate; recognition of multiple areas affecting school quality; and provision of continuous school improvement and school support.

- Expanding the use of performance-based assessments and reducing the number of credits verified by Standards of Learning tests to satisfy graduation requirements.
- Increasing the emphasis on work-based learning experiences.
- Increasing career exposure, exploration, and planning in elementary, middle, and high school.
- Emphasizing critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship (the five Cs).
- Implementing the four domains of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*: content knowledge, career planning, workplace skills, and community and civic responsibility.
- Reflecting changes in the School Quality Profile.
- Establishing a new school accreditation system that measures school quality through multiple indicators and the designation of performance levels in each indicator.

Administrative Impact and Projected Costs of Implementation

The proposed regulations are anticipated to have an administrative impact on local school divisions as follows:

- High schools will be required to provide opportunities for students to participate in work experiences such as internships, externships, credentialing, and blended learning.
- High schools will be required to provide a program of instruction that encompasses the requirements of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, and students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in the five Cs as a graduation requirement.
- The number of end-of-course tests required to be administered to high school students will be reduced.
- Middle schools will be required to provide a course in career investigations, or provide the course through an alternative means that is equivalent in content and rigor.
- All schools will be required to continually monitor school quality indicators and develop improvement plans to address performance on each school quality indicator.

Local school divisions may incur administrative costs related to the implementation of these regulations; however, it is expected that with sufficient support from the Department of Education, these impacts will be minimal. Throughout the next year, the Department is providing professional development and technical support to school divisions to help build the necessary capacity and knowledge to implement these changes.

You may contact this Department's Office of Policy at 804-225-2092 or by email at Policy@DOE.virginia.gov if you have any questions regarding these issues.

SRS/ZLR/bj