Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ J. _____   **Date:** __October 28, 2010___

Topic: First Review of Establishment of Virtual School Programs in Virginia as Required in
 § 22.1-212.23-27

Presenter: Mr. Lan Neugent, Assistant Superintendent for Technology, Career & Adult Education

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Origin:

_____   Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

_X_   Board review required by
  _X_   State or federal law or regulation
  _____   Board of Education regulation
  _____   Other: _____

_ _   Action requested at this meeting

_X_   Action requested at future meeting: Final review: November 18, 2010

Previous Review/Action:

_X_   No previous board review/action

_____   Previous review/action
  date _____
  action _____

Background Information:

As specified in *§ 22.1-212.24.A & B*, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the application, the application process, and the monitoring procedure for multidivision online providers. The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that quality online courses are provided to school divisions who are interested in alternative methods of instruction for students.

Summary of Major Elements:

The attached document, Establishment of Virtual School Programs in Virginia, contains a collection of work products related to the implementation of the virtual school programs legislation introduced by Governor Robert F. McDonnell and passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2010.

The document includes

- the original legislation
- the vision for online virtual school programs based on research and best practices
- key responsibilities for each of the involved stakeholders
- the criteria for approval of multidivision online providers
- the list of approved accreditation programs (currently pending approval by the Board)
- the processes for
  - applying to become a multidivision online provider in Virginia
  - appealing decisions made by the Department of Education
  - monitoring providers as they fulfill contracts with divisions within the state
  - revoking approval of a provider should that prove necessary
- an initial timeline for implementation

Additionally, the document includes the four-part application to be completed online by organizations desiring to become an approved multidivision online provider in Virginia.

Appendices include the Application Review Rubric for Virginia Department of Education personnel use and the Annual Monitoring Report to be completed by approved providers so that the Board of Education may complete the annual report required by the General Assembly.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the Establishment of Virtual School Programs in Virginia document.

Impact on Resources:

N/A

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Upon acceptance of first review by the Board of Education, the document will be distributed for public comment. The document will be presented to the Board of Education for final review at the November 18 meeting.

Establishment of Virtual School Programs in Virginia

Criteria, Processes, and Procedures for the Approval and
Implementation of Multidivision Online Providers
(§ 22.1-212.23-27)

October 2010

Virginia Department of Education

Contents

Introduction

This document contains a collection of work products related to the implementation of the virtual school programs legislation introduced by Governor Robert F. McDonnell and passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2010. It provides essential information for multidivision online providers, school divisions, and families seeking to understand the process of establishing and monitoring virtual school programs in Virginia.

This document includes the criteria, processes, and procedures for approving the establishment of multidivision online provider programs and monitoring their implementation as required in the legislation. The information in the document will assist the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) in developing key deliverables such as the online application, data collection tools, and model policies for school divisions. Components of the document reference specific sections of the legislation to assist readers in understanding how each relate to the overall implementation.

Legislation

In 2010, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation, introduced by Governor Robert F. McDonnell, authorizing the establishment of virtual school programs.

CHAPTER 537

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-253.13:2 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 13 of Title 22.1 an article numbered 1.4, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-212.23 through 22.1-212.27, relating to the establishment of virtual school programs.
[H 1388]
Approved April 11, 2010

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-253.13:2 of the *Code of Virginia* is amended and reenacted and that the *Code of Virginia* is amended by adding in Chapter 13 of Title 22.1 an article numbered 1.4, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-212.23 through 22.1-212.27, as follows:

Article 1.4.
Establishment of Virtual School Programs.
§ 22.1-212.23. Definitions.

As used in this article:

"Multidivision online provider" means (i) a private or nonprofit organization that enters into a contract with a local school board to provide online courses or programs through that school board to students who reside in Virginia both within and outside the geographical boundaries of that school division; (ii) a private or nonprofit organization that enters into contracts with multiple local school boards to provide online courses or programs to students in grades K through 12 through those school boards; or (iii) a local school board that provides online courses or programs to students who reside in Virginia but outside the geographical boundaries of that school division. However, "multidivision online provider" shall not include (a) a local school board's online learning program in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of that school division; (b) multiple local school boards that establish joint online courses or programs in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of those school divisions; (c) local school boards that provide online learning courses or programs for their students through an arrangement with a public or private institution of higher education; or (d) local school boards providing online courses or programs through a private or nonprofit organization that has been approved as a multidivision online provider.

"Online course" means a course or grade-level subject instruction that (i) is delivered by a multidivision online provider primarily electronically using the Internet or other computer-based methods and (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both.

"Virtual school program" means a series of online courses with instructional content that (i) is delivered by a multidivision online provider primarily electronically using the Internet or other computer-based methods; (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both; (iii) is delivered as a part-time or full-time program; and (iv) has an online component with online lessons and tools for student and data management.

An online course or virtual school program may be delivered to students at school as part of the regularly scheduled school day.

§ 22.1-212.24. Approval of multidivision online providers; contracts with local school boards.

A. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop, and the Board of Education shall approve, (i) the criteria and application process for approving multidivision online providers; (ii) a process for monitoring approved multidivision online providers; (iii) a process for revocation of the approval of a previously approved multidivision online provider; and (iv) an appeals process for a multidivision online provider whose approval was revoked or whose application was denied. The process developed under this subsection shall require approvals and revocations to be determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and either the denial of an application or revocation of approval may be appealed to the Board of Education for review. The approval of a multidivision online provider under this section shall be effective until the approval is revoked, for cause, pursuant to the terms of this section. Any notice of revocation of approval of a multidivision online provider or rejection of an application by a multidivision online provider shall state the grounds for such action with reasonable specificity and give reasonable notice to the multidivision online provider to appeal. These criteria and processes shall be adopted by January 31, 2011.

B. In developing the criteria for approval pursuant to subsection A, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall (i) require multidivision online providers to be accredited by a national, regional, or state accreditation program approved by the Board; (ii) require such courses or programs, pupil performance standards, and curriculum to meet or exceed any applicable Standards of Learning and Standards of Accreditation; (iii) require any educational objectives and assessments used to measure pupil progress toward achievement of the school's pupil performance standards to be in accordance with the Board's Standards of Accreditation and all applicable state and federal laws; and (iv) require such courses or programs to maintain minimum staffing requirements appropriate for virtual school programs.

C. Local school boards may enter into contracts, consistent with the criteria approved by the Board pursuant to this section, with approved private or nonprofit organizations to provide multidivision online courses and virtual school programs. Such contracts shall be exempt from the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.).

§ 22.1-212.25. Information regarding online courses and virtual programs; report.

A. The Department of Education shall develop and maintain a website that provides objective information for students, parents, and educators regarding online courses and virtual programs offered through local school boards by multidivision online providers that have been approved in accordance with § 22.1-212.24. The website shall include information regarding the overall instructional programs, the specific content of individual online courses and online programs, a direct link to each multidivision online provider's website, how to register for online learning programs and courses, teacher qualifications, course completion rates, and other evaluative and comparative information. The website shall also provide information regarding the process and criteria for approving multidivision online providers. Multidivision online providers shall provide the Department of Education the required information for the website as a condition of maintaining Board approval.

B. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop model policies and procedures regarding student access to online courses and online learning programs that may be used by local school divisions.

Nothing in this article shall be deemed to require a local school division to adopt model policies or procedures developed pursuant to this section.

C. Beginning November 1, 2011, and annually thereafter, the Board of Education shall include in its annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly information regarding multidivision online learning during the previous school year. The information shall include but not be limited to student demographics, course enrollment data, parental satisfaction, aggregated student course completion and passing rates, and activities and outcomes of course and provider approval reviews. The November 1, 2011, report shall be an interim progress report and include information on the criteria and processes adopted by the Board and outcomes of provider applications.

D. By July 1, 2011, local school boards shall post on their websites information regarding online courses and programs that are available through the school division. Such information shall include but not be limited to the types of online courses and programs available to students through the school division, when the school division will pay course fees and other costs for nonresident students, and the granting of high school credit.

§ 22.1-212.26. Teachers and administrators of online courses and virtual programs.

A. Teachers who deliver instruction to students through online courses or virtual school programs shall be licensed by the Board of Education and shall be subject to the requirements of § 22.1-296.1 and 22.1-296.2 applicable to teachers employed by a local school board.

B. The administrator of a virtual school program shall hold an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with educational and work experience in administering educational programs.

§ 22.1-212.27. Students enrolled in online courses and virtual programs.

A. Any student enrolled in any online course or virtual program offered by a local school division shall be enrolled in a public school in Virginia as provided in § 22.1-3.1.

B. A student's parent or guardian shall give written permission prior to the enrollment of the student in any full-time virtual program offered by a local school division.

C. A student shall not be charged tuition for enrolling in any online course or virtual program offered by the school division in which he resides, pursuant to § 22.1-3. However, tuition may be charged to students who do not reside within the boundaries of the school division offering such course or program, pursuant to § 22.1-5.

§ 22.1-253.13:2. Standard 2. Instructional, administrative, and support personnel.

A. The Board shall establish requirements for the licensing of teachers, principals, superintendents, and other professional personnel.

B. School boards shall employ licensed instructional personnel qualified in the relevant subject areas.

C. Each school board shall assign licensed instructional personnel in a manner that produces divisionwide ratios of students in average daily membership to full-time equivalent teaching positions, excluding special education teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and librarians, that are not greater than the following ratios: (i) 24 to one in kindergarten with no class being larger than 29 students; if the average daily membership in any kindergarten class exceeds 24 pupils, a full-time teacher's aide shall be assigned to the class; (ii) 24 to one in grades one, two, and three with no class being larger than 30 students; (iii) 25 to one in grades four through six with no class being larger than 35 students; and (iv) 24 to one in English classes in grades six through 12.

Within its regulations governing special education programs, the Board shall seek to set pupil/teacher ratios for pupils with mental retardation that do not exceed the pupil/teacher ratios for self-contained classes for pupils with specific learning disabilities.

Further, school boards shall assign instructional personnel in a manner that produces schoolwide ratios of students in average daily memberships to full-time equivalent teaching positions of 21 to one in middle schools and high schools. School divisions shall provide all middle and high school teachers with one planning period per day or the equivalent, unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.

D. Each local school board shall employ with state and local basic, special education, gifted, and career and technical education funds a minimum number of licensed, full-time equivalent instructional personnel for each 1,000 students in average daily membership (ADM) as set forth in the appropriation act. Calculations of kindergarten positions shall be based on full-day kindergarten programs. Beginning with the March 31 report of average daily membership, those school divisions offering half-day kindergarten with pupil/teacher ratios that exceed 30 to one shall adjust their average daily membership for kindergarten to reflect 85 percent of the total kindergarten average daily memberships, as provided in the appropriation act.

E. In addition to the positions supported by basic aid and in support of regular school year programs of prevention, intervention, and remediation, state funding, pursuant to the appropriation act, shall be provided to fund certain full-time equivalent instructional positions for each 1,000 students in grades K through 12 who are identified as needing prevention, intervention, and remediation services. State funding for prevention, intervention, and remediation programs provided pursuant to this subsection and the appropriation act may be used to support programs for educationally at-risk students as identified by the local school boards.

F. In addition to the positions supported by basic aid and those in support of regular school year programs of prevention, intervention, and remediation, state funding, pursuant to the appropriation act, shall be provided to support 17 full-time equivalent instructional positions for each 1,000 students identified as having limited English proficiency.

G. In addition to the full-time equivalent positions required elsewhere in this section, each local school board shall employ the following reading specialists in elementary schools, one full-time in each elementary school at the discretion of the local school board.

H. Each local school board shall employ, at a minimum, the following full-time equivalent positions for any school that reports fall membership, according to the type of school and student enrollment:

1. Principals in elementary schools, one half-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; principals in middle schools, one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis; principals in high schools, one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis;

2. Assistant principals in elementary schools, one half-time at 600 students, one full-time at 900 students; assistant principals in middle schools, one full-time for each 600 students; assistant principals in high schools, one full-time for each 600 students;

3. Librarians in elementary schools, one part-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; librarians in middle schools, one-half time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students, two full-time at 1,000 students; librarians in high schools, one half-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students, two full-time at 1,000 students;

4. Guidance counselors in elementary schools, one hour per day per 100 students, one full-time at 500 students, one hour per day additional time per 100 students or major fraction thereof; guidance counselors in middle schools, one period per 80 students, one full-time at 400 students, one additional period per 80 students or major fraction thereof; guidance counselors in high schools, one period per 70 students, one full-time at 350 students, one additional period per 70 students or major fraction thereof; and

5. Clerical personnel in elementary schools, part-time to 299 students, one full-time at 300 students; clerical personnel in middle schools, one full-time and one additional full-time for each 600 students beyond 200 students and one full-time for the library at 750 students; clerical personnel in high schools, one full-time and one additional full-time for each 600 students beyond 200 students and one full-time for the library at 750 students.

I. Local school boards shall employ five full-time equivalent positions per 1,000 students in grades kindergarten through five to serve as elementary resource teachers in art, music, and physical education.

J. Local school boards shall employ two full-time equivalent positions per 1,000 students in grades kindergarten through 12, one to provide technology support and one to serve as an instructional technology resource teacher.

K. Local school boards may employ additional positions that exceed these minimal staffing requirements. These additional positions may include, but are not limited to, those funded through the state's incentive and categorical programs as set forth in the appropriation act.

L. A combined school, such as kindergarten through 12, shall meet at all grade levels the staffing requirements for the highest grade level in that school; this requirement shall apply to all staff, except for guidance counselors, and shall be based on the school's total enrollment; guidance counselor staff requirements shall, however, be based on the enrollment at the various school organization levels, i.e., elementary, middle, or high school. The Board of Education may grant waivers from these staffing levels upon request from local school boards seeking to implement experimental or innovative programs that are not consistent with these staffing levels.

M. School boards shall, however, annually, on or before January 1, report to the public the actual pupil/teacher ratios in elementary school classrooms by school for the current school year. Such actual ratios shall include only the teachers who teach the grade and class on a full-time basis and shall exclude resource personnel. School boards shall report pupil/teacher ratios that include resource teachers in the same annual report. Any classes funded through the voluntary kindergarten through third grade class size reduction program shall be identified as such classes. Any classes having waivers to exceed the requirements of this subsection shall also be identified. Schools shall be identified; however, the data shall be compiled in a manner to ensure the confidentiality of all teacher and pupil identities.

N. Students enrolled in a public school on a less than full-time basis shall be counted in ADM in the relevant school division. Students who are either (i) enrolled in a nonpublic school or (ii) receiving home instruction pursuant to § 22.1-254.1, and who are enrolled in public school on a less than full-time basis in any mathematics, science, English, history, social science, career and technical education, fine arts, foreign language, or health education or physical education course shall be counted in the ADM in the relevant school division on a pro rata basis as provided in the appropriation act. Each such course enrollment by such students shall be counted as 0.25 in the ADM; however, no such nonpublic or home school student shall be counted as more than one-half a student for purposes of such pro rata calculation. Such calculation shall not include enrollments of such students in any other public school courses.

O. Each local school board shall provide those support services that are necessary for the efficient and cost-effective operation and maintenance of its public schools.

For the purposes of this title, unless the context otherwise requires, "support services" shall include services provided by the school board members; the superintendent; assistant superintendents; student services (including guidance counselors, social workers, and homebound, improvement, principal's office, and library-media positions); attendance and health positions; administrative, technical, and clerical positions; operation and maintenance positions; educational technology positions; school nurses; and pupil transportation positions.

Pursuant to the appropriation act, support services shall be funded from basic school aid on the basis of prevailing statewide costs.

P. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, when determining the assignment of instructional and other licensed personnel in subsections C through J, a local school board shall not be required to include full-time students of approved virtual school programs.

2. That any multidivision online provider operating prior to the enactment of this act and prior to the development and enactment of the approval criteria pursuant to subsection A of § 22.1-212.24 of the *Code of Virginia* and meeting the requirements of subsection B of § 22.1-212.24 shall be permitted to continue operating until enactment of the approval criteria pursuant to § 22.1-212.24. Following such enactment, any operating multidivision online provider shall be required to submit an application for approval and shall be permitted to continue operating until a decision is rendered under the criteria enacted pursuant to § 22.1-212.24.

Vision for Virtual School Programs in Virginia

Research increasingly suggests that online learning can be as effective and, in some cases, more effective than traditional classroom learning.[1] This finding, coupled with the increasing availability of newer technologies, has led to a dramatic growth in virtual school programs in recent years. Virtual programs offer increased opportunities, flexibility, and convenience. Along with their tremendous potential to meet the unique needs of students and families, virtual programs must reflect the same characteristics of any effective program. In other words, effective online programs require highly qualified teachers, rigorous and appropriate standards-based curricula, meaningful assessments, engaging resources, adequate support, and effective administration.

Since 2001, the Commonwealth of Virginia has invested more than $525 million in technology infrastructure improvements in the public schools. Coupled with a strong statewide system of academic support built upon rigorous Standards of Learning (SOL), this extensive technical infrastructure establishes an ideal environment in which virtual programs can thrive. In 2010, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation to ensure that virtual programs in the Commonwealth offer the highest quality instruction and be aligned to state standards.

The following describes characteristics of high-quality virtual school programs. It is intended to provide a vision for establishing and implementing virtual school programs in Virginia.

High-Quality Virtual School Programs

Recent work by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the U.S. Department of Education define quality online learning programs fairly consistently.

Effective programs, whether offering a complete range of online courses or one single course, should have a strong sense of mission and purpose supported by effective leadership. The curricula should be developed based on current research in best practices for online classes. Various specialists should work collaboratively to develop each course, including curriculum specialists and instructional and technical designers. Course content must be rigorous and match or exceed the content of currently accepted courses taught in traditional school environments. Instructional materials and approaches should be varied and take advantage of the unique properties of electronic media, including student-teacher interaction. The description of the course content, pedagogy, and mechanism for delivery should be clear and accurate so students are aware of prerequisites and expectations. In addition, an orientation

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[1]R. Smith, T. Clark, & R. L. Blomeyer, *A Synthesis of New Research on K-12 Online Learning* (Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates, November 2005) http://www.ncrel.org/tech/synthesis/.

must be included to help students learn to use the particular course system and be successful in an online class.

Assessment options and requirements must be stated up front, with clearly outlined methods for students to appeal their grades or earned credits. Teachers should provide frequent relevant feedback to students and parents to help students track their progress and make necessary adjustments. As well, teachers, students, and parents must be well informed about federal, state, and local assessment requirements and determine how they will be used in the course and program.

Teachers should be highly qualified, licensed by the Virginia Board of Education, and endorsed in their course content area and have specific, ongoing training in online learning and teaching. Teachers should be assessed regularly for their ability to provide a quality online learning experience, measured in part by measures of student growth and achievement. Providers should provide technical support on a timely basis for teachers and students.

Programs that use a blended approach—with either a parent or educational mentor—must provide training for the mentor. Programs that provide a complete curriculum must provide support services (e.g., academic advising, needs assessment, career counseling) to all students. The online environment must also be safe, secure, and appropriately maintained.

Certain characteristics should be present in every high-quality online program:

- Technology should be used effectively to support the integration of multiple tools and pedagogical approaches. Effective support facilitates communication, collaboration, and learning. The technology must be reliable and properly maintained. Multimedia elements must be age and content appropriate, engaging, and optimized for delivery over the Internet. Effective technology is unobtrusive and intuitive for users.

- The programs must ensure a commitment to equity by providing students with disabilities the necessary accommodations and modifications to access the content. Teachers serving these students should be properly licensed and endorsed. They should also ensure that students from low-income families, English language learners, or traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities are not excluded from participation and that the content of the materials is diverse to reflect the inclusive nature of the program.

- Data must be gathered and used effectively to inform decisions regarding all aspects of the program, including tracking individual student growth and achievement and adjusting particular teaching methods. The program and courses must be updated regularly to improve student growth and achievement, adjust for technological changes, and stay aligned with the program goals and learning standards. In addition, virtual

programs must readily provide appropriate data to stakeholders and solicit feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the programs.

These characteristics of effective online programs form the basis for the criteria and application process for becoming an approved multidivision online provider in Virginia.

Resources

All Web sites were available on May 18, 2010.

http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf
Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2009). *Evaluation of evidence-based practices in online learning: A meta-analysis and review of online learning studies*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Policy, and Evaluation Development, Policy and Program Studies Service.

http://www.inacol.org/research/nationalstandards/NACOL%20Standards%20Quality%20Online%20Programs.pdf
Pape, L., & Wicks, M. (2009). *National standards for quality online programs*. Vienna, VA: International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL).

http://publications.sreb.org/2008/08T05_Onl_Student_Survey.pdf
Thomas, W. R. (2008). *Do online courses work for middle grades and high school students? Online students have their say*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

http://publications.sreb.org/2009/09T02_Overcoming_Doubts.pdf
Thomas, W. R. (2009). *Overcoming doubts about online learning*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

http://www.inacol.org/research/promisingpractices/iNACOL_PP_MgmntOp_042309.pdf
Watson, J., & Gemin, B. (2009). *Management and operations of online programs: Ensuring quality and accountability*. Vienna, VA: International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL).

Key Responsibilities

Following is a table that presents key responsibilities for each stakeholder group.

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Virginia Board of Education (VBOE)	• Approve accreditation programs for multidivision online providers • Approve criteria of multidivision online providers and processes for approval, monitoring, appeals, and revocation • Hear appeals from unapproved or revoked multidivision online providers as necessary • Provide information about multidivision online learning to the Governor and General Assembly in its annual report
Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)	• Draft criteria for VBOE approval of multidivision online providers and processes for approval, monitoring, appeals, and revocation • Provide objective information about providers on the VDOE Web site • Provide model policies and procedures for divisions • Approve and revoke (if necessary) multidivision online providers • Monitor multidivision online providers through the use of annual reports, three-year reapproval applications, and spot audits • Collect data from school divisions and multidivision online providers about online students
Multidivision Online Provider	• Provide information as specified in application • Align courses to Virginia SOL • Once approved, contract with local school boards • Provide services as stipulated in contract • Provide information to VDOE as requested • Communicate frequently with LEA and parents about student progress and participation
Local School Board	• Contract with approved multidivision online provider • Ensure multidivision online provider meets Standards of Accreditation and other requirements of division • Make agreements with other local school boards regarding participation of non-resident students less than full time in virtual school programs
School Division Administration	• Provide information on Web site about services offered through the division's contracts with multidivision online provider • Ensure students take courses that address their specific needs, including any provisions required under the individualized education program (IEP) • Gather permission from parents for students under 18 • Inform VDOE if contract with multidivision online provider is discontinued • Gather data from multidivision online provider regarding student progress and participation, communicate information to parents, and report through regular channels to VDOE

Parent	- Monitor student progress through communication with student, school division, and multidivision online provider - Notify school division and multidivision online provider if student status changes (if student moves, if student discontinues course or program, or if student's specific needs change) - Provide feedback on services to multidivision online provider and school division - Pay required tuition if student enrolls with multidivision online provider outside of local school board agreement - Enroll student in public school for participation in a virtual course or program offered by a multidivision online provider

Criteria for Approval of Multidivision Online Providers

The Criteria for Approval of Multidivision Online Providers address the following sections of the *Code of Virginia*.

> *As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A & B, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the criteria for approving multidivision online providers, including those specified in these sections. Per § 22.1-212.26.A & B, teachers and administrators for multidivision online providers must meet specified requirements.*

CATEGORY	CRITERIA
ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS	
Accreditation	The multidivision online provider's program is accredited by one of the following accrediting agencies: • AdvancEd (formerly Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation [CITA], North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement [NCA CASI], and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement [SACS CASI]) • Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools and Commission on Secondary Schools • New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) • Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) (formerly Northwest Association of Accredited Schools) • Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) • Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) School divisions operating as multidivision online providers may be deemed as meeting accreditation requirements if a majority of its schools are fully accredited by the Virginia Board of Education.
Organizational Stability	The multidivision online provider has an effective and stable organizational and management structure. The multidivision online provider is financially solvent. The legal status of the online program is clear with no ambiguities in ownership, control, or responsibility.
STAFFING	
Teachers	All teachers hired by the multidivision online provider who provide instruction to students meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-296.1 and 22.1-296.2* of the *Code of Virginia* and will be highly qualified, licensed by the Virginia Board of Education, and endorsed in their course content area. The established agreements between Virginia and other states for reciprocal teacher licensure are also in effect for virtual schools.

	The multidivision online provider must provide at least one FTE teacher at a reasonable ratio to students based on grade and subject being taught but not exceeding 150 students per FTE teacher.
Administrators	All administrators hired by the multidivision online provider meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-212.26.B* of the *Code of Virginia*. The *Code of Virginia* states: "The administrator of a virtual school program must hold an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with educational and work experience in administering education programs."
DATA	
Data Reporting	Multidivision online providers provide data to each division in which students are enrolled for the purposes of monitoring student participation and progress to ensure that students meet division participation requirements and make progress toward successful completion of the course. Data and data management meet state and federal reporting requirements.
Data Reporting	Multidivision online providers provide data to the Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of reporting information to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding multidivision online learning during the previous school year.
ACCOUNTABILITY	
Pupil Performance	The pupil performance standards for online courses or virtual school programs meet or exceed any applicable Virginia Board of Education Standards of Accreditation. Any educational objectives and assessments used to measure pupil progress toward achieving pupil performance standards are in accordance with the Board's Standards of Accreditation and all applicable state and federal laws.
Content	The content of each online course is rigorous and meets or exceeds the content of courses taught in traditional school environments. Standards meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation.
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	
Research-based	Curriculum and instruction reflect both scientifically based research and best practices for online courses.
Differentiation	Differentiation in content, delivery of content, and assessments meets the needs of a variety of learners.
Special Needs	Students with special needs, including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students with financial limitations, students from traditionally underrepresented groups, and others, are not excluded from participating in courses provided by the multidivision online provider. The provider must comply with all state and federal regulations specific to students with disabilities and work with the division to ensure student individualized education programs (IEP) are implemented.
TECHNOLOGY	
Reliability	The system used to support course delivery and management is effective and

	reliable.
Support	Technical support is consistently available on a timely basis for students, parents, and school divisions.

Accreditation Programs Pending Approval by
the Virginia Board of Education

AdvancEd (formerly Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation [CITA], North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement [NCA CASI], and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement [SACS CASI])

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools and Commission on Secondary Schools

New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) (formerly Northwest Association of Accredited Schools)

Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE)

School divisions operating as multidivision online providers may be deemed as meeting accreditation requirements if a majority of its schools are fully accredited by the Virginia Board of Education.

Application Process for Multidivision Online Providers

The application, appeals, monitoring, and revocation processes address the following section of the *Code of Virginia.*

> *As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the processes for approving and monitoring multidivision online providers, as well as a process for the revocation of a previously approved multidivision online provider and an appeal process for a multidivision online provider whose approval was revoked or for whom application was denied.*

Local school boards in Virginia may enter contracts with private organizations, educational institutions, or nonprofit virtual school organizations to establish multidivision online provider agreements once the Superintendent of Public Instruction has established the private, nonprofit, or school division virtual school organization as an approved multidivision online provider. The instruction in a virtual school is done primarily by a teacher who is in a different physical setting from the student, though local mentors may support this instruction.

A multidivision online provider is
- a private or nonprofit organization that enters into a contract with a local school board to provide online courses or programs through that school board to students who reside in Virginia both within and outside the geographical boundaries of that school division
- a private or nonprofit organization that enters into contracts with multiple local school boards to provide online courses or programs to students in grades K through 12 through those school boards
- a local school board that provides online courses or programs to students who reside in Virginia but outside the geographical boundaries of that school division

A multidivision online provider is not
- a local school board's online learning program in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of that school division
- multiple local school boards that establish joint online courses or programs in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of those school divisions
- local school boards that provide online learning courses or programs for their students through an arrangement with a public or private institution of higher education
- local school boards providing online courses or programs through a private or nonprofit organization that has been approved as a multidivision online provider

Electronic applications for approval will be made available on the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Web site on February 1, 2011. Applications will be accepted for a period of 30 calendar days beginning February 1. The application will be accessible at [INSERT URL].

Applications will be reviewed by teams selected by VDOE and whose members have expertise in curriculum, instruction, online learning, counseling support, assessment and accountability, finance, staff quality, data collection and use, and technology and technical support. The applications will be reviewed based on the Criteria for Approving Multidivision Online Providers. These teams will prepare a report with recommendations for the Superintendent of Public Instruction within 30 business days of the close of the application period.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction will make a decision regarding approval of multidivision online providers and official notification of approval or notification of denial will be mailed to the applicant within 45 business days of the close of the application period. The letter will be sent by the U.S. Postal Service and will include detailed reasons for denial if applicable.

Appeals Process for Multidivision Online Providers

If the Superintendent of Public Instruction denies approval of an application, the applicant may submit a revised application within 30 business days of notification. The Superintendent of Public Instruction will review any changes and either approve or deny the resubmitted application within 45 business days from the receipt of a resubmitted application.

An applicant that has been denied, either the first time or on resubmission, may submit an appeal directly to the Virginia Board of Education within 30 business days of receiving the application denial. The Board of Education will rule on the appeal within 60 business days from the receipt of an appeal—or at the next scheduled public meeting if no meeting occurs within 60 business days of receipt of appeal. The applicant may appear before the Board of Education. This decision of the Board of Education is intended to be a final "case decision" within the meaning of the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA) *§ 2.2-4000 et seq.* of the *Code of Virginia*, and is subject to further review in accordance with the APA and Part 2A of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The APA details the authority of state agencies to make decisions based on regulations and explains the standard procedures to be used. The final decision of the Board of Education will be sent by letter to the organization submitting the appeal.

Denied applicants may also submit a new application in subsequent application periods.

Regular Monitoring of Multidivision Online Providers

An oversight committee of the Virginia Department of Education will conduct selected reviews of approved providers and their approved courses each year. The intent of the regular monitoring process is to provide oversight through periodic review of previously approved programs and to intervene when programs no longer meet the Criteria for Approving Multidivision Online Providers, including possible revocation of approved programs. Information from the reviews will be used in preparing an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia.

The applicant must submit a Provider Monitoring Report each year; however, the Virginia Department of Education may request that a Provider Monitoring Report be completed and submitted at any time. Multidivision online providers must complete a full review after three years.

The annual Provider Monitoring Report requires providers to supply updates and changes to their programs using the online process (see Appendix B). (NOTE: Much of this form will be generated online based on the original application by the provider and is not shown in Appendix B). The oversight committee will use the Application Review Rubric (Appendix A) to evaluate the information about program changes as well as information collected from stakeholder surveys and statistical data related to course completion and student growth and achievement. The oversight committee will make a recommendation within 30 business days. Based on the recommendation of the oversight committee, a decision regarding the continued approval of multidivision online providers will be made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction within 15 business days of receipt of the monitoring report. The applicants will be notified of their status via a letter sent by the U.S. Postal Service within 45 business days of the end of the monitoring report period.

A multidivision online provider who no longer meets the Criteria for Approving Multidivision Online Providers is placed on provisional status (they may continue to serve Virginia students currently enrolled in the multidivision online program but cannot enroll new students or enter into new multidivision online provider contracts) and must address the concerns of the oversight committee and the Superintendent of Public Instruction within 40 business days of receipt of notification. If the provider does not address the concerns to the satisfaction of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the approval status of the provider may be revoked at the end of the academic year or provisional status may be extended; however, provisional status will not be extended past the full review date.

Revocation Process for Multidivision Online Providers

The approval of a multidivision online provider will remain in effect until the approval is revoked for cause, pursuant to section *§ 22.1-212.24* of the *Code of Virginia*. The decision regarding revocation of a previously approved multidivision online provider will be made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction based on the oversight committee's report and recommendation during the monitoring process.

Revocation notices will be made by certified mail within five business days after the decision has been made.

If the Superintendent of Public Instruction has revoked a provider's approval, the applicant may appeal, in writing, to the Virginia Board of Education within 30 business days of the date the revocation letter is mailed. The Board of Education will review the appeal within 60 business days of the date the appeal is received—or at the next public meeting if none takes place within 60 days of receiving the appeal. The final decision of the Board of Education will be sent by letter to the individual submitting the appeal. This decision of the Board of Education is intended to be a final "case decision" within the meaning of the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA) *§ 2.2-4000 et seq.* of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject to further review in accordance with the APA and Part 2A of the Supreme Court of Virginia. The APA details the authority of state agencies to make decisions based on regulations and explains the standard procedures to be used.

If a provider's approval is revoked by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and upheld by the Board of Education, the applicant may submit a new application during the next application period.

Multidivision Online Provider Application Process Timeline

2011 Calendar Year

Application Period	Activity
February 1, 2011	The multidivision online application window opens.
March 3, 2011	The application window closes. (30 calendar days)
April 14, 2011	The applications are reviewed by a team selected by the Virginia Department of Education and forwarded with recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (30 business days after the application window closes).
May 5, 2011	The Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee will approve or deny the application and notifications will be sent (within 45 business days after the application window closes).
Within 30 business days from receipt of a denial	Applicants may resubmit their revised materials.
Within 45 business days from receipt of a resubmitted application on appeal	The Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee will approve or deny the resubmitted application.
Within 30 business days from receipt of a first or second denial	Applicants may appeal decisions in writing to the Board of Education.
Within 60 business days from receipt of appeal (or next scheduled meeting if no meeting occurs within 60 business days of receipt of appeal)	The Board of Education will rule on the appeal.
When requested by the Department of Education or within three years of last approval	The applicant must submit Provider Monitoring Report.

Application to Become an Approved Multidivision Online Provider

(Note: This application will be an online form to be completed by applicants.)

The Application addresses the following sections of the *Code of Virginia*.

> *As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A & B, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the criteria and application process for approving multidivision online providers, including those specified in these sections. Per § 22.1-212.26.A & B, teachers and administrators for multidivision online providers must meet specified requirements.*

This application must be completed by each provider seeking approval to provide multidivision online courses or programs through local school boards in Virginia. The initial online application period will be available for 30 calendar days.

Applications must include all the information requested. Incomplete applications will not be considered. The Virginia Department of Education will provide the applicant with a written decision regarding the approval or denial of the application within 45 business days of the close of the application period.

Please submit the completed application online at [INSERT URL]. Review and follow all instructions carefully. Answer all questions fully but within any character-length stipulations. Refrain from submitting additional supplemental materials beyond what is specifically requested.

Supporting documentation submissions must be sent as Portable Document Format (PDF) files. A copy of the Application Affidavit must be signed, scanned, and attached to the application as a PDF.

Questions may be directed to Cheri Kelleher, Coordinator of Virtual Programs, at the Virginia Department of Education, by phone at 804-786-9281 or e-mail at cheri.kelleher@doe.virginia.gov.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL AS A MULTIDIVISION ONLINE PROVIDER

(Note: The application will be an online form to be completed by applicants, though this page will be printed, signed, and submitted as a PDF document.)

Part I. Applicant Affidavit

Applicant: _____

Primary Contact Person: _____

Address:_____City/State/Zip:_____

Telephone:_____Fax:_____

E-Mail Address: _____Web Site:_____

Printed Name:_____Signature: _____

Title:_____Date Signed:_____

Certification:

The applicant acknowledges that federal and state laws and regulations prohibit certain forms of discrimination. The applicant further acknowledges that, by entering into a contract with a local school division for the provision of services, the applicant may become subject to such laws or regulations, either directly through the application of such laws or regulations to itself, or in the provision of services under the contract with the local school division.

I, _____, certify that the information contained in, and attached to, this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that the multidivision online provider program conforms to the provisions of the *Code of Virginia § 22.1-212.23* through *22.1-212.27*. If changes occur in the operation or ownership of the program, I further certify that I will notify the Virginia Department of Education prior to or immediately following such changes. I understand that providing false, misleading, or incomplete information or failing to notify the Department of changes as they occur may result in the removal of the entity from the list of approved multidivision online providers as provided for in the above-referenced *Code*.

_____
Signature of Authorized Official   Date

_____
Title

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL AS A MULTIDIVISION ONLINE PROVIDER
(Note: This application will be an online form to be completed by applicants.)

Part II. Program Profile

The Application: Program Profile addresses the following section in the *Code of Virginia.*
> *As specified in § 22.1-212.25, the Virginia Department of Education will develop and maintain a Web site that provides objective information for students, parents, and educators regarding online courses and virtual programs offered through local school boards by approved multidivision online providers. Some of this information must be provided by multidivision online providers as a condition of maintaining Board approval.*

Please respond to each of the following, limiting the number of characters when noted:

1. Type of program (e.g., full-time, supplemental, fully-online, blended [online instruction by a teacher in a different physical location from the student but with local mentors], computer-based instruction, or other)
2. URL for provider's Web site and contact information for division personnel, parents, and students, as well as a link to a course directory page where individual course syllabi may be accessed
3. Grade levels served
4. Target population (e.g., full-time, credit recovery, expanded options, advanced placement, etc.)
5. Capacity of the program in terms of the number of full-time equivalent students that can be served each year
6. Enrollment schedule and course calendar, including course withdrawal dates, cohort information, and grading periods
7. The learning management system used, including Shareable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) compliance (1,500 characters)
8. Third-party providers used and their interactions with stakeholders, including how this interaction is monitored (1,500 characters)
9. Instructional model used in courses (1,500 characters)
10. Technology infrastructure model used to deliver and support courses (1,500 characters)
11. Online teacher qualifications, including academic credentials, licensure, certifications, experience, and the teacher review process (2,500 characters)
12. Average teacher load by subject area or grade-level range
13. Type and frequency of synchronous and asynchronous methods of student-teacher interaction, including the monitoring process (1,500 characters)
14. Teacher availability (hours of support) for students and parents, including communication methods (1,500 characters)
15. Technical support availability for students, parents, and school personnel and methods for providing timely support (1,500 characters)

16. How student progress is monitored and reported, including verification of authenticity of student work (1,500 characters)
17. Course completion rates and graduation rates, where applicable
18. Information on student test scores, including Virginia's Standards of Learning assessment outcomes; English language proficiency; the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement test outcomes; and outcomes on other standardized assessments as applicable (2,500 characters)
19. Specific special education supports and services for students with disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP) or a 504 Plan (2,500 characters)
20. Information on support services, including career explanation and counseling, academic advising and placement, assistance for students with limited English proficiency, mental health and social services, gifted education, high school/college dual-enrollment credits, etc. (2,500 characters)
21. Information on Internet safety policies, procedures, and monitoring (2,500 characters)
22. Information on disaster recovery plans and strategies for addressing short- and long-term service interruptions (1,500 characters)
23. Program experience in providing online or virtual instruction programs (1,500 characters)

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL AS A MULTIDIVISION ONLINE PROVIDER
(Note: This application will be an online form to be completed by applicants.)

Part III. Program Requirements

The Application: Program Requirements addresses the following sections of the *Code of Virginia*.

> As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A & B, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the criteria and application process for approving multidivision online providers, including those specified in these sections. Per § 22.1-212.26.A & B, teachers and administrators for multidivision online providers must meet specified requirements.

Please indicate whether your virtual instruction program meets these requirements by checking the appropriate box. Applications must provide documentation to support responses for each question. An application without the requested documentation will not be considered for approval.

This application is a
- □ new submission
- □ resubmission (previously denied)
- □ resubmission (third year monitoring submission)
- □ resubmission (expanding or revising scope of services)

Accreditation

The multidivision online provider's program is accredited by one of the following accrediting agencies:
(Please check one of the agencies listed below and attach accreditation certificate with dates of validity.)

- □ AdvancEd (formerly Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation [CITA], North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement [NCA CASI], and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement [SACS CASI])
- □ Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools and Commission on Secondary Schools
- □ New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
- □ Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) (formerly Northwest Association of Accredited Schools)
- □ Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
- □ Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE)

Note: School divisions operating as multidivision online providers may be deemed as meeting accreditation requirements if a majority of its schools are fully accredited by the Virginia Board of Education.

Organizational Stability

The multidivision online provider has an effective and stable organizational management structure. The multidivision online provider is financially solvent. The legal status of the online program is clear with no ambiguities in ownership, control, or responsibility.

> *Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:*
> - *Independent audit findings or other financial information that document financial stability from the previous three years, if available*

Staffing

I.   All teachers hired by the multidivision online provider who provide instruction to students meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-296.1* and *22.1-296.2* of the *Code of Virginia* and will be highly qualified, licensed by the Virginia Board of Education, and endorsed in their course content area.

> *Please include evidence to support provider compliance:*
> - *Evidence that the multidivision online provider will hire only highly qualified teachers licensed by the Virginia Board of Education and endorsed in the content area they will teach*
> - *An electronic listing of all teachers; teacher license number; and dates of background, fingerprint, and convictions check, to be updated immediately as new teachers are hired. No course will be approved to be offered until a teacher has been hired.*
> - *Willingness and ability to provide other staff records to the Virginia Department of Education with the information necessary to verify compliance for maintaining approval*

II.   All administrators hired by the multidivision online provider meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-212.26.B* of the *Code of Virginia*. The *Code of Virginia* states: "The administrator of a virtual school program must hold an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with educational and work experience in administering education programs."

> *Please include evidence to support provider compliance:*
> - *Qualifications required by the provider for administrators*

III. Provide at least one FTE teacher at a reasonable ratio to students based on grade and subject being taught, but not exceeding 150 students per FTE teacher.

Please include evidence to support provider compliance:
- *A statement regarding student/teacher ratios that will not be exceeded, listed by course, and a rationale supporting the established ratio.*

Data

I. Multidivision online providers must provide data to each division in which students are enrolled for the purposes of monitoring student participation and progress to ensure that students meet division participation requirements and make progress toward successful completion of the course. Data and data management meet state and federal reporting requirements.

Please include evidence to support provider compliance including the following:
- *Written policies and procedures for recording, monitoring, and reporting student participation and progress*
- *Written grading and reporting policies*
- *Ability to deliver data to meet state and federal requirements*
- *Ability to transmit data electronically to each division*

II. Multidivision online providers must provide data to the Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of reporting information to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding multidivision online learning during the previous school year.

Please include evidence that the following data are collected and, where applicable, can be reported in a format consistent with the requirements of the Virginia Department of Education's data collection:
- *Parental satisfaction*
- *Activities and outcomes of course and provider approval reviews. This may include how course satisfaction and approval of the provider's services by the contracting division are conducted and how the results will be shared with the Virginia Department of Education*

Accountability

I. The pupil performance standards for online courses or virtual school programs meet or exceed any applicable Virginia Board of Education Standards of Accreditation. Any educational objectives and assessments used to measure pupil progress toward achieving pupil performance standards are in accordance with the Board's Standards of Accreditation and all applicable state and federal laws.

Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:

- *Evidence that the multidivision online provider has the ability to work with divisions to meet the applicable Virginia Board of Education Standards of Accreditation, and all applicable state and federal laws*

II. The content of each online course is rigorous and meets or exceeds the content of courses taught in traditional school environments. Standards meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation.

   Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
   - *The complete list of courses to be offered in Virginia, including a URL for the course directory which includes an online syllabus for each course*
   - *Correlation using the online template provided by VDOE for all courses being offered to Virginia students, indicating what Virginia Standards of Learning are met by each course and describing where each course might exceed Virginia's Standards of Learning*
   - *Written policies and procedures related to supporting state achievement testing*

Curriculum and Instruction

I. Curriculum and instruction reflect both scientifically based research and best practices for online courses.

   Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
   - *Descriptions of basis for curriculum used and/or developed*
   - *Descriptions of basis for instructional methodologies used*

II. Differentiation in content, delivery of content, and assessments meets the needs of a variety of learners.

   Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
   - *Description of means used to differentiate course content*
   - *Description of how delivery of content is differentiated for different learners*
   - *Description of various assessments used throughout the course*

III. Students with special needs, including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students with financial limitations, students from traditionally underrepresented groups, and others, are not excluded from participating in courses provided by the multidivision online provider. The provider must comply with all state and federal regulations specific to students with disabilities and work with the division to ensure student individualized education programs (IEP) are implemented.

   Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
   - *Evidence that no students are excluded based on special needs*

- *Evidence that materials used in courses are in accessible digital formats for use by assistive technology devices or programs and that content is SCORM compliant*
- *Evidence that the multidivision online provider has the ability to work with LEA to meet the applicable state and federal regulations specific to students with disabilities and to implement specific student IEP*

Technology

I. The system used to support course delivery and management is effective and reliable.

Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
- *Description of the chosen course delivery and management system*
- *Statistical information on system availability, downtime, and back-up procedures*

II. Technical support is consistently available on a timely basis for students, parents, and school divisions.

Please provide written documentation to support provider compliance:
- *Description of technical support mechanisms in place*

Upon request, the applicant will provide course access to the Virginia Department of Education during the review phase of the application process.

Course Correlation to Virginia Standards of Learning

A 90 percent alignment to the Virginia Standards of Learning is required for approval.

[THIS WILL BE AN ONLINE FORM]

Name of Provider:
Name of Course:
URL for Course Syllabus:
Last Revision Date:

(Specify grade and subject area SOL)	
Standard:	**How does the course content address this standard? (Please refer to syllabus posted on your Web site.)**
1.1 The student will	
a) demonstrate …	
b) analyze …	
c) draw conclusions …	

How might this course exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning?

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL AS A MULTIDIVISION ONLINE PROVIDER
(Note: This application will be an online form to be completed by applicants.)

Part IV. Program Description

The Application: Program Description addresses the following sections of the *Code of Virginia*.
>*As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A & B, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the criteria and application process for approving multidivision online providers, including those specified in these sections. Per § 22.1-212.26.A & B, teachers and administrators for multidivision online providers must meet specified requirements.*

The following information will assist the Virginia Department of Education evaluation team using the rubric in Appendix A to determine the quality of the provided services. These responses will be used while reviewing the program. Please provide a narrative response not to exceed the specified character limits. Include prior experience, if applicable (for the initial application only, such experience may reflect that from comparable states if not currently a provider in Virginia). For organizations which have not provided online courses before, and for the initial application only, descriptions of policies, procedures and descriptions of the program's technical capabilities to meet the requirements will be considered.

Organizational Strengths (5,000 characters)

Provide information about the leadership, organizational, and management structure of the multidivision online provider, including:
- Mission statement
- Functions, organization, responsibilities, and membership of the governance organization
- Stability of management structures
- Tenor of relationships between all levels in the organization

Teacher and Administrator Quality (5,000 characters)

Provide information on teacher quality within the virtual program, indicating the proficiency of teachers—including descriptions of measures—in the following areas:
- Content area knowledge
- Multimedia applications and tools
- Developmentally appropriate software
- Assessment
- Internet safety policies

This should also include professional development requirements and teacher evaluation procedures.

Descriptive information should include the following data. No course will be approved to be offered until a teacher has been hired.
- Total number of teachers
- Number and percentage of teachers with advanced degrees
- Average and range of years of teaching experience
- Average and range of years of online teaching experience
- Number and percentage of highly qualified teachers
- Percentage of National Board Certified teachers
- Teacher/staff turnover rates

Provide information about administrator quality within the virtual school program, including information about:
- Requirements for previous experience with administering educational programs
- Number of teachers supervised
- Ongoing professional development requirements

Data Management (5,000 characters)

Provide information about the use of data for management and instruction and how data is protected:
- How data integrity is managed
- Data security policy and implementation plan, as well as verification that data management and reporting practices are in compliance with federal and state privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Virginia's Government Data Dissemination and Practices Act, known as the Privacy Act

Include information on the following:
- Protection from security threats such as viruses and hackers
- Reporting and data transmission policies and measures to ensure compliance with state and federal privacy laws

Provider Accountability (5,000 characters)

Provide information documenting student assessment and program accountability (for the initial application only, this may include examples from comparable states if currently not a provider in Virginia)—including the ability to provide electronic data to the Virginia Department of Education, school divisions, and other stakeholders—and how the following are tracked:
- Student participation rates in the Virginia Standards of Learning tests, early literacy assessments, or other types of standardized tests, including the names and types of assessments, grade levels, and participation rates

- Student, school, and program performance results, including nationally recognized standardized test results; Standards of Learning assessments; results from end-of-course exams; college entrance and readiness exams, including the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement tests, where applicable; rates of promotion to the next grade; high school graduation rates; postsecondary enrollment rates and the need for remediation/developmental coursework upon enrollment in postsecondary education programs; professional licenses and credentials earned; successful completion rates; student mobility rates; and dropout rates
- Summary data on noncompleters or dropouts related to the timing of and primary reasons for withdrawal

Curriculum and Instruction (10,000 characters)

Provide information documenting your curriculum's design and effectiveness. Include the following:
- Source or origin of your course content
- Strengths of teaching pedagogy followed and supported
- Basis for and frequency of revisions
- Progress monitoring used to frequently assess students' growth toward meeting specific learning objectives with a description of how students who are not meeting objectives receive additional assistance
- How course requirements and expectations are communicated to parents, students, and other stakeholders
- What type of orientation and other supporting services for students are provided
- Equity-related policies and practices for providing access to students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, traditionally underrepresented students, and students with financial and other constraints (see the Americans with Disabilities Act: http://www.ada.gov/ and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: http://idea.ed.gov/)
- Steps taken to ensure content is SCORM compliant and in accessible digital formats
- Protection from online bullies and potential predators
- Resources to promote Internet safety and positive digital citizenship

Technology Infrastructure, System Performance, and Technical Support (5,000 characters)

Describe the technology infrastructure that supports the delivery of online courses, including the following:
- Technical requirements for end users
- Alternative means of delivery for content if the system is down

Describe the overall system performance of the learning management system, including the following:
- Off-site back-up frequency for student data and other critical information

Describe the technical support for students, parents, and staff, including the following:
- Training provided for mentors and/or parents, if course is blended
- Types of technical assistance provided
- Hours/days technical support is available and how support can be accessed
- Staffing levels for technical support
- Average response time
- Typical procedures for students when encountering problems

Other Indicators of Program Success (2,500 characters)

Describe any additional support for the program, such as the following:
- A summary of stakeholder satisfaction survey results with links or an address to obtain copies of the complete survey results
- Awards, recognitions, testimonials, etc.

Appendix A: Application Review Rubric

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	MEETS	DOES NOT MEET
	ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS		
Accreditation	The multidivision online provider's program is accredited by one of the following accrediting agencies: • AdvancEd (formerly Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation [CITA], North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement [NCA CASI], and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement [SACS CASI]) • Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools and Commission on Secondary Schools • New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) • Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) (formerly Northwest Association of Accredited Schools) • Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) • Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) • School divisions operating as multidivision online providers may be deemed as meeting accreditation requirements if a majority of its schools are fully accredited by the Virginia Board of Education.		
Organizational Stability	The multidivision online provider has an effective and stable organizational and management structure. The multidivision online provider is financially solvent. The legal status of the online program is clear with no ambiguities in ownership, control, or responsibility.		
Reviewer's Comments:			
	STAFFING		
Teachers	All teachers hired by the multidivision online provider who provide instruction to students meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-296.1 and 22.1-296.2* of the *Code of Virginia* and will be highly qualified, licensed by the Virginia Board of Education, and endorsed in their course content		

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	MEETS	DOES NOT MEET
	area. If teachers have not yet been hired, policies and procedures in place ensure they will be hired to meet the above requirements. The multidivision online provider must provide at least one FTE teacher at a reasonable ratio to students based on grade and subject being taught but not exceeding 150 students per FTE teacher.		
Administrators	All administrators hired by the multidivision online provider meet the requirements set forth in section *§ 22.1-212.26.B* of the *Code of Virginia*. The *Code of Virginia* states: "The administrator of a virtual school program must hold an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with educational and work experience in administering education programs." If administrators have not yet been hired, policies and procedures in place ensure they will be hired to meet the above requirements.		
Reviewer's Comments:			
DATA			
Data Reporting	Multidivision online providers are able to provide data to each division in which students are enrolled for the purposes of monitoring student participation and progress to ensure that students meet division attendance requirements and make progress toward successful completion of the course. Data and data management meet state and federal reporting requirements.		
Data Reporting	Multidivision online providers are able to provide data to the Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of reporting information to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding multidivision online learning during the previous school year.		
Reviewer's Comments:			
ACCOUNTABILITY			
Pupil Performance	The pupil performance standards for online courses or virtual school programs meet or exceed any applicable Virginia Board of Education Standards of Accreditation. Any educational objectives and assessments used to measure pupil progress		

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	MEETS	DOES NOT MEET
	toward achieving pupil performance standards are in accordance with the Board's Standards of Accreditation and all applicable state and federal laws.		
Content	The content of each online course is rigorous and meets or exceeds the content of courses taught in traditional school environments. Standards meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation.		
Reviewer's Comments:			
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION			
Special Needs	Students with special needs, including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students with financial limitations, students from traditionally underrepresented groups, and others, are not excluded from participating in courses provided by the multidivision online provider. The provider must comply with all state and federal regulations specific to students with disabilities and work with the division to ensure student individualized education programs (IEP) are implemented.		
Research-based	Curriculum and instruction reflect both scientifically based research and best practices for online courses.		
Differentiation	Differentiation in content, delivery of content, and assessments meets the needs of a variety of learners.		
Reviewer's Comments:			
TECHNOLOGY			
Reliability	The system used to support course delivery and management is effective and reliable.		
Support	Technical support is consistently available on a timely basis for students, parents, and school divisions.		
Reviewer's Comments:			

Appendix B: Provider Monitoring Report

The Provider Monitoring Report addresses the following sections of the *Code of Virginia*.
> *As specified in § 22.1-212.24.A & B, the Superintendent of Public Instruction will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the criteria and application process for approving multidivision online providers, including those specified in these sections, and in § 22.1-212.26.A & B. In § 22.1-212.25.C, the Board of Education is directed to provide certain information in its annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding multidivision online learning for the previous year.*

This monitoring form is to be completed by approved multidivision online providers by June 30 of each academic year. Its purpose is to identify any significant programmatic changes that have occurred in relation to the original application since the initial application approval. This document, in conjunction with data collection regarding demographics, student success, and stakeholder satisfaction, will be used to determine continued alignment with Virginia's standards.

Questions may be directed to Cheri Kelleher, Coordinator of Virtual Programs, at the Virginia Department of Education, by phone at 804-786-9281 or e-mail at cheri.kelleher@doe.virginia.gov.

Review Panel Findings
This box for VDOE Review Panel Use Only

(Please check only one of the following)

This document indicates
- □ no significant changes in the past year
- □ significant changes that <u>do not</u> impact standards alignment
- □ significant changes that impact standards alignment

Each of the sections below reflects information provided in the initial application to the Virginia Department of Education. Beneath the heading of each section, select "no significant changes" or "significant changes that do not impact standards alignment" or "significant changes that impact standards alignment." For any significant changes, please attach a brief narrative explaining the significant changes. (Detailed descriptors for each section from the original application form are provided for reference purposes.) [THIS FORM IS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS, SINCE IT WILL BE BASED ON THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY PROVIDERS.]

Data Reporting

(for multidivision online provider to file with Provider Monitoring Report)

This reporting template assists the Virginia Department of Education with reviewing approved multidivision online providers. Please complete the chart below with the most complete and up-to-date information available.

School Level and Type	Number of Students	Number of Instructors and Staff
o Elementary	Full time:	Full-time teachers:
o Middle	Part time:	Part-time teachers:
o High		Administrators:
		Counselors:
Demographic Information		Other support staff:
Males:		
Females:		

Ethnic and Racial Makeup of Student Body
Please provide numbers/percentage of all students who are:
Hispanic or Latino students (a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South American, Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race):
Since students may choose one or more of the following, total percentages may equal more than 100%:
American Indian or Alaska Native (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America [including Central America], and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment):
Asian (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam):
Black or African American (a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa):
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands):
White (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa)**:**

Parental Satisfaction and Outcomes of Course and Provider Approval Reviews

Please submit a summative report on stakeholder satisfaction with your program. Stakeholders are considered to include, but not be limited to, parents, students, school officials (e.g., counselors, principals, division leaders), and faculty members. Include methods (quantitative or qualitative) used to collect data including, but not limited to, survey tools, survey questions, focus groups, etc. When available, cross-comparison data analysis would prove helpful. If available, please include a copy of the surveys.

The following information collected within the Department of Education through the Educational Information Management System (EIMS) will be used during the annual monitoring process.

Course Completion Data

Per the definitions provided by the Virginia Department of Education, the course may be counted as having been completed by a student when the academic content work—based on the contracting school division's approved academic content and testing requirements—has been completed.

Completion Data for Each Course Provided in Virginia by a Specific Multidivision Online Provider [Note: For end-of-course, need to differentiate passing class if standard credit or verified credit.]

Name of Course	Number of Enrollments	Number of Completers	Completer Percentage

* This chart can be expanded depending on the number of courses offered by a provider.

Course Pass Rates

Per the definitions provided by the Virginia Department of Education, course pass rates comprise the percentage of students completing and passing an online course, calculated by dividing the number of students who passed by the number of students in the enrollment count.

Name of Course	Number of Students Completing and Passing Course	Number of Students Enrolled in Course	Pass Rate of Course

END