



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

April 8, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Diploma Seals**

According to the [\*Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia\*](#), students who meet the requirements for graduation and who demonstrate academic excellence may be eligible for one or more of the following diploma seals:

1. **The Governor's Seal** shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "B" or better and successfully complete college-level coursework that will earn the student at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or dual enrollment courses.
2. **The Board of Education Seal** shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "A."
3. **The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal** shall be awarded to students who: (i) earn a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma and complete a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" or better average in those courses; or (ii) pass an examination or an occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers a certification or occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, trade or professional association; or (iii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Board of Education shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements. For additional information on this seal, go to: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2011/060-11.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2011/060-11.shtml).
4. **The Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology** shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma, and: (i) satisfy all of the mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II; two verified units of credit) with a "B" average or better; and (ii) either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade or professional association; (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (c) pass an examination approved by the Board that confers college-level credit in a technology or computer science area. The Board of Education shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements. For additional information on this seal, go to: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2011/060-11.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2011/060-11.shtml).
5. **The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education** shall be awarded to students who earn either a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma; and: (i) complete Virginia and United

States History and Virginia and United States Government courses with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies; and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that would satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include: (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation will be deemed to have met this community service requirement.

**6. The Board of Education's Seal of Biliteracy** shall be awarded to students who earn a Board of Education-approved diploma and: (i) pass all required End-of-Course Assessments in English reading and writing at the proficient or higher level; and (ii) are proficient at the intermediate-mid level or higher in one or more languages other than English, as demonstrated through an assessment from a list to be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. American Sign Language qualifies as a language other than English. For additional information on this seal, go to: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2015/218-15.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2015/218-15.shtml).

Local school boards determine the design and use of other seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance in accordance with local school board criteria. The Department of Education, through James River Press, can only make available the six seals listed above, as outlined in the Standards of Accreditation, and does not have access to any other seals used by local school boards.

Please note: School divisions should order only seals for diplomas awarded during spring and summer 2016 and must place all orders directly with James River Press by **May 13, 2016**. James River Press will only accept orders from the central office of the school division; orders cannot be accepted from individual schools. For the 2015-2016 school year, orders for diploma seals may be e-mailed on the attached form to:

James River Press  
Brooke or Bob Rhodes  
[brooke@jamesriverpress.com](mailto:brooke@jamesriverpress.com)

Please direct additional questions about orders to Misty Kiser at [misty.kiser@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:misty.kiser@doe.virginia.gov).

For additional information regarding diploma seals, go to:  
[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/diploma\\_seals/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/diploma_seals/index.shtml).

For questions regarding a student's eligibility for a specific Board-approved seal, please contact the Office of Policy at (804) 225-2092 or [policydata@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:policydata@doe.virginia.gov).

SRS/ZR/bsj

Attachment:

A. [Diploma Seal Request Form](#) (Word)