

including staff positions for supporting educational technology, student services, auxiliary education programs such as library and media services, course and credit requirements for graduation from high school, community relations, and the philosophy, goals, and objectives of public education in Virginia.

Summary of Major Elements: The Board has announced its intent to amend the accreditation standards. At the April meeting, the Board of Education is requested to review the contents of the current standards and to discuss issues that will need to be addressed during the revision process.

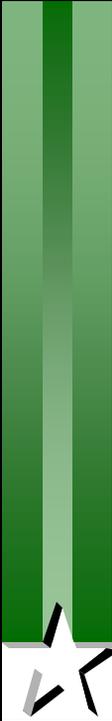
The current regulations were adopted by the Board of Education on July 29, 2000, and became effective September 28, 2000. Since that time, public schools in Virginia have implemented more rigorous requirements for accountability both at the school level and the student level. Now that most Virginia schools are fully accredited, and the first high school class required to earn verified units of credit has graduated from high school, it is time for a comprehensive review of the regulations to determine if there are changes that might be needed.

Mrs. Wescott will review the Standards of Accreditation and lead a discussion of issues related to the provisions of the standards.

Superintendent's Recommendation: N/A

Impact on Resources: N/A

Timetable for Further Review/Action: During the coming months, the Board of Education will review and approve proposed revisions to the Standards of Accreditation, public hearings will be held, and final regulations will be adopted.



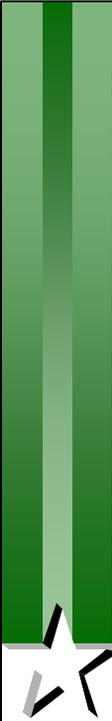
Standards of Accreditation

Overview of Current Provisions

*Board of Education Work Session
April 20-21, 2005*

*Anne Wescott
Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications*

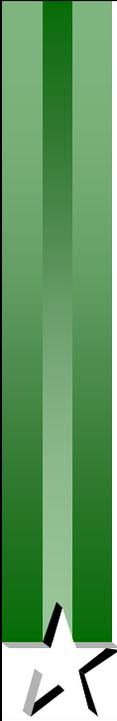
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Part I: Purpose

- The standards for the accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools.
- The Standards of Quality, § 22.1-253.13:3 of the Code of Virginia, require the Board of Education to promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation.

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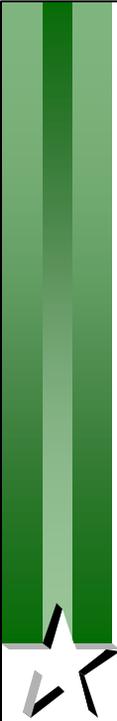
Part II: Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

Each school shall have a philosophy, goals, and objectives that:

- Are used to serve as a basis for the biennial school plan,
- Are consistent with the Standards of Quality, and
- Include measurable objectives to raise student and school achievement, improve attendance, reduce drop-out rates, and increase the quality of instruction.

The school shall review annually whether it has met its goals and objectives.

3



Part III: Student Achievement Expectations

Promotion and retention policies:

- Each student should learn the relevant grade level/course subject matter before promotion to the next grade.
- Schools shall use Standards of Learning test results in K-8 as a part of a set of multiple criteria for promotion/retention policies.
- Each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course Standards of Learning tests following course instruction.
- Schools may use the Standards of Learning test score in determining student's final course grade.

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Options for Completing High School

- Standard Diploma
- Advanced Studies Diploma
- Modified Standard Diploma
- Special Diploma
- Certificate of Program Completion

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Standard Diploma Course Requirements

| Discipline Area | Standard Units of Credit | Verified Units of Credit |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| English | 4 | 2 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 1 |
| Laboratory Science | 3 | 1 |
| History & Social Sciences | 3 | 1 |
| Health & Physical Education | 2 | |
| Fine Arts or Practical Arts | 1 | |
| Electives | 6 | |
| Student Selected Test | | 1 |
| TOTAL | 22 | 6 |

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Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements

| Discipline Area | Standard Units of Credit | Verified Units of Credit |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| English | 4 | 2 |
| Mathematics | 4 | 2 |
| Laboratory Science | 4 | 2 |
| History & Social Sciences | 4 | 2 |
| Foreign Language | 3 | |
| Health & Physical Education | 2 | |
| Fine Arts or Practical Arts | 1 | |
| Electives | 2 | |
| Student Selected Test | | 1 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 9 |

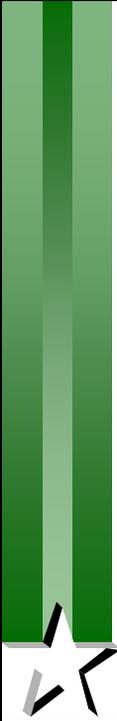
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Modified Standard Diploma Course Requirements

| | Standard Units of Credit |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics | 3 |
| Science | 2 |
| History and Social Science | 2 |
| Health and Physical Education | 2 |
| Fine or Practical Arts | 1 |
| Electives | 6 |
| Total | 20 |

Students pursuing the Modified Standard Diploma must pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments prescribed by the Board.

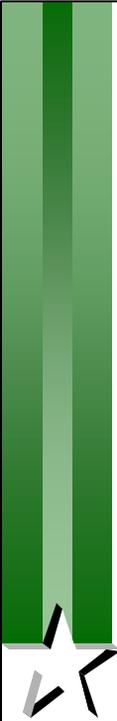
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Special Diploma and Certificate of Program Completion

- **Students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas shall be awarded Special Diplomas.**
- **Students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for diplomas shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion.**

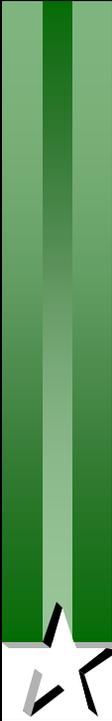
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Awards for Exemplary Student Performance: Diploma Seals

- **Governor's Seal**
- **Board of Education Seal**
- **Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal**
- **Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology**
- **Seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance defined by the local school board**

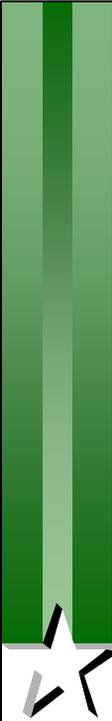
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Transfer of Credits: Standard Diploma

- 10th or the beginning of the 11th grade - four verified credits: one each in English, mathematics, history, and science
- 11th or the beginning of the 12th grade - two verified credits: one in English and one of the student's choosing
- Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma. DOE may grant waivers in accordance with Board guidelines.

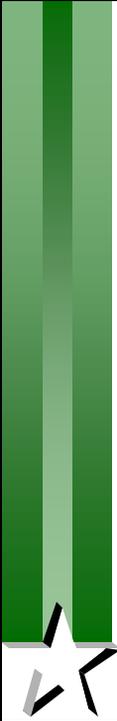
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Transfer of Credits: Advanced Studies Diploma

- 10th or the beginning of the 11th grade - six verified credits: two in English; one each in mathematics, history, and science; one of the student's choosing
- 11th or the beginning of the 12th grade - four verified credits: one in English and three of the student's choosing
- Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma. DOE may grant waivers in accordance with Board guidelines.

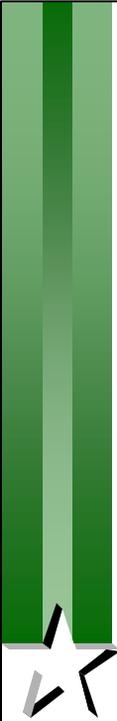
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Elementary Schools

- Elementary schools shall provide a program of instruction in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.
- Elementary schools shall provide instruction in art, music, and physical education and health, and shall provide a daily recess as determined appropriate by the school.
- A minimum of 75% of the annual instructional time of 990 hours shall be in English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.
- Students who are not successfully progressing in early reading proficiency shall receive additional instruction.

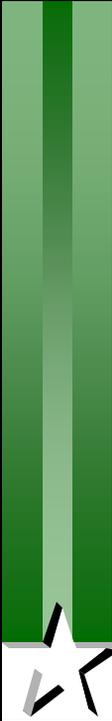
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Middle Schools

- Middle schools shall provide a program of instruction in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science.
- Each school shall provide instruction in art, music, foreign language, physical education and health, and career and technical exploration.
- In the eighth grade, elective courses shall be available in a foreign language, health and physical education, fine arts, and career and technical exploration.
- Each student shall be provided 140 clock hours per year of instruction in each of the four disciplines of English, math, science, and history/social science.

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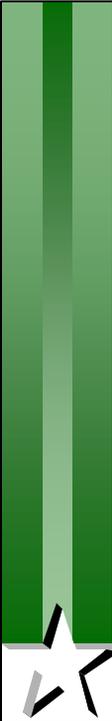
Secondary Schools

The secondary school shall provide a program of instruction in the academic areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science to meet the graduation requirements.

The school shall offer opportunities to pursue studies in academics, fine arts, and career and technical areas including:

- Career and technical education choices to be a program completer in one of three or more occupational areas;
- Access to at least two advanced placement courses or two college-level courses for credit; and
- Opportunities to study and explore the fine arts.

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Standard and Verified Units of Credit

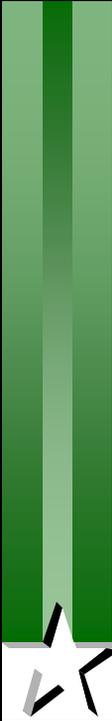
Standard unit of credit:

- A minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, and
- Successful completion of the requirements of the course.

Verified unit of credit:

- A minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction.
- Successful completion of the requirements of the course, and
- The achievement of a passing score on the end-of-course Standards of Learning test or a substitute test for that course.

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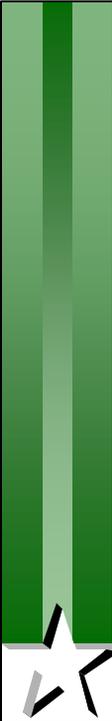


Substitute Tests

The Board may approve additional tests for awarding verified credit:

- The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school division in which the test is given;
- The test must be knowledge based;
- The test must be administered on a multistate or international basis; and
- The test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the Standards of Learning content in the course for which verified credit is given.

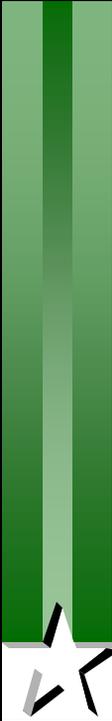
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Additional Flexibility: End-of-Course Tests

- Expedited retakes – opportunities for students who have passed the course to retake the end-of-course test to earn a verified unit of credit.
- Locally awarded verified unit of credit (§1 bill, not in the SOA) – opportunities for students who have passed the course to earn a verified unit of credit.

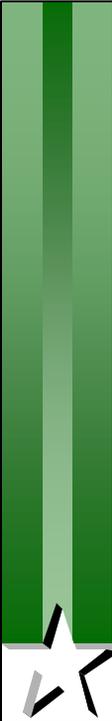
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Additional Flexibility: Accreditation

- **Remediation recovery – opportunities for students in K-8 to participate in a remediation program and then retake tests in English, mathematics, or both. In grades 9-12, the remediation recovery program applies to retakes of end-of-course Standards of Learning mathematics tests only.**

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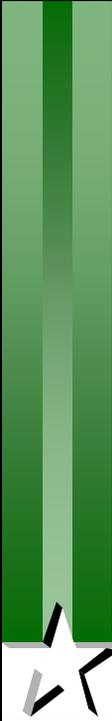


Dual Enrollment

Students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit (dual enrollment):

- **The high school principal must give written approval;**
- **The college must accept the student for admission to the course or courses; and**
- **The course or courses must be given by the college for degree credits.**

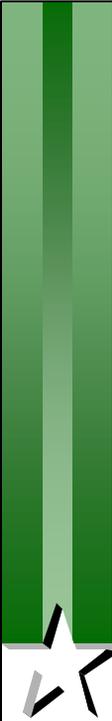
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Standard School Year and School Day

- The standard school year shall be 180 days.
- The standard school day for students in grades 1 through 12 shall average at least 5-1/2 hours, excluding breaks for meals, and a minimum of three hours for kindergarten.

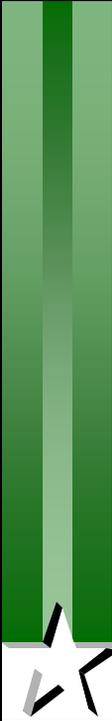
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Offsite Instruction

- Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance.
- Students may enroll in and receive a standard and verified unit of credit for supervised correspondence courses.
- Schools are encouraged to pursue alternative means to deliver instruction to accommodate student needs through emerging technologies and other similar means.

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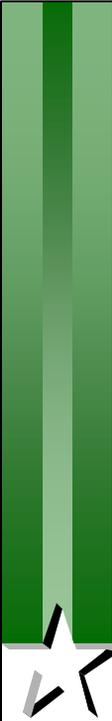


Part V: School and Instructional Leadership

Role of the Principal

- **The principal is recognized as the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for effective school management that promotes positive student achievement, a safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn, and efficient use of resources.**

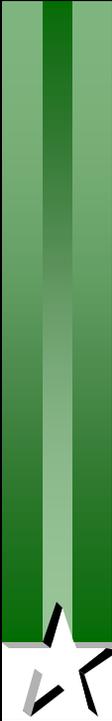
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Role of the Professional Teaching Staff

- **The professional teaching staff shall be responsible for providing instruction that is educationally sound in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy, which is conducive to learning, and in which all students are expected to achieve the objectives of the Standards of Learning for the appropriate grade level or course.**

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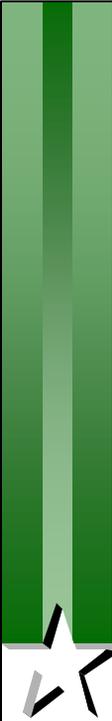


Staffing Requirements

Staffing requirements in the SOA mirror those in the Standards of Quality for:

- Principals
- Assistant principals
- Librarians
- Guidance counselors
- Clerical support

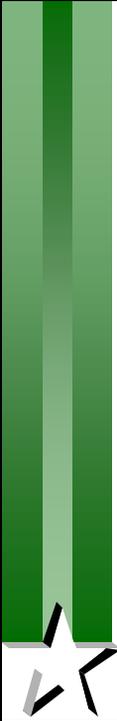
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Part VI: School Facilities and Safety

- Each school shall be in compliance with USBC, and shall have regular safety, health, and fire inspections.
- Each school shall have contingency plans for emergencies and staff certified in CPR, the Heimlich maneuver, and emergency first aid.
- The physical plant shall be accessible, barrier free, safe, and clean.
- There shall be suitable space for classrooms, library and media services, and physical education.
- There shall be adequate, safe, and properly-equipped laboratories for science, technology, fine arts, and career and technical programs.

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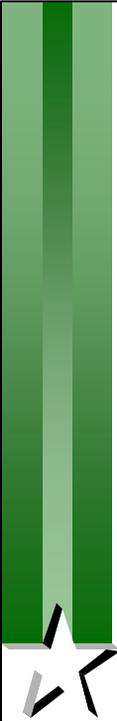


Part VII: School and Community Communications

Each school shall:

- Involve parents and the community in developing the biennial school plan; on advisory committees; in curriculum studies; and in evaluating the educational program;
- Provide annually to the parents and the community the School Performance Report Card;
- Cooperate with business and industry in formulating career and technical educational programs; and
- Encourage and support the parent-teacher association or other organization and work cooperatively with it.

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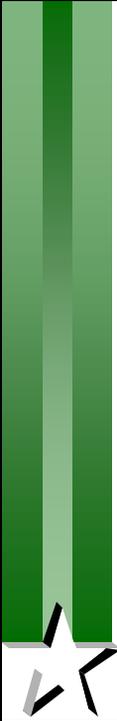


Communications with Parents

Each school shall provide to parents or guardians:

- The learning objectives to be achieved at their child's grade level or a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses, and a copy of the school division promotion, retention, and remediation policies;
- A copy of the Standards of Learning applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date of the child's next SOL testing;
- An annual notice of the requirements for Standard, Advanced Studies, and Modified Standard Diplomas.

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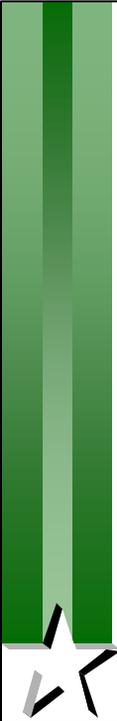
Part VIII: School Accreditation

Schools are accredited annually based on compliance with pre-accreditation eligibility requirements and results of student performance on the Standards of Learning tests.

The principal and division superintendent shall certify:

- The extent to which each school continues to meet standards
- That the Standards of Learning have been fully incorporated into the school division's curriculum
- Actions taken to correct any noncompliance issues cited in the previous year.

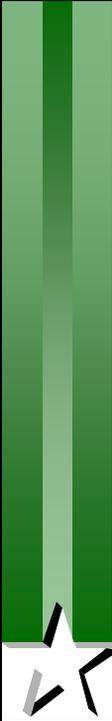
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Biennial Plan

- In keeping with provisions of the Standards of Quality, and in conjunction with the six-year plan of the division, each school shall prepare and implement a biennial school plan which shall be available to students, parents, staff and the public.
- Each biennial school plan shall be evaluated as part of the development of the next biennial plan.

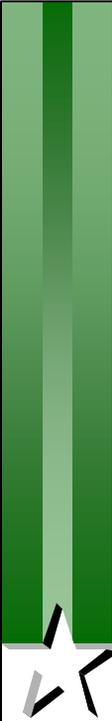
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Accreditation Ratings

- **Fully Accredited** - its eligible students meet the pass rate of 70% in each of the four core academic areas except the pass rates required shall be 75% in third and fifth grade English and 50% in third grade science and history/social science.
- **Accredited with Warning** in (specific academic area or areas) - it does not meet the pass-rate requirements to be Fully Accredited. For 2005-06 and beyond, a school will be Accredited with Warning if it has achieved Fully Accredited status but has failed to meet the requirements to maintain that status in any one year. Following 2005-06, such a school may remain in the Accredited with Warning status for no more than three consecutive years.

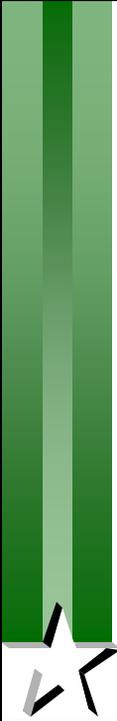
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Accreditation Ratings

- **Accreditation Denied** – (academic years 2005-06 and beyond) - it fails to meet the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited, except for schools rated Accredited with Warning as set forth above.
- **Accreditation Withheld/Improving School Near Accreditation** (beginning in 2005-06 and ending in 2008-09) - it has never met the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited but meets the following criteria:
 - ✓ 70% of its students must have passed the English SOL tests (75% in third and fifth grade).
 - ✓ 60% of its students must have passed the SOL tests in the other three core academic areas.
 - ✓ The pass rate must have increased by 25 percentage points compared 1998-99.

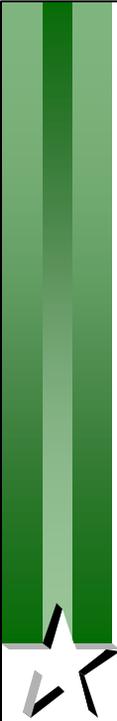
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Actions Required for a School Accredited with Warning

- **Schools rated Accredited with Warning must undergo an academic review in accordance with Board guidelines.**
- **Any school that is rated Accredited with Warning in English or mathematics must adopt an instructional method with a proven track record of success at raising student achievement.**
- **A three-year School Improvement Plan must be developed and implemented, based on the results of an academic review.**

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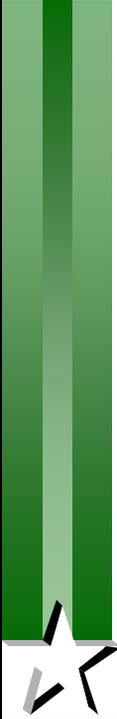


Recognitions for School Accountability

Schools may be recognized by the Board by:

- **Public announcements recognizing individual schools;**
- **Tangible rewards;**
- **Waivers of certain board regulations;**
- **Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or**
- **Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.**

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Waivers and Special Provisions

- **Waivers may be granted by the Board of Education based on submission of a request from the local school division, except no waiver may be granted to the requirements of Part III, Student Achievement.**
- **The Board of Education may enact special provisions related to the administration and use of any Standards of Learning test for any period during which the content in that area is being revised and phased in.**
- **Any school in violation of this chapter shall be subject to appropriate action by the Board of Education including, but not limited to, the adjustment or withdrawal of a school's accreditation.**