

# Board of Education Agenda Item

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Date: July 23, 2009

**Topic:** Final Review of Revisions to Criteria for the Virginia Index of Performance, Virginia's Incentive Program to Encourage and Recognize School Accountability Performance and Competence to Excellence

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## Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by

State or federal law or regulation

Board of Education regulation

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Action requested at this meeting  Action requested at future meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action

date June 25, 2009

action Accepted for first review

## Background Information:

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8VAC 20-131-325) authorize the Board of Education to establish guidelines for recognizing and rewarding school accountability performance.

In July 2007, the Board of Education established the *Virginia Index of Performance (VIP)* incentive program to recognize and reward fully accredited schools and school divisions that make significant progress toward achieving specific measurable goals and objectives established by the Board of Education and supported by the Governor.

Student achievement is a fundamental component in determining the accreditation status of Virginia's public schools. For more than a decade in Virginia, student performance has been measured by achievement on the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests or additional assessments approved by the Board of Education. A school achieves fully accredited status primarily by meeting pass rates established for all students in four core academic content areas. The VIP program was intended to provide schools and divisions with incentives to strive for higher levels of achievement for all of our children.

VIP is intended to measure the extent to which students are progressing towards advanced proficiency levels in reading, mathematics, science, and history and social science and on other indicators of school and student performance. Schools and school divisions are eligible for VIP awards by meeting applicable federal and state achievement benchmarks (school accreditation and currently adequate yearly progress or AYP) for two consecutive years.

The VIP achievement measure is calculated using weighted student scores on Standards of Learning assessments. In the calculation, scores are weighted according to the achievement levels of basic, proficient, and advanced with the advanced level having the highest weight. The VIP score is determined by aggregating student scores in all of the content areas and adding up to five additional VIP points to the achievement measure. The additional VIP points may be earned when a school or division meets the following performance objectives established for the program or exceeds state goals in the target areas:

- Increase the percentage of third graders reading on grade level (95% state goal);
- Increase the percentage of students enrolled in Algebra I by grade 8 (45% state goal);
- Increase the percentage of high school students taking Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment courses (25% state goal);
- Increase the number of career and technical industry certifications, state licenses, or successful national occupational assessment (15,000 state goal);
- Increase the percentage of high school graduates earning an Advanced Studies Diploma (57% state goal);
- Increase the percentage of students who receive a high school diploma recognized by the Board of Education (80% state interim target);
- Increase the percentage of schools that are fully accredited and making Adequate Yearly Progress (divisions only; 100% state goal);
- Increase the percent of at-risk four-year-olds who are being served by the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI; divisions only; 100% state goal);
- Increase the percentage of students in each student subgroup achieving at higher levels of proficiency on state assessments;
- Increase the percentage of students maintaining literacy proficiency throughout their adolescent years (95% state goal);
- Increase the percentage of schools offering foreign language instruction in the elementary grades; and
- Increase participation in the Governor’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Scorecard Awards Program.

The chart below shows the number of schools and divisions earning each type of award under the existing criteria for each of the two years for which the program was in place.

**Number of schools and school divisions earning VIP awards:**

Award year	Governor’s Awards for Educational Excellence		Board of Education Awards					
			Excellence		Competence to Excellence		Rising Star	
	Schools	Divisions	Schools	Divisions	Schools	Divisions	Schools	Divisions
2008-2009	162	0	544	24	276	10	2	0
2007-2008	89	0	475	19	322	25	N/A	N/A

N/A: Not applicable. Rising star awards were not available in the first year of the program.

## Summary of Major Elements

One of the goals of the VIP program is that “high school students earn a high school diploma, especially advanced studies diplomas, within four years.” At the time the program was established, the best available information on graduation rates was estimates of the four-year rate. Under the established program guidelines, schools and divisions that have a graduation rate of 80 percent or higher, or that increase their graduation rate from the previous year can earn up to one bonus point added to their VIP achievement score. As well, schools can earn up to one bonus point if they increase the percent of students who earn advanced studies diplomas or meet or exceed the state goal of 57 percent.

In October 2008, the Department of Education first published the Virginia On-Time Graduation Rate and in March 2009 published the full cohort report to document the status of all students in the on-time graduation cohort, including the cohort dropout rate. The proposed recommendations would update VIP award criteria and establish minimum criteria for each award level using data newly available from the cohort report, including graduation and dropout rates.

The VIP program was also designed as an incentive program that encourages schools to support more students moving from competence to excellence in all of the core academic content areas. To further emphasize the Board’s commitment to the importance of each core content area, the proposed updates provide criteria that consider each core academic content area separately.

The primary objectives for the proposed revisions to the VIP award program were the following:

1. The minimum eligibility criteria for VIP awards would remain the same as current requirements. That is, to be eligible for VIP, schools would have to be fully accredited and make AYP for two consecutive years; school divisions would have to make AYP for two consecutive years.
2. Retain incentives for schools to:
  - a. Have more students increase their proficiency levels over time (e.g., move from proficient to advanced proficient); and
  - b. Achieve as many of the “additional indicators” as possible for their school level.
3. Enhance the incentives for students to earn high achievement levels in each academic content area (English/reading, mathematics, science, and history and social sciences).
4. Incorporate new cohort report data into VIP criteria.

### Proposed updates to the VIP award criteria

1. In order to earn a Governor’s Award for Educational Excellence, eligible schools and school divisions with a graduating class would be required to:
  - a. Earn a minimum of 80 index points on the weighted VIP index points, using the current weightings<sup>1</sup>, in EACH of the following content areas:
    - English/reading (combined reading and writing)
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - History and Social Sciences; *and*
  - b. Meet the current VIP excellence targets for Governor’s awards as specified in the currently approved VIP program; *and*
  - c. Meet or exceed the state goal for on-time high school graduation rate, currently established at 80 percent on the Governor’s scorecard; *and*

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<sup>1</sup> Current weightings are 0 points for below basic; 25 basic; 75 proficient; 100 advanced proficient.

- d. The combined percent of cohort students who dropped out or have unconfirmed status is 10 percent or less.
2. To earn a Board of Education VIP Excellence Award, eligible schools and divisions would have to meet the following criteria:
  - a. Earn a minimum of 80 index points on the weighted VIP index points, using the current weightings, in EACH of the following content areas:
    - English/reading (combined reading and writing)
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - History and Social Sciences; *or*
  - b. Achieve a minimum of 80 index points in each content area using the total number of additional index points earned through the program to meet the minimum of 80 total VIP points in each content area; and
  - c. Meet or exceed the state goal for on-time high school graduation rate, currently established at 80 percent on the Governor’s scorecard; and
  - d. The combined percent of cohort students who dropped out or have unconfirmed status is 10 percent or less.
3. To earn a Board of Education VIP Competence to Excellence award, eligible schools and divisions would have to meet the following criteria:
  - a. Earn a minimum of 75 index points on the weighted VIP index points, using the current weightings, in EACH of the following content areas:
    - English/reading (combined reading and writing)
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - History and Social Sciences; *or*
  - b. Achieve a minimum of 75 index points in each content area using the total number of additional index points earned through the program to meet the minimum of 75 total VIP points in each content area; and
  - c. Meet or exceed the state goal for on-time high school graduation rate, currently established at 80 percent on the Governor’s scorecard; or
  - d. Have a combined percent of cohort students who dropped out or have unconfirmed status of 10 percent or less.
4. To earn a Board of Education VIP Rising Star Award, eligible schools and divisions would have to meet the following criteria:
  - a. Demonstrate significant improvement in the VIP index in each academic content area in which they earn less than 75 index points:
    - English/reading (combined reading and writing)
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - History and Social Sciences; *and*
  - b. Meet or exceed the state goal for on-time high school graduation rate, currently established at 80 percent on the Governor’s scorecard; or
  - c. Have a combined percent of cohort students who dropped out or have unconfirmed status of 10 percent or less.

The table below illustrates how the data from each core content area and the additional index points can be used to achieve the criteria for Board of Education VIP Excellence and Competence to Excellence

awards. This approach would be used to determine awards when the weighted VIP index in one or more content areas falls below the proposed criteria of 80 and 75 for excellence and competence to excellence awards, respectively.

Content Area							
English/reading Weighted VIP index	Mathematics Weighted VIP index	History and Social Science Weighted VIP index	Science Weighted VIP index	Total Additional VIP index points earned	Additional index points needed for Excellence award	Additional index points needed for Competence to Excellence award	VIP Award
78	80	79	80	5	3	NA	Board of Education Excellence Award
74	80	75	74	3	17	2	Board of Education Competence to Excellence Award

The Department proposes to implement the revised VIP award criteria for awards given in the 2009-2010 school year.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education adopt the recommended revisions to the criteria to earn VIP awards and instruct the Department of Education to implement the revised criteria in awards given during the 2009-2010 school year.

**Impact on Resources:**

The Department can absorb the costs to adjust the awards criteria for the VIP program.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

None