



#111-21

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #111-21**

DATE: April 30, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Changes in Accreditation Requirements**

On March 18, 2021, Governor Northam signed [HB2238](#), as passed during the 2021 General Assembly session which changes Section [22.1-323](#) of the *Code of Virginia* to state that all private schools for students with disabilities licensed by the Virginia Board of Education must also be accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE). The specific language from the *Code*, as amended by HB2238, reads as follows:

Effective on July 1, 2021, the language in the *Code*, at § [22.1-323](#). Licenses generally, will be changed to read as follows:

B. Notwithstanding the provisions of § [22.1-19](#), the Board shall require, pursuant to regulation, any private school for students with disabilities that is licensed by the Board, as a condition for renewal of its initial license to operate, to obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency recognized by the Virginia Council for Private Education within three years of the issuance of its initial triennial license by the Board.

2. That notwithstanding the provisions of the first enactment of this act, any private school for students with disabilities that is licensed to operate by the Board of Education as of July 1, 2021, shall obtain accreditation from an

accrediting agency recognized by the Virginia Council for Private Education no later than July 1, 2024.

Upon acceptance of an application to operate, any school for students with disabilities licensed by the Board of Education in accordance with the provisions of the [Regulations Governing the Operation of Private Schools for Students with Disabilities](#) must become accredited within three years of the effective date of the issuance of a Triennial license. Additionally, all schools which are currently licensed by the Board of Education, regardless of licensure status on July 1, 2021, and are not fully accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Virginia Council for Private Education must become accredited by such an agency no later than July 1, 2024.

Information on the accreditation process can be found on the [VCPE](#) website or by emailing VCPE at office@vcpe.org. You may also wish to review the listing of the [Accrediting Agencies](#) currently recognized by VCPE to determine which agency would be most appropriate for your specific school operations.

For more information

If you have questions, please contact Hank Millward, Director of Facilities and Family Engagement, via email, at Hank.Millward@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone, at (804) 371-0525.

JFL/HJM/lc