

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
P.O. Box 2120
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23218-2120

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CERTAIN ACCREDITING STANDARDS
AND/OR APPROVAL
OF AN INNOVATIVE OR EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, ([8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.](#)) sets the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (§§ [22.1-253.13:1 et seq.](#)). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30.

This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to the beginning of an accrediting cycle or the proposed implementation of the program or activity that precipitates the request for the waiver. The types of waivers available and the corresponding section of the standards are indicated below. Please attach additional sheets or information deemed appropriate. (The Board will consider this request in its monthly meeting and school divisions **are required** to appear before the board **in person or electronically** to explain a waiver request.)

SCHOOL DIVISION Norfolk Public Schools (NPS)

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY Norfolk Public Schools Open Campus Academy (Year Round Program)

TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED:

- Approval of an Alternative to the Standard School Year and School Day ([8 VAC 20-131-150](#))
- Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan ([8 VAC 20-131-280.D](#))
- Approval of an Experimental Program (§ [22.1-79.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and [8 VAC 20-131-290.D](#))
- Approval of an Innovative Program (§ [22.1-79.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and [8 VAC 20-131-290.D](#))
- Approval of a Waiver of Other Provision(s) of the Standards ([8 VAC 20-131-350](#))
(Complete Pages 1 and 3 of the application only.)

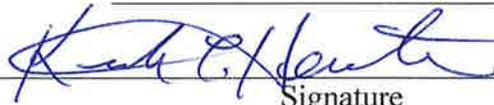
SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED PROGRAM/ACTIVITY

NPS Open Campus Academy (Year Round Program)

2/5/14

Date Approved

by the Local School Board



Signature

Chairman of the School Board

2/5/14

Submission Date



Signature

Division Superintendent

SCHOOL DIVISION

Norfolk Public Schools

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY

NPS Open Campus Academy (Year Round Program)

IF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL OR INNOVATIVE, FOR EACH SCHOOL EXPLAIN HOW THIS IS SO AND PROVIDE A PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, INCLUDING THE TYPE OF PROGRAM, ITS PURPOSE, THE GRADES SERVED, DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION DESCRIBING THE STUDENTS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING, THE RATIONALE FOR THE PROGRAM, THE PROGRAM'S GOALS, EVALUATION PROCEDURES, AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION.

The Norfolk Public Schools Open Campus Academy (Year Round Program) (§ 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and 8 VAC 20-131-290.D)

The NPS Open Campus Academy (Year Round Program) is a non-traditional educational program designed for NPS students that will provide more appropriate options for them to complete their education and reach their college and career goals. Our student-focused program provides an opportunity to earn a high school diploma at a pace suitable for each student's schedule, lifestyle and learning needs. Students will experience an abbreviated, flexible school day and maximize online learning, aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning, to focus on required courses and subjects that are aligned with their specific areas of interest. A customized curriculum, individualized support and counseling will give students a complete roadmap for success. Working with EdisonLearning, Inc., the Magic Johnson Bridgescape Program, the local business community and select colleges and universities, the Open Campus Academy will support student readiness and success in both college and career!

Projected to open in summer, 2014, the NPS Open Campus Academy will open its doors to scholars in select middle grades, high school students in grades 9-12 behind on credits, and students who have already dropped out of school who reside within the City of Norfolk. The program's mission is to educate these youth with a "laser focus" on dropout prevention, credit recovery and career development. The program is designed to serve:

- Students who are over age for grade.
- Students who are currently enrolled in a Norfolk high school and are behind on course credits that will prevent on-time graduation.
- Students who have dropped out of school.
- Students who want to successfully complete 5th/6th year college-level courses.
- Students who want to complete career-level certifications that lead to job placement.
- Students who are not exhibiting discipline problems.
- Students who are parents in need of child care that supports a learning environment for both the student and the child.

The NPS Open Campus Academy's curriculum will be enhanced through a partnership with EdisonLearning and the Magic Johnson Bridgescape Program. The main goal of the Magic Johnson Bridgescape Program is to bridge the gap between high school students and their high school diplomas in a flexible, blended e-learning environment. This innovative learning environment will be facilitated through the use of eCourses offered through EdisonLearning. EdisonLearning's eCourses support multiple modalities of student learning and provide a learning environment that promotes interaction and socialization, supported by each student's individualized web-based individualized education plan. eCourses feature:

- Self-Guided and Self-Paced Instruction Delivery: Students can work on their own schedule.
- Personalized: Allows for individualization and customization based on specific student needs and includes a host of interactive multimedia to support diverse learners.
- Comprehensive High School (9-12) Curriculum: Courses are aligned to the SOLS and EdisonLearning provides a VDOE-approved course list.
- Individualized tutoring (average daily min. 1.5 hours): Specifically designed and directed to the achievement of course goals and objectives.
- Modular: Consistent unit and lesson structure allow students to maintain focus and motivation by accomplishing achievable goals in each lesson.
- Dynamic Platform: A game-like interface and visual display of progress that can be monitored by the student, staff, EdisonLearning, Inc. and NPS administrators.

This new Academy program will be designed to engage or re-engage students in an effective learning process aligned with the main goal, "to increase the number of students graduating from Norfolk Public Schools who are college and/or career ready despite circumstances or chronological age." In addition, an option is offered for students who desire to enroll in college-level courses prior to high school graduation and receive certifications in programs that prepare them for employment and college and career success. Dual Enrollment courses will be supported and provided by WEST POINT MILITARY ACADEMY, Virginia State University, Norfolk State University, and Old Dominion University. The Virginia Ship Repair Association (256 corporate membership) will offer courses on-site that will lead to immediate employment and a successful career in the ship repair industry.

Special Note: NPS has developed a general five-year growth plan for providing services to this non-traditional population of students. The financial plan has been submitted to the local school board, and will be approved at the Board Meeting scheduled in late January, 2014.

NPS Open Campus Academy Target Population:

Utilizing the Magic Johnson Bridgescape's proven system of school organization, staff professional development and administrative operations, the academy will function using the EdisonLearning, Inc., curriculum that is specifically aligned to Virginia's Standards of Learning curriculum. The initial program will serve 250 students and the anticipated growth will serve a minimum of 450 students by 2017.

Proposed School Name	Target Opening Date	Target Population	Geographic Community	Proposed Location	Grade Levels at Full Enrollment
NPS Open Campus Academy	Summer, 2014	Over Age for Grade High School Students Behind on Credits Dropout Students	Students that Reside in Norfolk	2329 E. Little Creek Road, Norfolk, VA 23181	9-12

Although NPS has a current roster of 339 students who dropped out during the current school year, the total estimated dropout population for the City of Norfolk exceeds 9,000 students. The general student population includes but is not limited to the following:

- Students needing to makeup one or more courses for graduation.
- Potential dropout students who have the desire to join the workforce before graduation.
- Actual dropout students seeking education while gainfully employed.
- Students with social, emotional, environmental, and/or self-imposed issues.
- Traditional students with individual wants/needs that may conflict with traditional schooling.
- Students over age for grade from grades 9 through 12 and/or over age for grade currently enrolled students in middle schools (e.g. over age for grade level, or one or years behind, etc.).

Norfolk Public Schools Open Campus Academy (Year Round)			
Year	POPULATION	GRADES	ENROLLMENT
2013-14	Middle School Students Overage for Grade	9-12	250
	High School Students Behind on Credits		
	Dropout Students		
2014-15	Middle School Students Overage for Grade	9-12	300

	High School Students Behind on Credits Dropout Students		
2015-16	Middle School Students Overage for Grade High School Students Behind on Credits Dropout Students	9-12	350
2016-17	Middle School Students Overage for Grade High School Students Behind on Credits Dropout Students	9-12	400
2017-18	Middle School Students Overage for Grade High School Students Behind on Credits Dropout Students	9-12	450
<i>*The enrollment reflects the minimum number of students for budget projections.</i>			

The program is especially designed for students who wish to accelerate the manner in which they complete the remaining required units for graduation—in a non-traditional manner. The program will provide a unique and evidence-based educational opportunity to students over age for grade (as detailed in bullet 6 above). At the time of enrollment, students must not be serving long-term suspensions or expulsions.

Accountability and VA Standards of Learning:

Consistent with NPS standards, all students enrolled in the NPS Open Campus Academy will be held to the highest expectations for conduct and decision-making over the course of their enrollment in the program. A standard Virginia Standards of Learning high school curriculum will be offered and delivered by a qualified faculty in addition to computer-supported instruction. All students will participate in an intensive advisor/advisee mentor program during their tenure in the program. A student must complete the required number of units and pass the relevant Virginia Standards of Learning End of Course assessments in order to graduate. Students will participate in the graduation ceremony at their home schools upon meeting all graduation requirements, or they can opt to attend the Norfolk Open Campus Academy Diploma Completion Celebration.

Typical School Day for the NPS Open Campus Academy Year Round Student:

Students in the program will spend their time on-site completing eCourses developed by EdisonLearning, Inc. and engaging in individualized tutoring (an average of 1.5 hours daily) to achieve the goal of graduation. Their individual educational plans will be guided and directed by NPS teachers, guidance staff, paraprofessionals and EdisonLearning, Inc. staff. Typically, students will be able to choose from a flexible schedule - whether to attend the program from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. or 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., or from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. each day, depending on work schedules. On-site support services will include child care, dual enrollment course options, and job training certification.

Waiver Requested: Approval for an Alternative to the Standard School Day (8 VAC 20-131-150)

Although an average of 1.5 hours of individualized tutoring is mandated by contract for each student per day, a waiver to the requirement that the average school day be 5 ½ hours is requested from the State Board of Education. The NPS Division is requesting that the 1.5 hours of mandated tutoring be added to the 4-hour block of instructional time available in each of the three (3) Academy sessions such that the combined instructional/learning hours for each session totals the State-required 5.5 hours of instructional time each day.

Additionally, during the school day, students will receive job training and possible job placements from major corporations as well as through the site-based courses provided through the Virginia Ship Repair Association (VSRA). Given this laser-like focus on course work for four (4) hours each day, individualized tutoring, a longer school day that affords participation in dual enrollment or career certifications (during the second session/evening session from 12:30 to 4:30; and/or the third evening session from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.), on-site child care for parents, and on-site counselors, teachers, and program leaders, students in the Academy (program) will

have substantially more targeted and effective instructional time and learning opportunities than in the regular school environment. Furthermore, each student's web-based individualized education plan - aligned with his/her preference of an educational program - will allow the staff at the NPS Open Campus Academy to tailor the learning environment to meet student needs and support their successful completion of high school-level work. Students will be supported by a lead "on-site" NPS Guidance Counselor and a team of "on-site" counselors provided by ODU, pursuant to a memorandum of understanding.

This extra time and on-site support - combined with a disciplined, consistent school culture, high expectations, and a team of dedicated teachers with a demonstrated personal and professional commitment to student success - should result in dramatically improved academic performance, higher on-time graduation statistics, and higher participation rates in dual enrollment/college readiness and career certification courses.

DOES THE PROGRAM REQUIRE THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS REFERENCED IN THIS APPLICATION TO OPEN PRIOR TO LABOR DAY?

YES NO.

IF YES, EXPLAIN WHY.

Pre-Labor Day Start Waiver: (8 VAC 20-131-150)

The NPS Open Campus Academy will operate on an academic calendar divided into equal quarters which will essentially contain the same number of school days in the school year as other traditional NPS high schools. Each quarter will be followed by a break of approximately two weeks. At the end of the program year, the summer vacation break will be approximately five weeks. The proposed quarterly calendar has several important academic benefits. The equal quarter's process ensures a more continuous learning cycle that reduces the potential for student academic stagnation or loss that typically occurs during the long summer vacation, it reduces teacher fatigue and "burn-out, and aids in overall teacher retention. Additionally, these pre-determined breaks can be utilized as independent learning opportunities or intercessions for students to catch up on missed assignments or remediate weaknesses. As noted above, each student in the NPS Open Campus Academy will be supported and guided through the use of an individualized education plan, developed in concert with testing and assessments conducted through NPS and EdisonLearning. Given the need to appropriately assess each student, and adjust and monitor these individualized education plans, these intercessions will afford opportunities for guidance staff and mentors to conveniently manage these duties outside the normal operational day or program schedule. It is anticipated that the 1st academic quarter of each program year will begin shortly after the 4th of July. A tentative academic calendar for Year One of the program will be approved at the next NPS BOE Meeting..

IF THE PROGRAM IS EXPERIMENTAL, FOR THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS REFERENCED IN THIS APPLICATION INCLUDE INFORMATION THAT EXPLAINS WHY THERE IS REASON TO EXPECT THAT THE PROGRAM WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

NA

The EdisonLearning eCourses and the Magic Johnson Bridgescape instructional models and design plans that will be used for the NPS Open Campus Academy are not experimental in nature or scope. The instructional models and design plans are in use in other school districts across the country in at least 5 states and in 19 individual locations/cities.

DESCRIBE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM FOR EACH SCHOOL.

The staff of the NPS Open Campus Academy will work with students and parents to establish an Individualized Education Plan and Student Contract. Each student will be assigned a mentor and receive prescriptive interventions to remove socio-emotional, economic, and academic barriers impeding academic success. All students will be expected to commit to the high expectations at enrollment with the understanding that the NPS Open Campus Academy (program learning community) will support their success and have faith in their ability to achieve the goals set in their individual education plans and contracts.

Student Academic Proficiency

The NPS Open Campus Academy will facilitate the academic success and/or the graduation of 100% of all students who maintain consistent enrollment in the program.

Student Academic Growth

NPS Open Campus Academy students will meet or exceed proficiency scores as articulated on/in the Virginia Standards of Learning.

Academic Gaps in both Proficiency and Growth between Major Student Subgroups

The NPS Open Campus Academy will assist the Division's high schools close academic gaps for all subgroups in accordance with the Federal Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs).

The NPS Open Campus Academy will assist the Division's high schools meet or exceed the VDOE graduation requirement (85% GCI).

Additionally, Open Campus Academy students will attain 95% of the goals specified in their Individualized Education Plans and Student Contracts.

Attendance

The NPS Open Campus Academy will maintain an average 95% attendance rate. The rigor of the program will require a high level of commitment from all students. Students will be expected to be on time, present, and ready to learn daily. We will also ask youth to commit to attending after session tutoring (1.5 hours daily), Saturday study sessions (as needed), and Summer School (if necessary) to meet the academic goals for the program. High levels of attendance during the school day and attendance in the extended sessions are crucial to supporting the overall mission and academic goals of program.

Recurrent Enrollment from Year to Year

The NPS Open Campus Academy will maintain students until they matriculate through the program. The administration expects a high demand for enrollment based upon NPS data.

Post-secondary Readiness

NPS Open Campus Academy students will have earned the pre-requisites to successfully transition back and graduate from their home school, and to move into college or career programs and/or military service. Additionally, NPS Open Campus Academy students will be appropriately prepared to finance college and/or other post-secondary options.

SCHOOL DIVISION Norfolk Public Schools

TITLE OF PROGRAM/ACTIVITY The Norfolk Open Campus Academy (Year Round)

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A WAIVER OF A PROVISION OR PROVISIONS OF THE ACCREDITING STANDARDS, STATE THE PROVISION AND THE RATIONALE FOR SEEKING A WAIVER FOR EACH.

Approval of an Alternative to the Standard School Year and School Day ([8 VAC 20-131-150](#)):

Waiver Requested: Approval for an Alternative to the Standard School Day ([8 VAC 20-131-150](#))

NPS Open Campus students will be able to choose from a flexible academic schedule - whether to attend the program from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. or 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., or from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. each day, depending on work schedules. Although an average of 1.5 hours of individualized tutoring is mandated by contract for each student per day, a waiver to the requirement that the average school day be 5 ½ hours is requested from the State Board of Education. The NPS Division is requesting that the 1.5 hours of mandated tutoring be added to the 4-hour block of instructional time available in each of the three (3) Academy sessions such that the combined instructional/learning hours for each session totals the State-required 5.5 hours of instructional time each day.

Approval of an Innovative Program (§ [22.1-79.1](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and [8 VAC 20-131-290.D](#))

The NPS Open Campus Academy Year Round is a non-traditional educational program designed for NPS students that will provide more appropriate options for them to complete their education and reach their college and career goals. Our student-focused program provides an opportunity to earn a high school diploma at a pace suitable for each student's schedule, lifestyle and learning needs. Students will experience an abbreviated, flexible school day and maximize online learning, aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning, to focus on required courses and subjects that are aligned with their specific areas of interest. A customized curriculum, individualized support and counseling will give students a complete roadmap for success. Working with EdisonLearning, Inc., the Magic Johnson Bridgescape Program, the local business community and select colleges and universities, the NPS Open Campus Academy will support student readiness and success in both college and career.

The NPS Open Campus' innovative learning environment will be facilitated through the use of eCourses offered through EdisonLearning. EdisonLearning's eCourses support multiple modalities of student learning and provide a learning environment that promotes interaction and socialization, supported by each student's individualized web-based individual education plan.

The EdisonLearning eCourses and the Magic Johnson Bridgescape instructional models and design plans that will be used for the NPS Open Campus Academy, while innovative, are in use in other school districts across the country in at least 5 states and in 19 individual locations/cities. State Board approval is requested to afford the Division an opportunity to proactively address the dropout rate and credit recovery issues that disproportionately impact the life chances of youth and young adults in the City of Norfolk.

Request for a Pre-Labor Day Start Waiver - (8 VAC 20-131-150)

The NPS Open Campus Academy will operate on an academic calendar divided into quarters which will essentially contain the same number of school days in the school year as other traditional NPS high schools. Each quarter will be followed by a break of approximately two weeks. At the end of the program year, the summer vacation break will be approximately five weeks. The proposed quarterly calendar has several important academic benefits. The equal quarter's process ensures a more continuous learning cycle that reduces the potential for student academic stagnation or loss that typically occurs during the long summer vacation, it reduces teacher fatigue and "burn-out, and aids in overall teacher retention. Additionally, these pre-determined breaks can be utilized as independent learning opportunities or intercessions for students to catch up on missed assignments or remediate weaknesses. As noted above, each student in the NPS Open Campus Academy will be supported and guided through the use of an individualized education plan, developed in concert with testing and assessments conducted through NPS and EdisonLearning. Given the need to appropriately assess each student, and adjust and monitor these individualized education plans, these intercessions will afford opportunities for guidance staff and mentors to conveniently manage these duties outside the normal operational day or program schedule. It is anticipated that the 1st quarter of each program year will begin shortly after the 4th of July. A tentative academic calendar for Year One of the program will be approved at the next NPS Board of Education Meeting.

DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WAIVER/PROGRAM/ACTIVITY. (Include information that includes measurable goals, objectives, and student academic achievement that will be expected as a result of the implementation of the program/activity.)

NPS Open Campus Goals and Measurable Educational Objectives

Goals		Measurable Objectives
1	100% of all students attending the NPS Open Campus Academy will graduate.	100% of students will complete a rigorous course of study in their program of choice prior to graduation.
	100% of students will meet Virginia graduation requirements according to their Individualized Education Plans.	
2	100% of students graduating from the NPS Open Campus Academy will pursue post-secondary education or enter a career option successfully.	100% of all students will work with their mentors to complete and annually update secondary and post-secondary plans.

All students will receive intensive college/career preparation (including opportunities for career certifications), and all students will receive counseling services designed to support post-secondary goals including: financing college - grants, scholarships, financial aid; military service; and career access in the junior and senior years of instruction.

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| 3 | 100% of all students at the NPS Open Campus Academy will fulfill the metrics of their Individualized Education Plans. | All students will complete the NPS/EdisonLearning eCourses and Bridgescape Program activities and courses required annually. |
| 4 | 100% of students attending the NPS Open Campus Academy will meet or exceed SOL testing expectations and core course testing expectations. | All students will receive a passing score or above on required SOL tests. |

Annually, students will follow the acceptable grade advancement requirements for Norfolk Public Schools.

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| 5 | The NPS Open Campus Academy will close academic gaps for all subgroups in accordance with the Federal Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). | The NPS Open Campus Academy staff will assess each student's past performance upon enrollment and annually examine each student's individualized education plan to ensure each student's success. |
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Upon enrollment and throughout the students' course of study, each counselor and mentor will work with students and parents to develop a meaningful, prescriptive and goals-driven Individualized Education Plan (IEP). IEP's will be updated quarterly and/or as needed based on each student's post-secondary education and career goals/plans.

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| 6 | The NPS Open Campus Academy will maintain a 95% attendance rate. | Students will work with counselors and/or mentors to fulfill attendance and participation elements outlined in the student/parent contracts. |
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Students will have flexible schedules appropriate for non-traditional learners and designed to be congruent with work and/or parental responsibilities. Additionally, all parents will be expected to participate in at least one or more of the Academy's NPS/Bridgescape program quarterly workshops.

Number of students involved in the program	The NPS Open Campus Academy will initially enroll 250 in 2014, and grow to 450 by 2017.
What is the anticipated length of the program or duration of the waiver?	5 years

Questions should be directed to the Division of Policy and Communications at (804) 225-2092, or by e-mail to policydata@doe.virginia.gov. This application and supporting documentation must be sent to:

Division of Policy and Communications
Department of Education
P. O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120