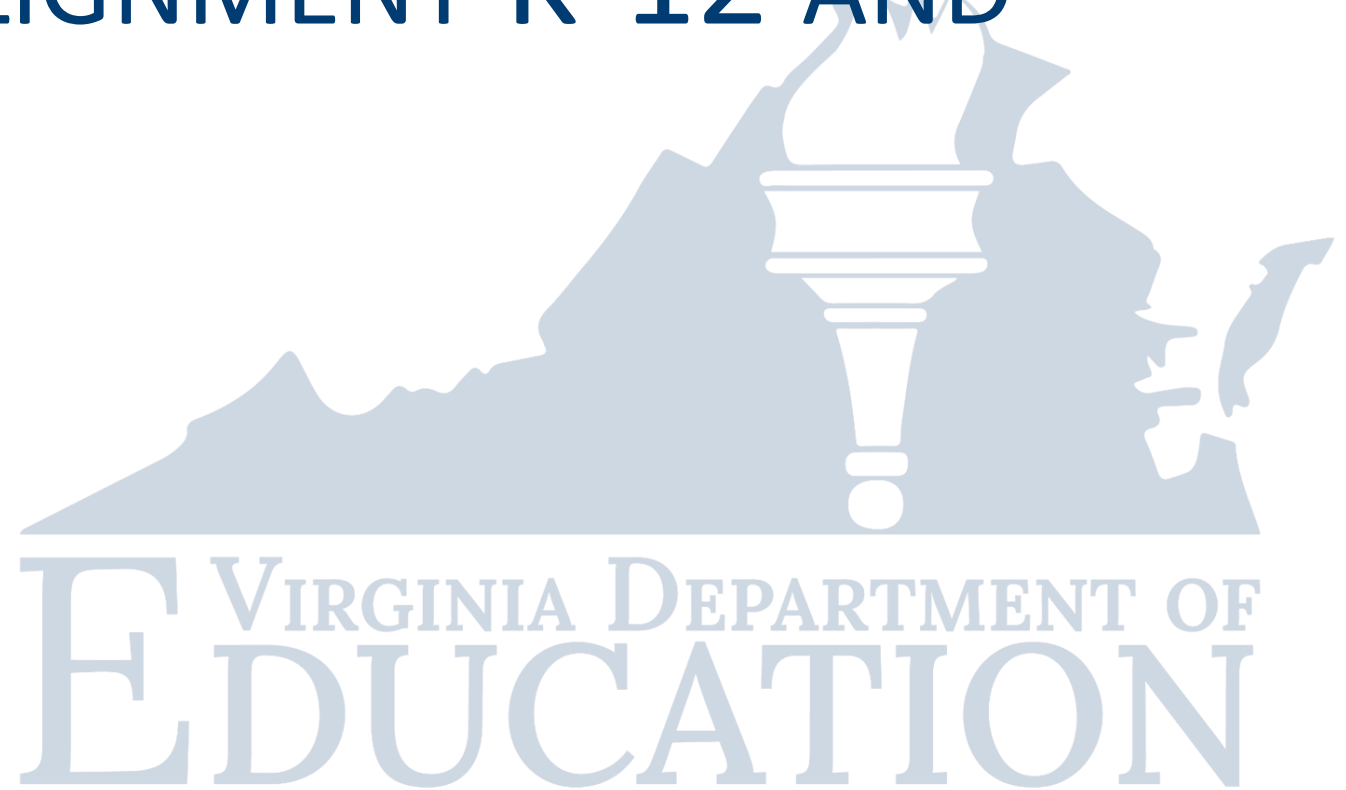


# SEPTEMBER 3E READINESS UPDATE: BUILDING CAREER PATHWAY SUPPORT AND ALIGNMENT K-12 AND BEYOND

Virginia Board of Education  
September 2024



# ALIGNMENT OF K-12 STUDENT EXPERIENCE TO 3E READINESS OUTCOMES

Overarching Goal:

K-12 students will engage in seamless pathways to sustainable employment in high-wage, high-demand careers post-graduation.

Every Virginia student graduates high school having earned at least one set of measurable experiences as defined by the 3E Readiness Framework including:

- high-demand industry recognized credential for **employment**,
- high-rigor military preparation as outlined in the outcome-based measures for **enlistment**, and/or
- transferable post-secondary credits (either through dual enrollment or accelerated, rigorous college credit-bearing coursework) for **enrollment**.

# ALIGNMENT OF K-12 STUDENT EXPERIENCE TO 3E READINESS OUTCOMES

Anticipated items for feedback and consideration between now and 2025:

- Career exploration definition and Academic and Career Plan (ACP) progression and components
- Work-based learning definition, associated rubric for high-quality WBL, and an update on the implementation CCRV (HB1087)
- CTE competencies and School Quality Profile metrics

The VDOE Workforce Feedback Group comprised of educators, business members, and CTE experts will be meeting regularly to provide thought partnership and feedback on these initiatives. Membership will be expanded depending on topic and ensure appropriate collaboration.

# DEFINING CAREER EXPLORATION

## Key Considerations:

- Currently, the career exploration definition does not provide a developmentally appropriate transition or clear pathway for educators. Similar terms are used interchangeably, creating challenges in alignment.
- We have a draft consistent, comprehensive definition developed in collaboration with partners and ensures alignment of skills, employer demand, and the Virginia Student Performance and Support Framework.
- We will be seeking feedback from a variety of stakeholders throughout the month.
- Feedback included suggested language related to parent and family engagement and occupation demand, wage, and local availability. Additional feedback was provided and included in the grade level definitions (see attachment).

# DEFINING CAREER EXPLORATION

Career exploration includes:

- a K-12 progression of exploring careers, skill sets, and attributes for careers as well personal strengths, skills, and interests;
- includes meaningful experiences where students are learning in workplace environments to help them understand “what work is”;
- provides opportunities for learning about different occupations, the local and regional demand and wage of available occupations, and how to meaningfully prepare for those occupations;
- allows students to evaluate and match career skill sets to one’s own interests, strengths, and skills; and
- continuously include efforts to engage business, workforce, postsecondary systems, and families to provide resources, education, and access to all students.

# DEFINING CAREER EXPLORATION

## Developmental orientation of the definition of career exploration

- The proposed guidance document includes career exploration definitions and expectations by elementary, middle, and high school grade bands.
  - **Elementary:** grounded within core content areas and in concrete exploration of all nationally- and state-recognized career clusters. It should foster development of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, citizenship, and creative thinking ([5 Cs](#)).
  - **Middle:** deeper focus on career clusters, grounded in updating the student's Academic Career Plan with demonstration of all 5Cs and career experiences through the end of middle school performance task. Middle schools should provide flexible, competency-based learning to ensure students can maximize 3E Readiness opportunities in high schools.
  - **High:** should be aligned in 3E Readiness. This includes understanding the high-demand industry-recognized pathways, advanced college-bearing coursework, and military career pathways in Grades 9 and 10. Grades 11 and 12 should include concrete experiences and high-quality work-based learning in one or more of the three readiness areas.

# ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLAN (ACP)

## Background

- The Standards of Accreditation (SOA) include provisions for each elementary, middle, and high school to “provide for the identification by all students of personal interests and abilities to support planning for postsecondary opportunities and career preparation.”
- The Academic Career Portfolio and Plan provide a framework that allows school leaders to log the experiences and outcomes of students through the career exploration programming designed at the school level.
- Middle school students are required by law to complete a career interest inventory and select a career pathway. They must complete a career investigations course which includes planning for academic courses, work-based learning opportunities, completion of industry certifications, independent projects, and postsecondary education.
- Students must develop an ACP beginning in seventh grade and completion by the end of the fall semester in eighth grade. Per Board regulations, the ACP is signed by the student, student’s parent or guardian, and school official; reviewed and updated annually; and is included in the student’s record.

# ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLAN (ACP)

## **Key Considerations and Challenges (feedback from division staff):**

### ***Technical Implementation Challenges***

- Platform Consistency: Stakeholders expressed a need for a uniform, state-supported platform to standardize ACP process across divisions.
- Data Management and Compliance: Questions about storage, compliance with state regulations, and best practices for managing ACP data were raised.

### ***Professional Development and Technical Assistance***

- Demand for consistent training for new staff and support for integration of academic and career planning K-12.
- Need for specific guidance related to elementary ACPP components and required artifacts.
- Need for additional resources and tailored support for younger students for career planning.
- Consider strategies to account for time constraints of school counselors in implementation.
- Support establishment and maintenance of partnerships with business, industry, and postsecondary partners.
- Ensure alignment of ACPs to transition-focused IEPs.



# ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLAN (ACP)

## Next Steps

1. In collaboration with the Workforce Feedback Group, populate the ACP progression to provide activities and outcomes to support competencies by grade band (elementary, middle, high).
2. Using the completed ACP progression, develop an updated ACP template grounded in student experiences to support 3E Readiness pathways in employment, enlistment, and enrollment.
3. Provide technical assistance, webinars, and resources to school divisions for consistent, quality implementation.
4. Create key networks of K-12, postsecondary, business, and workforce partners to ensure the ACP is a dynamic and meaningful document that ensures student engagement in 3E Readiness prior to high school graduation.
5. Implementation of the updated ACP should include communications and resources for schools and families and essential postsecondary, business, and workforce partners to create critical connections.