



# VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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# AGENDA ITEM

**Agenda Item:** P

**Date:** October 24, 2024

**Title:** Report on Schools Recognized for Exemplar Performance as Required by the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA)

**Presenters:** Dr. Andy Armstrong, Associate Superintendent of Programs

## **Purpose of Presentation**

For information only: No action required.

## **Executive Summary**

This report identifies schools, divisions, or school boards meeting the criteria for exemplar performance under the Board of Education's authority prescribed in the former *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8VAC20-131).

In April 2018, the Board approved final guidelines (pages 95 through 97 of the [Guidance Document Governing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia](#)) establishing the criteria for three types of recognition: (1) highest achievement, (2) continuous improvement, and (3) innovative practices. Recognition for highest achievement and continuous improvement are awarded annually based on the most current data and accreditation status. Recognition for innovative practice is awarded every two years and will be awarded later this school year upon completion of the nomination and review process.

For the 2024-2025 award year, **92** schools met the criteria for the Highest Achievement Award. These schools are listed in Attachment 1. Schools identified for this recognition must meet all these criteria using 2023-2024 school year data:

- The school must be Accredited (includes triennial waivers).

- The school meets state benchmark in reading, math and science (75 percent for reading and 70 percent for math and science) based on the current year pass rate on state assessments (not including growth or English Learner progress);
- All student groups within the school meet state benchmarks in reading and math (75 percent for reading and 70 percent for math) based on the current year pass rate on state assessments (not including growth or English Learner progress), *and*
  - For schools with two student groups, there is no more than five percentage points between the lowest performing group and all other students in the school; *or*
  - For schools with three or more student groups, there is no more than ten percentage points between the lowest performing group and all other students in the school.
- School demonstrates a current year chronic absenteeism rate of 15 percent or lower.

For schools with a graduating class, two additional criteria apply:

- School demonstrates a current year Graduation and Completion Index of 88 points or higher; and
- School demonstrates a current year dropout rate of six percent or lower.

There were **49** schools recognized for the Continuous Improvement Award. These schools are listed in Attachment 2. To receive this recognition the school can be *Accredited* or *Accredited with Conditions* and must meet at least **one** of the following criteria with three years of data (2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024):

**The school demonstrates an increase--**

- in the combined rate for math, reading and science for each of the past three years with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more;
- in the combined rate for two or more student groups in reading and math for each of the past three years with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more; *or*
- in the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) for each of the past three years with a total increase across the three years of four percent or more; *and* the school demonstrates a decrease in the dropout rate for each of the past three years with the total reduction across three years of 15 percent or more of the first year’s dropout rate.

Note: The Continuous Improvement Award criteria was amended for 2024-2025 to remove chronic absenteeism criteria since only two years of chronic absenteeism data was available (2022-2023 and 2023-2024).

**Action Requested**

No action requested.

**Previous Review or Action**

No previous review or action.

**Background Information and Statutory Authority**

Schools are identified for exemplar performance under the Board of Education's authority prescribed in the *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8VAC20-131-410) which stated the following:

Recognitions and rewards for school and division accountability.

Schools and divisions shall be recognized by the board in accordance with guidelines the board shall establish for the Exemplar School Recognition Program to recognize (i) schools or school divisions that exceed board-established requirements or show continuous improvement on academic and school quality indicators and (ii) schools, school divisions, and school boards that implement effective, innovative practices. Such recognition may include:

1. Public announcements recognizing individual schools and divisions;
2. Tangible rewards;
3. Waivers of certain board regulations;
4. Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or
5. Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.

In addition to board recognition, local school boards shall adopt policies to recognize individual schools through public announcements, media releases, and participation in community activities when setting policy relating to schools and budget development, as well as other appropriate recognition.

In April 2018, the Board approved final guidelines (pages 95 through 97 of the [Guidance Document Governing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia](#)) establishing the criteria for three types of recognition: (1) highest achievement, (2) continuous improvement, and (3) innovative practices.

### **Implementation and Communication**

Schools will be officially notified of their recognition after the Board meeting. To recognize all the award winners in the 2024-2025 school year:

- a) VDOE staff will create a school-specific image with the award recognition that a school may post to their school/division website, social media accounts, etc.
- b) A video will be developed with the names of the awardees in “rolling credits,” and they will be posted to the VDOE website. Divisions and schools can link to this video share on social media platforms.
- c) An Exemplar Performance Awards page will be created on the VDOE website which includes the award criteria, the videos and division names, as per the *Guidance Document*.
- d) A press release will be issued in October 2024, and it will include the names of the divisions receiving recognition.

### **Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:**

There is no significant impact on fiscal or human resources for either VDOE or school divisions.