

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: J.

Date: March 24, 2011

**Topic:** First Review of a Request for Continuation of an Alternative Accreditation Plan from Danville City Public Schools for J. M. Langston Focus School

**Presenter:** Dr. Kathleen M. Smith, Director, Office of School Improvement. Division of Student Assessment and School Improvement  
Dr. Sue B. Davis, Superintendent, Danville City Public Schools

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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: Final Review on April 28, 2011

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action

date September 26, 2007

action Board approved alternative accreditation plan

## Background Information:

Section 8 VAC 20-131-280 C. of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states:

Subject to the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in §22.1-26 of the Code, Governor's schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment may seek approval of an alternative accreditation plan from the Board of Education. Special purpose schools with alternative accreditation plans shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50.

Section 22.1-253.13:1.D.8 of the *Standards of Quality* requires local school boards to provide educational alternatives for students whose needs are not met in programs prescribed elsewhere in these standards. Such students shall be counted in average daily membership (ADM) in accordance with the regulations of the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE). Regulations governing programs such as this are found in the accrediting standards, which permit alternative accreditation plans and allow the VBOE to grant waivers to certain provisions of the standards.

### Summary of Major Elements

Danville City Public Schools is seeking an extension of an alternative accreditation plan for J. M. Langton School. The VBOE approved the first alternative accreditation plan in September 2007. Since that time, the school has not met the *Standards of Accreditation* targets. The school demonstrated an increase in English, mathematics, and history over the past three years:

<b>Unadjusted AYP Pass Rates</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>
	<b>Percent Passing</b>		
English Performance			
All Students	42%	58%	68%
Mathematics Performance			
All Students	15%	52%	68%
History Performance			
All Students	42%	60%	62%
Science Performance			
All Students	40%	61%	60%

The following data was used to determine the alternative accreditation status (*Accredited with Warning*) of J. M. Langston Focus School for the 2010-2011 year based on data from the 2009-2010 year:

**Table 1**

#### SOL Core Subject Index Points

<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>SOL Scaled Score</b>	<b>Points Awarded for Each Proficiency Level</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
10	600-500	100	1000
214	499-400	90	19260
9	399-375	70	630
152	Below 400 where a basic score is not available	0	0
<b>Total Number of Points Awarded</b>			<b>20890</b>
(A) Total Number of Points Awarded			20890
(B) Total Number of Grades 6-12 Tests Administered			376
<b>SOL Core Subject Index Score = (A)/(B)</b>			<b>55.6</b>

**Table 2****Additional Index Points**

Course GPA of students completing the College Success Skills at Danville Community College meets or exceeds 3.0 for 80% of completers	<b>2</b>
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**Table 3****Alternate Accreditation Composite Index Score Calculations**

Categories	
SOL Core Subject Index Score = (A)/(B)	55.6
Total Number of Additional Index Points (up to 8 points)	2.0
Alternative Accreditation Composite Index Score = [(A)/(B)] +	
Total Number of Additional Index Points (up to 8 points)	<b>57.6</b>

The proposed alternative education plan, Attachment A, includes both student achievement and graduation criteria since the graduation and completion index becomes an accreditation criteria for ratings awarded in 2011-2012.

Danville City Public Schools is requesting waivers from specific provisions of sections 8 VAC 20-131-90 A-C and 8 VAC 20-131-100 A-B. Foreign language, music and career and technical education are not provided in the middle grades. At the secondary level, foreign language and advanced placement courses are not provided. Danville City Public Schools is requesting the following waivers:

8 VAC 20-131-90. Instructional program in middle schools  
Music, foreign language, and career and technical exploration

8 VAC 20-131-100. Instructional program in secondary schools  
Foreign language and Advanced Placement (AP) courses

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Virginia Board of Education accept for first review the request for a continuation of an alternative accreditation plan from Danville City Public Schools for J. M. Langston Focus School.

**Impact on Resources:**

None

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Final action will be requested at the April 28, 2011, meeting.

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN**

*Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality ( 22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.). This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to August 1 of the school year in which the plan is to be implemented.*

*8 VAC 20-131-280 of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia states (in part): Special purpose schools such as regional, special education, alternative, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50.*

The Board of Education, in its *Guidelines Governing the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, states:

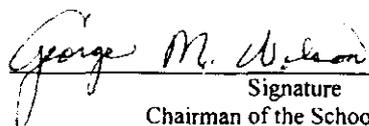
*Schools described in this section are those that serve as a student's school of principal enrollment and where students are reported in fall membership for the school. Fall membership determines whether or not these schools are subject to the provisions of the accrediting standards; therefore, schools reporting fall membership are subject to the provisions of the standards. These schools may or may not administer Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.*

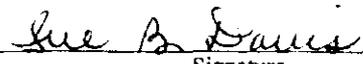
*In accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330 of the standards, local school boards may seek waivers of provisions of the standards to address the unique needs of these special purpose schools. Such requests may include an alternative accreditation plan. Applications must be submitted to the Board for consideration at least ninety days prior to August 1 of the school year. Requests for consideration must be accompanied by information that documents the need for approval of the request.*

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

December 2, 2010  
Date Approved  
by the Local School Board

December 3, 2010  
Submission Date

  
Signature  
Chairman of the School Board

  
Signature  
Division Superintendent

**DANVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
J. M. LANGSTON FOCUS SCHOOL  
DANVILLE, VIRGINIA**

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN**

**INTRODUCTION:**

J. M. Langston Focus School is in its fourth year as an alternative school in the Danville Public School System. Langston meets the state definition of a special purpose school and seeks approval for an alternative accreditation plan as provided in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, Part VIII, Section 8 VAC 20-131-280 D.

**INTENT:**

- To prepare students in grades 6-8 who are experiencing significant academic and behavior difficulties in a traditional education setting, to successfully complete middle grade content with the goal of promotion to high school.
  
- To prepare students in grades 9-12 who are experiencing significant academic and behavior difficulties in a traditional education setting, to successfully complete secondary grade content and earn a standard diploma.

**VISION/MISSION:**

J. M. Langston Focus School is designed to foster a learning environment for middle and secondary grade students who have experienced academic and behavior difficulties in a traditional education environment.

**TARGET POPULATION:**

J. M. Langston Focus School serves students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 who are overage, under credited, and are deficient in reading and/or math as measured by Istation's Indicators of Progress and/or the result of the Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test (ARDT) and/or who continuously experience behavior deficits that are outlined in the school board's *Student Standards of Conduct*.

**INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM:**

- The academic program for grades 6-8 will focus on reading, writing and mathematics. Students will receive instruction in organization and study skills as well as goal setting and problem-solving strategies. Interdisciplinary instruction will address the history and science content that is necessary for students to be successful in 9<sup>th</sup> grade entry level classes. The academic program for grades 9-12 will focus on the four core subject areas English, mathematics, history and social science, and science. Students will receive instruction and guidance in goal setting, career awareness, and post-secondary education.
- Students will be administered Istation's Indicators of Progress in reading and/or ARDT mathematics, respectively, at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year to assist teachers with the development of a differentiated instructional program that addresses the needs of each student.
- Grades 6-12 students will have opportunities for career exploration offered using internet resources. Students will take aptitude and interest inventories to be used in planning academic and vocational choices.

- Credit recovery programs will be provided to students in grades 9-12 using on-site technology and after-school programs.
- Students will be given additional time to master specific course objectives, particularly in courses that have an EOC/SOL test. This decision will be based on students' six weeks benchmark assessment scores, or social/environmental issues.
- A 30-minute lunch and recess will allow students time to eat and engage in physical activities.

### **STAFFING:**

J. M. Langston Focus School is staffed with a faculty of highly qualified teachers certified to teach the core subject areas proposed. Grades 6-12 teacher/pupil ratio will be limited to 1:15 per class. Paraprofessionals will be assigned to the school to serve as instructional assistants. Pupil support services will be on-site to assist students in grades 6-12 and their families with issues that serve as barriers to academic and behavior successes.

### **STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:**

Istation's Indicators of Progress and/or ARDT will be administered to all students at the beginning of the school year. The results will be used as baseline data for the students and to assist in instructional planning. Students will be administered benchmark assessments each six weeks in the core subject area with the achievement data tracked and analyzed. Grades 6-12 students will participate in the Virginia Standards of Learning Assessment Program.

### **WAIVER REQUESTED:**

Waivers are requested from sections 8 VAC 20-131-90 and 8 VAC 20-131-100 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* as follows:

8 VAC 20-131-90. Instructional program in middle schools  
Music, foreign language, and career and technical exploration

8 VAC 20-131-100. Instructional program in secondary schools  
Foreign language and Advanced Placement (AP) courses

### **ACCREDITATION:**

#### ***Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index Point System***

Grades 6-12 students will participate in grade level SOL tests and end-of-course tests as required by No Child Left Behind and Standards of Accreditation. Student performance for accreditation will be determined based on students passing the following SOL tests: grades 6-7 reading, grades 6-7 mathematics, and content specific history; grade 8 reading, writing, mathematics, content specific history, and science; and SOL end-of-course tests. The SOL scores of students, who receive an AYP Adjustment Code of A, B, or C, will be considered transfer students for the purpose of calculating the state accreditation rating. See *Clarification on the Application of AYP Adjustment Codes* in Appendix A.

Due to the small student population, a composite pass rate is necessary to create a larger number of student scores upon which to calculate state accreditation. An Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index score of at least 70 points and an Alternate Graduation and Completion Composite Index score of 85 points must be earned for J. M. Langston Focus School to meet fully accredited status.

The SOL Core Subject Index includes points assigned for student performance on each of the SOL tests and additional other subject area indicators. The SOL test component of the Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index will be calculated by multiplying the number of grades 6-12 tests receiving a Tier I score by 100; the number of grades 6-12 tests receiving a Tier II score by 95; the number of grades 6-12 tests receiving a Tier III score by 85; and the number of grades 6-12 tests receiving a Tier IV score by 0. The total points awarded will be divided by the total number of tests administered. The criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of a test score will be based on those used in calculating AYP. See Table 1.

Table 1

*SOL Core Subject Index Points*

Number of Tests Meeting Criteria	SOL Scaled Score	Tiers	Points Awarded for Each Tier	Points Awarded
	600-500	Tier I	100	
	499-400	Tier II	95	
	399-375	Tier III	85	
	Below 375	Tier IV	0	
(A)Total Number of Points Awarded				
(B)Total Number of Grades 6-12 Tests Meeting Criteria				
SOL Core Subject Index Score = (A)/(B)				

Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) and Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA) scores will be counted as described below. Historically, this school has not submitted VAAP.

The number of tests meeting criteria for VAAP and VGLA will be included in Table I as follows:

VAAP scores-

- Advanced Proficient will be included in Tier I
- Proficient will be included in Tier II
- Scores below Proficient will be included in Tier IV

VGLA scores-

- Advanced Proficient will be included in Tier I
- Proficient will be included in Tier II
- Basic will be included in Tier III
- Scores below Basic will be included in Tier IV

Additional SOL Core Subject Index points may be earned by meeting the performance criteria in the other subject indicators category. See Table 2.

Table 2

*Additional Subject Index Points*

Other Subject Indicators	Points Awarded
Forty percent of remediation recovery students pass the Math SOL test	2 points
Forty percent of remediation recovery students pass the Reading SOL test	2 points
Average daily attendance meets or exceeds 81%	1 point
Increase from the previous year the number of students enrolled in dual enrollment courses	2 points
Increase from the previous year the number of students in grades 6-8 who complete high school credit courses	1 point
Course GPA of students completing the College Success Skills at Danville Community College meets or exceeds 3.0 for 75% of completers	2 points

Forty percent of graduates enrolled in post-secondary studies in a 2- or 4-year college, vocational school or enter the military	4 points
Eighty percent of students administered the WorkKeys during the school year receive at least a score of 3	1 point

The categories used to calculate the Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index Score are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

*Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index Score Calculations*

Categories	Points Awarded
SOL Core Subject Index Score = (A)/(B)	
Total Number of Additional Subject Index Points (Up to 12 points)	
Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index Score = [(A)/(B)] + Total no. of additional subject index points up to 12 points	

***Alternate Graduation and Completion Composite Index Point System***

An *Alternate Graduation and Completion Composite Index (GCI)* will be used to determine the score for the school's graduation and completion index. The index includes points assigned for the type of diplomas awarded during the school year. The Graduation and Completion Index will be calculated by multiplying the number of students receiving a Standard, Modified Standard, and Special diploma by 100; the number of students receiving a GED by 75; and the number of students receiving a certificate of program completion by 25. The total points awarded will be divided by the total number of seniors counted in membership during the school year. See Table 4.

Table 4

*Alternate Graduation and Completion Index Points*

Number of Graduates	Type of Diplomas	Points Awarded for Each Diploma	Points Awarded
	Standard	100	
	Modified Standard	100	
	Special	100	
	GED	75	
	Certificate of Program Completion	25	
(C)Number of Points Awarded			
(D)Number of Seniors Counted in Membership During School Year			
Graduation and Completion Index Score (C)/(D)			

Additional GCI points may be earned by meeting the performance criteria in the other GCI indicator category. See Table 5.

Table 5

*Additional Graduation and Completion Index Points*

Other GCI Indicator	Points Awarded
Increase from the previous year the percent of students who complete high school with a Standard, Modified Standard, Special Diplomas, or GED.	2 points
Increase the number of students who earn a GED and enter post-secondary studies in a 2- or 4-year college, vocational school or enter the military	4 points

Increase the number of students who have 20 or more credits before exiting without graduating.	2 points
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The categories used to calculate the Alternate Graduation and Completion Index Score are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

*Alternate Graduation and Completion Index Score Calculations*

Categories	Points Awarded
Graduation and Completion Index Score = (C)/(D)	
Total Number of Additional Index Points (Up to 6 points)	
Alternate Graduation and Completion Index Composite Index Score = [(C)/(D)] + Total no. of additional GCI indicator points up to 6 points	

***Alternate Accreditation Composite Index Point System***

An *Alternate Accreditation Composite Index Point System* will be used to determine the accreditation rating. See Table 7.

Table 7

*Accreditation Status*

Accreditation Category	Score	Score Required	Status (Met or Not Met)
Alternate SOL Core Subject Composite Index Score = [(A)/(B)] + Total no. of additional other subject indicators points up to 12 points		Must Meet or Exceed 70 points	
Alternate Graduation and Completion Composite Index Score = [(C)/(D)] + Total no. of additional GCI points up to 6 points		Must Meet or Exceed 85 points	
<b>Accreditation Rating</b>			

**PROGRAM EVALUATION:**

The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated using several criteria. Student achievement will be monitored using report card grades, six weeks benchmark assessments, and summer, fall and spring SOL test results. Student attendance and behavior will be monitored weekly by using the Star Base student management system to track attendance and violations of the *Student Standards of Conduct*. Surveys will be distributed to students, faculty/staff and parents to gather data for school improvement at least twice during the school year.

**TRANSITION PLAN:**

Students and their parents will be interviewed face-to-face by the director of Alternative Education, and the principal, guidance counselor, and curriculum facilitator of Langston School. The purposes of this interview are: (1) to explain the academic and behavior expectations of students entering J. M. Langston Focus School, and (2) to explain the different support services available to students and parents of J. M. Langston Focus School.

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
J. M. Langston Focus School, Danville Public Schools  
Alternative Accreditation Plans for Special Purpose Schools**

Criteria	Yes	No	Limited
<b>School characteristics and instructional program:</b>			
1. The mission, purpose, and target population of the school justify its categorization as a “special purpose” school and, therefore, eligible to request an alternative accreditation plan.	X		
2. The characteristics and special needs of the student population are clearly defined, and the criteria for student placement require parental consultation and agreement.	X		
3. The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a comprehensive curriculum that is customized to support the mission of the school.  <i>The plan requests a waiver of 8 VAC 20-131-90 A-C and 8 VAC 20-131-100 A-B</i>			X
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they return to a regular school setting.  Note: Students do not return to a regular school setting.		X	
5. Strategies used to evaluate student progress are aligned to the mission/purpose of the school and include academic achievement measures.	X		
6. Convincing evidence has been provided that students enrolled in the school have not been successful in other schools subject to all the accrediting standards.	X		
7. Students will be taught with highly qualified teachers who meet the Board of Education’s licensure requirements for instructional personnel.	X		

<b>Alternative Accreditation Accountability Criteria:</b>			
1. Rationale and documentation provide convincing evidence that the “special purpose” nature of the school precludes its being able to reach and maintain full accreditation status as defined in the <i>Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia</i> (SOA).	X		
2. Alternative accreditation criteria described in the plan include academic achievement measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school.	X		
3. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
4. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
5. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.  <i>The plan does not specifically state that students will be tested as required by NCLB.</i>			X
6. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
7. Waivers have been requested for accrediting standards that are not being met, and the rationale for the waivers are clear and appropriate for the mission/purpose of the school.	X		