

The Board's *Guidance Document Governing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards of Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, adopted by the Board on October 26, 2006, gives school divisions guidance in prescribing additional credit requirements for the Standard and Advanced Studies diplomas. The guidance document says, in part:

Standard Diploma: Generally, the Board will approve requests from local school divisions to require up to two additional local credits to obtain the Standard Diploma, up to a maximum of 24 required credits. Generally, the Board will approve local requests for additional graduation credit requirements in the core discipline areas of the Standards of Learning (English, mathematics, science or history/social science)... Requests for additional local credits in disciplines outside the core discipline areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Advanced Studies Diploma: Generally, the Board will approve requests from local school divisions for local additional credits required for the Advanced Studies Diploma above the 24 contained in the standards if the credits are in the discipline areas of English, mathematics, science, history/social studies, fine arts (including performing arts), career and technical education, or foreign language. The Board will consider credits outside these disciplines on a case-by-case basis.

Transfer Students: Any local school division receiving approval to increase its course credit requirements may not deny either the Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma to any transfer student who has otherwise met the requirements contained in the standards, if the transfer student can only meet the division's requirements by taking a heavier than normal course load in any semester, by taking summer school, or by taking courses after the time when he or she otherwise would have graduated.

Prospective Application / Advance Notice: A local school division's additional credit requirements should apply only to students who have not yet entered ninth grade at the time the additional credits are approved.

Allocation of Electives: Generally the Board will approve requests from local school divisions to allocate elective credits for local prescribed course requirements, while reducing the number of electives by an equal amount so that the total number of graduation credit requirements remains unchanged....

Summary of Major Elements: Waynesboro Public Schools is requesting approval to require students to have successfully completed a course in finance, incorporating the Board's objectives in economic education and financial literacy. The student could complete either a full year, credit bearing course from the finance concentration sequence in Career and Technical Education, for which the student would earn a standard credit. As an alternative, if the student has sufficient credits for graduation, the student could complete a shorter, online course, which would also be based on the finance concentration sequence in Career and Technical Education. Transfer students could also take advantage of the online option. Students choosing the online option would not earn a standard credit for successfully completing this course.

This requirement would become effective for the students entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2007-2008 school year, as specified in both the Standards of Accreditation and the guidance document.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board approve Waynesboro City Public School's request to increase graduation requirements.

Impact on Resources: There is no impact on resources at the Department of Education.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: Upon approval of the request, Department of Education staff will notify Waynesboro City Public Schools of the Board's action.