

# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## Board of Education Agenda

**Date of Meeting:** May 19, 2011      **Time:** 9 a.m.  
**Location:** Jefferson Conference Room, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, James Monroe Building  
101 North 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Richmond, Virginia



**9:00 a.m.                      FULL BOARD CONVENES**

**Moment of Silence**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes of the April 27-28, 2011, Meeting of the Board**

**Public Comment**

**Action/Discussion: Board of Education Regulations**

- A. First Review of the Proposed Amendments to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8 VAC 20-131-5 et seq.) to Conform to HB 1554 and SB 810; HB 1793; and HB 2172 and SB 953 and HB 2494, Passed by the 2011 General Assembly, and HB 566 and SB 630 Passed by the 2010 General Assembly

**Action/Discussion Items**

- B. Final Review of a Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) to Revise the Definitions of At-Risk of Becoming Low-Performing and Low-Performing Institutions of Higher Education in Virginia as Required by Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)
- C. Final Review of a Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) to Approve a Cut Score for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment
- D. Final Review of a Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure to Approve a Cut Score for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment

## **Action/Discussion Items (continued)**

- E. Final Review of the Board of Education's *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016*
- F. Final Review of a Request for Approval of an Innovative Program Opening Prior to Labor Day from Alexandria City Public Schools. *This agenda item was removed at the request of Alexandria City Public Schools.*
- G. First Review of a Request for Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan from Albemarle County Public Schools for the Albemarle County Community Public Charter School
- H. First Review of a Request for Continuation of Alternative Accreditation Plans from Fairfax County Public Schools for the Kilmer and Key Centers
- I. First Review of a Request for Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plans from Fairfax County Public Schools for Mountain View High School, Woodson Adult High School, and Bryant Alternative High School
- J. First Review of Proposed State Approved Textbooks for K-12 Mathematics
- K. First Review of Recommended Cut Scores for History for the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA)

**DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES** - by Board of Education Members and Superintendent of Public Instruction

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Board of Education members will meet for dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Wednesday, May 18, 2011. Items for the Board agenda may be discussed informally at that dinner. No votes will be taken, and it is open to the public. The Board president reserves the right to change the times listed on this agenda depending upon the time constraints during the meeting.

### **GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. The Board of Education is pleased to receive public comment at each of its regular monthly meetings. In order to allow the Board sufficient time for its other business, the total time allotted to public comment will generally be limited to thirty (30) minutes. Individuals seeking to speak to the Board will be allotted three (3) minutes each.
2. Those wishing to speak to the Board should contact Dr. Margaret Roberts, Executive Assistant for Board Relations at (804) 225-2924. Normally, speakers will be scheduled in the order that their requests are received until the entire allotted time slot has been used. Where issues involving a variety of views are presented before the Board, the Board reserves the right to allocate the time available so as to ensure that the Board hears from different points of view on any particular issue.
3. Speakers are urged to contact Dr. Roberts in advance of the meeting. Because of time limitations, those persons who have not previously registered to speak prior to the day of the Board meeting cannot be assured that they will have an opportunity to appear before the Board.
4. In order to make the limited time available most effective, speakers are urged to provide multiple written copies of their comments or other material amplifying their views.



The current *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation) were approved by the Board of Education on February 9, 2009, and went into effective on July 31, 2009; however, to comport with HB 2166, passed by the 2009 General Assembly, the effective date for the new provisions related to graduation and school accreditation was delayed until July 1, 2010. In 2010, the General Assembly passed HB 111 and SB 352, which delayed the new provisions related to graduation and school accreditation until July 1, 2011, with the exception of the Graduation and Completion Index. On June 24, 2010, the Board of Education approved amendments to comport with this legislation, and the amendments became effective on September 15, 2010. The 2010 General Assembly also passed HB 1199 providing for a waiver of certain graduation requirements to be granted only for good cause. On September 15, 2010, the Board of Education approved amendments to comport with this legislation, and the amendments became effective on April 14, 2011.

The 2011 General Assembly passed HB 1554 and SB 810 that would again delay the new provisions related to graduation and school accreditation until July 1, 2012, with the exception of the provisions prescribing economics and financial literacy as a graduation requirement and related changes to the Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas. The legislation says:

§ 1. That no statutes or regulations prescribing additional requirements upon which the accreditation rating of schools in the Commonwealth is based, pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:3](#) of the Code of Virginia, beyond those already in effect on July 1, 2008, shall become effective before July 1, ~~2011~~ 2012, unless such statutes or regulations are also specifically required by federal code, federal regulation, or court action. Furthermore, that no statutes or regulations prescribing additional graduation requirements, pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:4](#) of the Code of Virginia, shall become effective before July 1, ~~2011~~ 2012, unless such statutes or regulations are also specifically required by federal code, federal regulation, or court action. Furthermore, the passing rates required for full accreditation in ~~2011-2012~~ [2012-2013](#) based on assessments administered during the ~~2010-2011~~ [2011-2012](#) school year shall be the same passing rates required for full accreditation during the [2008-2009](#) school year. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, schools with a graduating class shall meet prescribed thresholds on a graduation and completion rate index, as prescribed by the Board of Education, for accreditation ratings for [2011-2012](#). *Furthermore, notwithstanding the provisions of this section, regulations prescribing economics and financial literacy as a graduation requirement and related changes to the standard and advanced studies diplomas, pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:4](#) of the Code of Virginia, shall become effective July 1, 2011.*

The 2011 General Assembly passed HB 1793 that would permit students earning Modified Standard, Standard Technical, and Advanced Technical Diplomas to be awarded a diploma seal for excellence in civics education. The legislation amends § 22.1-253.13:4:

The Board shall also establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal for excellence in civics education and understanding of our state and federal constitutions and the democratic model of government for the *modified standard*, standard ~~and~~, *standard technical*, advanced studies, and *advanced technical* diplomas. The Board shall consider including criteria for (i) successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education; (ii) voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities that includes the types of activities that shall qualify

as community service and the number of hours required; and (iii) related requirements as it deems appropriate.

The 2011 General Assembly also passed HB 2172 and SB 953, relating to the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program. The legislation amends § 22.1-253.13:9:

*In order to encourage school divisions to promote student achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, the Board of Education shall take into account in its guidelines a school division's increase in enrollments and elective course offerings in these areas.*

In addition, the 2011 General Assembly passed HB 2494, to permit the Board of Education to grant waivers of regulations and approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan to all public schools. The legislation amends § 22.1-253.13:3:

*H. Any school board, on behalf of one or more of its schools, may request the Board of Education for releases from state regulations and for approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of one or more of its schools as authorized for certain other schools by the Standards of Accreditation pursuant to 8 VAC 20-131-280 C of the Virginia Administrative Code.*

Finally, the 2010 General Assembly passed HB 566 and SB 630 that would require additional reporting requirements about student achievement in Career and Technical Education. The legislation amends § 22.1-253.13:4:

School boards shall report annually to the Board of Education the number of *Board-approved* industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations passed, ~~and~~ *national occupational competency assessments passed, Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments passed; and* the number of career and technical education completers ~~that~~ *who* graduated. These numbers shall be reported as *separate* categories on the School Performance Report Card.

The Administrative Process Act, in § 2.2-2006 of the *Code of Virginia*, provides for an exemption from executive branch review for regulations necessary to conform to changes in statutory law where no discretion is involved. The provision permits the regulation to become effective at the conclusion of the 30-day public comment period following publication in the *Virginia Register* unless a legislative or gubernatorial objection is filed or the Board suspends the regulatory process.

**Summary of Major Elements:** The following sections of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* would be amended to comport with the legislation passed by the 2011 General Assembly and signed by the Governor:

1. [8 VAC 20-131-50](#) B, C, D and E, Requirements for Graduation, pages 12 through 16 - The new requirements for the Standard Diploma and the Advanced Studies Diploma would begin with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 2011. The requirements include one standard credit in economics and personal finance. The requirements for the Standard Technical Diploma and Advanced Technical Diploma would begin with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 2012. This comports with HB 1554 and SB 810.

2. [8 VAC 20-131-50](#) K, Requirements for Graduation, page 19 – The Board of Education’s Seal for Excellence in Civics Education will be awarded to students who earn any of the following diplomas: 1) Modified Standard Diploma; 2) Standard Diploma; 3) Standard Technical Diploma; 4) Advanced Studies Diploma; or 5) Advanced Technical Diploma. This comports with HB 1793.
3. [8 VAC 20-131-100](#) B, Instructional Program in Secondary Schools, page 28 – The minimum course offerings for each secondary school are revised to include the addition of one standard credit in economics and personal finance. This comports with HB 1554 and SB 810.
4. [8 VAC 20-131-140](#), College and Career Preparation Programs and Opportunities for Postsecondary Credit, page 34 - The requirement for all students, beginning in middle school, to have an Academic and Career Plan would begin in the 2012-2013 academic year. This comports with HB 1554 and SB 810.
5. [8 VAC 20-131-270](#) A, School and Community Communications, page 52 – School boards shall report annually to the Board of Education the number of Board-approved industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations passed, national occupational competency assessments passed, Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments passed; and the number of career and technical education completers who graduated. These numbers shall be reported as separate categories on the School Performance Report Card. This comports with HB 566 and SB 360.
6. [8 VAC 20-131-280](#) C, Expectations for School Accountability, page 53 – This language would permit the Board of Education to approve an alternative accreditation plan for any public school. The current regulation permits the Board to approve an alternative accreditation plan for special purpose public schools, such as joint and regional schools, Governor’s schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools. This comports with HB 2494.
7. [8 VAC 20-131-300](#) A, Application of the Standards, pages 58 and 59 – The current testing pass rate is 75 percent in English for grades three through five, and 70 percent for all other grades and courses. The testing pass rate is 50 percent for science and history and social science for grade three, and 70 percent for all other grades and courses. These rates will remain in effect with ratings awarded in the 2012-2013 school year. For ratings awarded in the 2013-2014 school year and beyond, the increase in the test pass rate needed for full accreditation for all grades will be 75 percent in English and 70 percent in mathematics, science, and history and social science. This comports with HB 1554 and SB 810.
8. [8 VAC 20-131-325](#) A, Recognitions and Rewards for School and Division Accountability Performance, page 67 - In order to encourage school divisions to promote student achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), the Board shall take into account in its guidelines for the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program, a school division’s increase in enrollments and elective course offerings in these STEM areas. This comports with HB 2172 and SB 953.

9. [8 VAC 20-131-360](#), Effective Date, page 71 – This amends the effective dates of the new provisions related to graduation and school accreditation. This comports with HB 1554 and SB 810.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:** The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept for first review the technical changes as proposed.

**Impact on Resources:** The impact on resources for these regulations is not expected to be significant.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Final approval will be requested at the June 23, 2011, Board meeting.



***REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING  
STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITING  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN VIRGINIA***

***8 VAC 20-131.***

***Adopted by the Virginia Board of Education  
February 19, 2009  
Effective July 31, 2009***

## FOREWORD

The Standards of Quality, in [§ 22.1-253.13:3](#) of the Code of Virginia, require local school boards to maintain schools that are fully accredited pursuant to the standards for accreditation as prescribed by the Board of Education. The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* set the minimum standards for the accreditation of Virginia's elementary, middle, secondary, and combined schools.

The regulations, approved by the Board of Education on February 19, 2009, became effective July 31, 2009. The majority of the regulatory changes in the regulations are to be implemented beginning with the 2010-2011 school year; however, three provisions became effective on July 31, 2009. The three provisions are described below:

- The provision found in 8 VAC 20-131-30.B. placing limitations on the practice of double-testing of students in grades K-8 in the same content area in the same school year.
- The provision found in 8 VAC 20-131-60.A., 8 VAC 20-131-60.E. and 8 VAC 20-131-300.B. requiring that a student's State Testing Identifier (STI) be maintained when the student transfers to another public school or that one be assigned immediately upon enrollment if transferring from out-of-state or home-schooling or a private school with no previous enrollment in a public school.
- The provision in 8 VAC 20-131-60.C. requiring that credit be automatically accepted for courses completed through Virtual Virginia, the state's virtual learning program, when a student transfers into a Virginia public school.

The Board of Education and the Department of Education periodically issue guidance to school divisions and the public on the implementation and interpretation of the standards. Questions regarding the regulations may be directed to the Office of Policy by phone to (804) 225-2403 or by e-mail to [policy@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:policy@doe.virginia.gov) or [SOACOMMENTS@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:SOACOMMENTS@doe.virginia.gov). Questions regarding the Virginia Assessment Program should be directed to the Division of Student Assessment and School Improvement at (804) 225-2102 or by e-mail to [Student\\_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov).

# PROPOSED TECHNICAL CHANGES – MAY 19, 2011

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8 VAC 20-131-5. Definitions.

The following words and terms apply only to these regulations and do not supersede those definitions used for federal reporting purposes or for the calculation of costs related to the Standards of Quality (§§ 22- 253.13:1 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). When used in these regulations, these words shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Accreditation” means a process used by the Virginia Department of Education (hereinafter “department”) to evaluate the educational performance of public schools in accordance with these regulations.

“Additional test” means a test, including substitute tests approved by the Board of Education that students may use in lieu of a Standards of Learning test to obtain verified credit.

“Class period” means a segment of time in the school day that is approximately 1/6 of the instructional day.

“Combined school” means a public school that contains any combination of or all of the grade levels from kindergarten through grade 12. This definition does not include those schools defined as elementary, middle, or secondary schools.

“Elementary school” means a public school with any grades kindergarten through five.

“Eligible students” means the total number of students of school age enrolled in the school at a grade or course for which a Standards of Learning test is required unless excluded under the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-30 F and 8 VAC 20-131-280 D relative to limited English proficient (LEP) students.

“Enrollment” means the act of complying with state and local requirements relative to the registration or admission of a child for attendance in a school within a local school division. This term also means registration for courses within the student’s home school or within related schools or programs.

“First time” means the student has not been enrolled in the school at any time during the current school year (for purposes of 8 VAC 20-131-60 with reference to students who transfer in during the school year).

“Four core areas” or “four core academic areas” means English, mathematics, science, and history and social science for purposes of testing for the Standards of Learning.

“Graduate” means a student who has earned a Board of Education recognized diploma, which includes the Advanced Studies, Advanced Technical, Standard, Standard Technical, Modified Standard, Special, and General Achievement diplomas.

“Homebound instruction” means academic instruction provided to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance based upon certification of need by a licensed physician or a licensed clinical psychologist.

“Locally awarded verified credit” means a verified unit of credit awarded by a local school board in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-110.

“Middle school” means a public school with any grades 6 through 8.

“Planning period” means one class period per day or the equivalent unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.

“Recess” means a segment of free time exclusive of time provided for meals during the standard school day in which students are given a break from instruction.

“Reconstitution” means a process that may be used to initiate a range of accountability actions to improve pupil performance, curriculum, and instruction to address deficiencies that caused a school to be rated Accreditation Denied that may include, but not be limited to, restructuring a school’s governance, instructional program, staff or student population.

“School” means a publicly funded institution where students are enrolled for all or a majority of the instructional day and:

1. Those students are reported in fall membership at the institution; and
2. At a minimum, the institution meets the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements of these regulations as adopted by the Board of Education.

“Secondary school” means a public school with any grades 9 through 12.

“Standard school day” means a calendar day that averages at least five and one-half instructional hours for students in grades 1 through 12, excluding breaks for meals and recess, and a minimum of three instructional hours for students in kindergarten.

“Standard school year” means a school year of at least 180 teaching days or a total of at least 990 teaching hours per year.

“Standard unit of credit” or “standard credit” means credit awarded for a course in which the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the course. Local school boards may develop alternatives to the requirement for 140 clock hours of instruction as provided for in these regulations at 8 VAC 20-131-110.

“Standards of Learning” (SOL) tests means those criterion referenced assessments approved by the Board of Education for use in the Virginia assessment program that measure attainment of knowledge and skills required by the Standards of Learning.

“Student” means a person of school age as defined by § 22.1-1 of the Code of Virginia, a child with disabilities as defined in § 22.1-213 of the Code of Virginia, and a person with limited English proficiency in accordance with § 22.1-5 of the Code of Virginia.

“Student periods” means the number of students a teacher instructs per class period multiplied by the number of class periods taught.

“Verified unit of credit” or “verified credit” means credit awarded for a course in which a student earns a standard unit of credit and achieves a passing score on a corresponding end-of-course SOL test or an additional test approved by the Board of Education as part of the Virginia assessment program.

“Virginia assessment program” means a system used to evaluate student achievement that includes Standards of Learning tests and additional tests which may be approved from time to time by the Board of Education.

Part I  
Purpose

8 VAC 20-131-10. Purpose.

The foremost purpose of public education in Virginia is to provide children with a quality education giving them opportunities to meet their fullest potential in life. The standards for the accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools. The mission of the public education system is to educate students in the essential academic knowledge and skills in order that they may be equipped for citizenship, work, and a private life that is informed and free. The accreditation standards:

1. Provide an essential foundation of educational programs of high quality in all schools for all students.
2. Encourage continuous appraisal and improvement of the school program for the purpose of raising student achievement.
3. Foster public confidence.
4. Assure recognition of Virginia's public schools by other institutions of learning.
5. Establish a means of determining the effectiveness of schools.

Section 22.1-253.13:3 B of the Code of Virginia requires the Virginia Board of Education (hereinafter "board") promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation.

The statutory authority for these regulations is delineated in § 22.1-19 of the Code of Virginia, which includes the requirement that the board shall provide for the accreditation of public elementary, middle and secondary schools in accordance with regulations prescribed by it.

These regulations govern public schools operated by local school boards providing instruction to students as defined in 8 VAC 20-131-5. Other schools licensed under other state statutes are exempt from these requirements.

Part II  
Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

8 VAC 20-131-20. Philosophy, goals, and objectives.

A. Each school shall have a current philosophy, goals, and objectives that shall serve as the basis for all policies and practices and shall be developed using the following criteria:

1. The philosophy, goals, and objectives shall be developed with the advice of professional and lay people who represent the various populations served by the school and in consideration of the needs of the community and shall serve as a basis for the creation and review of the biennial school plan.
2. The school's philosophy, goals and objectives shall be consistent with the Standards of Quality.
3. The goals and objectives shall (i) be written in plain language so as to be understandable to noneducators, including parents; (ii) to the extent possible, be stated in measurable terms; and (iii) consist primarily of measurable objectives to raise student and school achievement in the core academic areas of the Standards of Learning (SOL), to improve student and staff attendance, to reduce student drop-out rates, to increase graduation rates, and to increase the quality of instruction through professional staff development and licensure.
4. The school staff and community representatives shall review annually the extent to which the school has met its prior goals and objectives, analyze the school's student performance data including data by grade level or academic department as necessary, and report these outcomes to the division superintendent and the community in accordance with local school board policy. This report shall be in addition to the school report card required by 8 VAC 20-131-270 B.

B. Copies of the school's philosophy, goals and objectives shall be available upon request.

Part III  
Student Achievement

8 VAC 20-131-30. Student achievement expectations.

A. Each student should learn the relevant grade level/course subject matter before promotion to the next grade. The division superintendent shall certify to the Department of Education that the division's promotion/retention policy does not exclude students from membership in a grade, or participation in a course, in which SOL tests are to be administered. Each school shall have a process, as appropriate, to identify and recommend strategies to address the learning, behavior, communication, or development of individual children who are having difficulty in the educational setting.

B. In kindergarten through eighth grade, where the administration of Virginia assessment program tests are required by the Board of Education, each student shall be expected to take the tests; students who are accelerated shall take the tests of the grade-level enrolled or the tests for the grade level of the content received in instruction. No student shall take more than one test in any content area in each year. Schools shall use the Virginia assessment program test results in kindergarten through eighth grade as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students. Students promoted to high school from eighth grade should have attained basic mastery of the Standards of Learning in English, history and social science, mathematics, and science and should be prepared for high school work. Students shall not be required to retake the Virginia assessment program tests unless they are retained in grade and have not previously passed the related tests.

C. In kindergarten through grade 12, students may participate in a remediation recovery program as established by the board in English (Reading) or mathematics or both.

D. The board recommends that students in kindergarten through grade 8 not be required to attend summer school or weekend remediation classes solely based on failing a SOL test in science or history/social science.

E. Each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction. Students who achieve a passing score on an end-of-course SOL test shall be awarded a verified unit of credit in that course in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-110. Students may earn verified units of credit in any courses for which end-of-course SOL tests are available. Middle and secondary schools may consider the student's end-of-course SOL test score in determining the student's final course grade. However, no student who has failed an end-of-course SOL test but passed the related course shall be prevented from taking any other course in a content area and from taking the applicable end-of-course SOL test. The board may approve additional tests to verify student achievement in accordance with guidelines adopted for verified units of credit described in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

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8 VAC 20-131

F. Participation in the Virginia assessment program by students with disabilities shall be prescribed by provisions of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. All students with disabilities shall be assessed with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments where necessary.

G. All students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) shall participate in the Virginia assessment program. A school based committee shall convene and make determinations regarding the participation level of LEP students in the Virginia assessment program. In kindergarten through eighth grade, limited English proficient students may be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in the areas of writing, science, and history and social science.

H. Students identified as foreign exchange students taking courses for credit shall be required to take the relevant Virginia assessment program tests. Foreign exchange students who are auditing courses and who will not receive a standard unit of credit for such courses shall not be required to take the Standards of Learning tests for those courses.

8 VAC 20-131-40. Literacy Passport Tests. (Repealed.)

8 VAC 20-131-50. Requirements for graduation.

A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time. Students shall be awarded a diploma upon graduation from a Virginia high school.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades 9 through 12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level. To earn a verified unit of credit for these courses, students must meet the requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-110.

The following requirements shall be the only requirements for a diploma, unless a local school board has prescribed additional requirements that have been approved by the Board of Education. All additional requirements prescribed by local school boards that have been approved by the Board of Education remain in effect until such time as the local school board submits a request to the board to amend or discontinue such requirements.

B. Requirements for a Standard Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of ~~2010-2011~~ 2011-2012 and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with a Standard Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	3	1
Laboratory Science <sup>2,6</sup>	3	1
History and Social Sciences <sup>3,6</sup>	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education <sup>7</sup>	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives <sup>4</sup>	4	
Student Selected Test <sup>5</sup>		1
Total	22	6

<sup>1</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra, Functions, and Data Analysis, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>2</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

<sup>5</sup> A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

<sup>6</sup> Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association or acquires a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification, competency credential, or license for (i) the student selected verified credit and (ii) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification, license, or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the Board of Education as an additional test to verify student achievement.

<sup>7</sup> Pursuant to Section 22.1-253.13:4, Code of Virginia, credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine or performing arts or career and technical education.

Students completing the requirements for the Standard Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection K of this section.

C. Requirements for a Standard Technical Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of ~~2010-2011~~ **2012-2013** and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with a Standard Technical Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credits Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	3	1
Laboratory Science <sup>2,5</sup>	3	1
History & Social Sciences <sup>3,5</sup>	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts, or Foreign Language	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Career and Technical Education <sup>4</sup>	4	
Electives	1	
Student Selected <sup>6</sup>		1
Total	22	6

<sup>1</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra Functions and Data Analysis, or Algebra II or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>2</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics, or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement must include a career concentration as approved by the board. If a career concentration includes a specific assessment approved by the board and the student is eligible to take the assessment, then the student must take this assessment.

<sup>5</sup> Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry or trade or professional association or acquires a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification competency credential or license for (i) the student selected verified credit and (ii) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification license or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the board as an additional test to verify student achievement.

<sup>6</sup> A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

Students completing the requirements for the Standard Technical Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection K of this section.

D. Requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma. (Any student who meets the requirements for both the Advanced Studies and the Advanced Technical diploma may choose between these two diplomas.)

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of ~~2010-2011~~ 2011-2012 and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with an Advanced Studies Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	4	2
Laboratory Science <sup>2</sup>	4	2
History and Social Sciences <sup>3</sup>	4	2
Foreign Language <sup>4</sup>	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	3	
Student Selected Test <sup>5</sup>		1
Total	26	9

<sup>1</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>2</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

<sup>5</sup> A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

Students completing the requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection K of this section.

E. Requirements for an Advanced Technical Diploma. (Any student who meets the requirements for both the Advanced Studies and the Advanced Technical diploma may choose between these two diplomas.)

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of ~~2010-2011~~ 2012-2013 and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.
2. Credits required for graduation with an Advanced Technical Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	4	2
Laboratory Science <sup>2</sup>	4	2
History and Social Sciences <sup>3</sup>	4	2
Foreign Language <sup>4</sup>	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Career and Technical Education <sup>5</sup>	3	
Student Selected Test <sup>6</sup>		1
Total	26	9

<sup>1</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>2</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>3</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

<sup>5</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement must include a career concentration as approved by the board. If a career concentration includes a specific assessment approved by the board and the student is eligible to take the assessment, then the student must take this assessment.

<sup>6</sup> A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

Students completing the requirements for the Advanced Technical Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection K of this section.

F. Requirements for the Modified Standard Diploma.

1. Every student shall be expected to pursue a Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma, or Advanced Technical Diploma. The Modified Standard Diploma program is intended for certain students at the secondary level who have a disability and are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Eligibility and participation in the Modified Standard Diploma program shall be determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team including the student, where appropriate, at any point after the student's eighth grade year.

2. The school must secure the informed written consent of the parent/guardian and the student to choose this diploma program after review of the student’s academic history and the full disclosure of the student’s options.
3. The student who has chosen to pursue a Modified Standard Diploma shall also be allowed to pursue the Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma at any time throughout that student’s high school career, and the student must not be excluded from courses and tests required to earn a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma.
4. Students pursuing the Modified Standard Diploma shall pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments prescribed by the board.

5. Credits required for graduation with a Modified Standard Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required
English	4
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	3
Science <sup>2</sup>	2
History and Social Sciences <sup>3</sup>	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1
Electives <sup>4</sup>	6
Total	20

<sup>1</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include content from among applications of algebra, geometry, personal finance, and probability and statistics in courses that have been approved by the board.

<sup>2</sup> Courses completed shall include content from at least two of the following: applications of earth science, biology, chemistry, or physics in courses approved by the board.

<sup>3</sup> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include one unit of credit in U.S. and Virginia History and one unit of credit in U.S. and Virginia Government in courses approved by the board.

<sup>4</sup> Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives in the same manner required for the Standard Diploma.

6. The student must meet any additional criteria established by the Board of Education.

G. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas shall be awarded Special Diplomas.

H. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for Standard, Standard Technical, Advanced Studies, Advanced Technical, Modified Standard, Special, or General Achievement diplomas shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion. The requirements for Certificates of Program

Completion are developed by local school boards in accordance with the Standards of Quality. Students receiving a general achievement diploma shall comply with 8 VAC 20-680, *Regulations Governing the General Achievement Diploma*.

I. In accordance with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law and 8 VAC 20-360, *Regulations Governing General Education Development Certificates*, students who do not qualify for diplomas may earn a high school equivalency credential.

J. At a student's request, the local school board shall communicate or otherwise make known to institutions of higher education, potential employers, or other applicable third parties, in a manner that the local school board deems appropriate, that a student has attained the state's academic expectations by earning a Virginia diploma and that the value of such a diploma is not affected in any way by the accreditation status of the student's school.

K. Awards for exemplary student performance. Students who demonstrate academic excellence and/or outstanding achievement may be eligible for one or more of the following awards:

1. Students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma with an average grade of "B" or better, and successfully complete college-level coursework that will earn the student at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or dual enrollment courses shall receive the Governor's Seal on the diploma.
2. Students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma with an average grade of "A" shall receive a Board of Education Seal on the diploma.
3. The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal will be awarded to students who earn a Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma and complete a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" or better average in those courses; or (i) pass an examination or an occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification or occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, trade or professional association or (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Board of Education shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.

4. The Board of Education’s Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology will be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma and (i) satisfy all of the mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II; two verified units of credit) with a “B” average or better; and (ii) either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association; (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (c) pass an examination approved by the board that confers college-level credit in a technology or computer science area. The Board of Education shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.
5. The Board of Education’s Seal for Excellence in Civics Education will be awarded to students who earn either a *Modified Standard Diploma*, Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Studies Diploma, or Advanced Technical Diploma and: (i) complete Virginia and United States History and Virginia and United States Government courses with a grade of “B” or higher; and, (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies and, (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that would satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include: (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation will be deemed to have met this community service requirement.
6. Students may receive other seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance in accordance with criteria defined by the local school board.

L. Students completing graduation requirements in a summer school program shall be eligible for a diploma. The last school attended by the student during the regular session shall award the diploma unless otherwise agreed upon by the principals of the two schools.

M. Students who complete Advanced Placement courses, college-level courses, or courses required for an International Baccalaureate Diploma shall be deemed to have completed the requirements for graduation under these standards provided they have earned the standard units of credit and earned verified units of credit in accordance with the requirements of subsections B and C of this section.

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N. Students shall be counseled annually regarding the opportunities for using additional tests for earning verified credits as provided in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-110, and the consequences of failing to fulfill the obligations to complete the requirements for verified units of credit.

8 VAC 20-131-60. Transfer students.

A. The provisions of this section pertain generally to students who transfer into Virginia high schools. Students transferring in grades K-8 from Virginia public schools or nonpublic schools accredited by one of the approved accrediting constituent members of the Virginia Council for Private Education shall be given recognition for all grade-level work completed. The academic record of students transferring from all other schools shall be evaluated to determine appropriate grade placement in accordance with policies adopted by the local school board. The State Testing Identifier (STI) for students who transfer into a Virginia public school from another Virginia public school shall be retained by the receiving school.

B. For the purposes of this section, the term “beginning” means within the first 20 hours of instruction per course. The term “during” means after the first 20 hours of instruction per course.

C. Standard or verified units of credit earned by a student in a Virginia public school shall be transferable without limitation regardless of the accreditation status of the Virginia public school in which the credits were earned. Virginia public schools shall accept standard and verified units of credit from other Virginia public schools, Virginia’s virtual learning program, Virtual Virginia, and state operated programs. Standard units of credit also shall be accepted for courses satisfactorily completed in accredited colleges and universities when prior written approval of the principal has been granted or the student has been given credit by the previous school attended.

D. A secondary school shall accept credits toward graduation received from Virginia nonpublic schools accredited by one of the approved accrediting constituent members of the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE). The Board of Education will maintain contact with the VCPE and may periodically review its accrediting procedures and policies as part of its policies under this section.

Nothing in these standards shall prohibit a public school from accepting standard units of credit toward graduation awarded to students who transfer from all other schools when the courses for which the student receives credit generally match the description of or can be substituted for courses for which the receiving school gives standard credit, and the school from which the child transfers certifies that the courses for which credit is given meet the requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-110 A.

Students transferring into a Virginia public school shall be required to meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50 to receive a Standard, Standard Technical, Advanced Studies, Advanced Technical or Modified Standard Diploma, except as provided by subsection G of this section. To receive a Special Diploma or Certificate of Program Completion, a student must meet the requirements prescribed by the Standards of Quality.

E. The academic record of a student transferring from other Virginia public schools shall be sent directly to the school receiving the student upon request of the receiving school in accordance with the provisions of the 8 VAC 20-150-10, *Management of the Student's Scholastic Records in the Public Schools of Virginia*. The State Testing Identifier (STI) for students who transfer into a Virginia public school from another Virginia public school shall be retained by the receiving school.

F. The academic record of a student transferring into Virginia public schools from other than a Virginia public school shall be evaluated to determine the number of standard units of credit that have been earned, including credit from schools outside the United States, and the number of verified units of credit needed to graduate in accordance with subsection G of this section. Standard units of credit also shall be accepted for courses satisfactorily completed in accredited colleges and universities when the student has been given credit by the previous school attended.

Students transferring above the tenth grade from schools or other education programs that do not require or give credit for health and physical education shall not be required to take these courses to meet graduation requirements.

G. Students entering a Virginia public high school for the first time after the tenth grade shall earn as many credits as possible toward the graduation requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50. However, schools may substitute courses required in other states in the same content area if the student is unable to meet the specific content requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-50 without taking a heavier than normal course load in any semester, by taking summer school, or by taking courses after the time when he otherwise would have graduated. In any event, no such student shall earn fewer than the following number of verified units, nor shall such students be required to take SOL tests or additional tests as defined in 8 VAC 20-131-110 for verified units of credit in courses previously completed at another school or program of study, unless necessary to meet the requirements listed in subdivisions 1 and 2 of this subsection:

1. For a Standard Diploma or Standard Technical Diploma:

- a. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the ninth grade or at the beginning of the tenth grade shall earn credit as prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50;
- b. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the tenth grade or at the beginning of the eleventh grade shall earn a minimum of four verified units of credit: one each in English, mathematics, history, and science. Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence may substitute a certificate, occupational competency credential or license for either a science or history and social science verified credit pursuant to 8 VAC 20-131-50; and

c. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade or at the beginning of the twelfth grade shall earn a minimum of two verified units of credit: one in English and one of the student's own choosing.

2. For an Advanced Studies Diploma or Advanced Technical Diploma:

a. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the ninth grade or at the beginning of the tenth grade shall earn credit as prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50;

b. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the tenth grade or at the beginning of the eleventh grade shall earn a minimum of six verified units of credit: two in English and one each in mathematics, history, and science and one of the student's own choosing; and

c. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade or at the beginning of the twelfth grade shall earn a minimum of four verified units of credit: one in English and three of the student's own choosing.

H. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time after the first semester of their eleventh grade year must meet the requirements of subdivision 1 c or 2 c of this subsection. Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior or twelfth grade year shall be given every opportunity to earn a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma. If it is not possible for the student to meet the requirements for a diploma, arrangements should be made for the student's previous school to award the diploma. If these arrangements cannot be made, a waiver of the verified unit of credit requirements may be available to the student. The Department of Education may grant such waivers upon request by the local school board in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the Board of Education.

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

J. The transcript of a student who graduates or transfers from a Virginia secondary school shall conform to the requirements of 8 VAC 20-160-10, *Regulations Governing Secondary School Transcripts*.

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K. The accreditation status of a high school shall not be included on the student transcript provided to colleges, universities, or employers. The board expressly states that any student who has met the graduation requirements established in 8 VAC 20-131-50 and has received a Virginia diploma holds a diploma that should be recognized as equal to any other Virginia diploma of the same type, regardless of the accreditation status of the student's high school. It is the express policy of the board that no student shall be affected by the accreditation status of the student's school. The board shall take appropriate action, from time to time, to ensure that no student is affected by the accreditation status of the student's school.

Part IV  
School Instructional Program

8 VAC 20-131-70. Program of instruction and learning objectives.

A. Each school shall provide a program of instruction that promotes individual student academic achievement in the essential academic disciplines and shall provide additional instructional opportunities that meet the abilities, interests, and educational needs of students. Each school shall establish learning objectives to be achieved by students at successive grade levels that meet or exceed the knowledge and skills contained in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science adopted by the board and shall continually assess the progress of each student in relation to the objectives.

B. Instruction shall be designed to accommodate all students, including those identified with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, those identified as gifted/talented, and those who have limited English proficiency. Each school shall provide students identified as gifted/talented with instructional programs taught by teachers with special training or experience in working with gifted/talented students. Students with disabilities shall have the opportunity to receive a full continuum of education services, in accordance with 8 VAC 20-80, *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia* and other pertinent federal and state regulations.

8 VAC 20-131-80. Instructional program in elementary schools.

A. The elementary school shall provide each student a program of instruction that corresponds to the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. In addition, each school shall provide instruction in art, music, and physical education and health and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness during the regular school year in accordance with guidelines established by the Board of Education.

B. In kindergarten through grade 3, reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics shall be the focus of the instructional program. Schools shall maintain an early skills and knowledge achievement record in reading and mathematics for each student in grades kindergarten through grade 3 to monitor student progress and to promote successful achievement on the third grade SOL tests. This record shall be included with the student's records if the student transfers to a new school.

C. To provide students with sufficient opportunity to learn, a minimum of 75% of the annual instructional time of 990 hours shall be given to instruction in the disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. Students who are not successfully progressing in early reading proficiency or who are unable to read with comprehension the materials used for instruction shall receive additional instructional time in reading, which may include summer school.

D. Elementary schools are encouraged to provide instruction in foreign languages.

8 VAC 20-131-90. Instructional program in middle schools.

A. The middle school shall provide each student a program of instruction which corresponds to the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. In addition, each school shall provide instruction in art, music, foreign language, physical education and health, and career and technical exploration and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness during the regular school year in accordance with guidelines established by the Board of Education.

B. The middle school shall provide a minimum of eight courses to students in the eighth grade. English, mathematics, science, and history/social science shall be required. Four elective courses shall be available: level one of a foreign language, one in health and physical education, one in fine arts, and one in career and technical exploration.

C. Level one of a foreign language and an Algebra I course shall be available to all eighth grade students. For any high school credit-bearing course taken in middle school, parents may request that grades be omitted from the student's transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course in accordance with policies adopted by the local school board. Notice of this provision must be provided to parents with a deadline and format for making such a request. Nothing in these regulations shall be construed to prevent a middle school from offering any other credit-bearing courses for graduation.

D. To provide students a sufficient opportunity to learn, each student shall be provided 140 clock hours per year of instruction in each of the four disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. Sixth grade students may receive an alternative schedule of instruction provided each student receives at least 560 total clock hours of instruction in the four academic disciplines.

E. Each school shall ensure that students who are unable to read with comprehension the materials used for instruction receive additional instruction in reading, which may include summer school.

8 VAC 20-131-100. Instructional program in secondary schools.

A. The secondary school shall provide each student a program of instruction in the academic areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science that enables each student to meet the graduation requirements described in 8 VAC 20-131-50 and shall offer opportunities for students to pursue a program of studies in foreign languages, fine arts, and career and technical areas including:

1. Career and technical education choices that prepare the student as a career and technical education program completer in one of three or more occupational areas and that prepare the student for technical or preprofessional postsecondary programs;
2. Coursework and experiences that prepare the student for college-level studies including access to at least three Advanced Placement (AP) courses, college-level courses for degree credit, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, Cambridge courses, or any combination thereof;
3. Preparation for college admissions tests; and
4. Opportunities to study and explore the fine arts and foreign languages.

B. Minimum course offerings for each secondary school shall provide opportunities for students to meet the graduation requirements stated in 8 VAC 20-131-50 and must include:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science (Laboratory)	4
History and Social Sciences	4
Foreign Language	3
Electives	4
Career and Technical Education	11
Economics and Personal Finance	1
Fine Arts	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Total Units	39

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C. Classroom driver education may count for 36 class periods of health education. Students shall not be removed from classes other than health and physical education for the in-car phase of driver education.

D. Each school shall ensure that students who are unable to read with comprehension the materials used for instruction receive additional instruction in reading, which may include summer school.

8 VAC 20-131-110. Standard and verified units of credit.

A. The standard unit of credit for graduation shall be based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction and successful completion of the requirements of the course. When credit is awarded in less than whole units, the increment awarded must be no greater than the fractional part of the 140 hours of instruction provided. If a school division elects to award credit on a basis other than the 140 clock hours of instruction required for a standard unit of credit defined in this subsection, the local school division shall develop a written policy approved by the superintendent and school board which ensures:

1. That the content of the course for which credit is awarded is comparable to 140 clock hours of instruction; and
2. That upon completion, the student will have met the aims and objectives of the course.

B. A verified unit of credit for graduation shall be based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, successful completion of the requirements of the course, and the achievement by the student of a passing score on the end-of-course SOL test for that course or additional tests as described in this subsection. A student may also earn a verified unit of credit by the following methods:

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Standards of Quality, students may earn a standard and verified unit of credit for any elective course in which the core academic SOL course content has been integrated and the student passes the related end-of-course SOL test. Such course and test combinations must be approved by the Board of Education.
2. Upon the recommendation of the division superintendent and demonstration of mastery of course content and objectives, qualified students may receive a standard unit of credit and be permitted to sit for the relevant SOL test to earn a verified credit without having to meet the 140-clock-hour requirement.
3. Beginning with the ninth grade class of 2003-2004 and beyond students who do not pass Standards of Learning tests in science or history and social science may receive locally awarded verified credits from the local school board in accordance with criteria established in guidelines adopted by the Board of Education.

C. The Board of Education may from time to time approve additional tests for the purpose of awarding verified credit. Such additional tests, which enable students to earn verified units of credit, must, at a minimum, meet the following criteria:

1. The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school division in which the test is given;

2. The test must be knowledge based;
3. The test must be administered on a multistate or international basis, or administered as part of another state's accountability assessment program; and
4. To be counted in a specific academic area, the test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the SOL content in the course for which verified credit is given.

The Board of Education will set the score that must be achieved to earn a verified unit of credit on the additional test options.

D. With such funds as are appropriated by the General Assembly, the Board of Education will provide opportunities for students who meet criteria adopted by the board to have an expedited retake of a SOL test to earn verified credit or to meet literacy and numeracy requirements for the Modified Standard Diploma.

8 VAC 20-131-120. Summer school.

A. The courses offered and the quality of instruction in the summer school program shall be comparable to that offered during the regular school term. At the middle and secondary school levels, credit for courses taken for credit toward graduation other than a repeat course shall be awarded in accordance with the requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-110. Students must also meet the requirements for SOL testing if appropriate.

B. At the middle and secondary school levels, credit for repeat courses ordinarily will be granted on the same basis as that for new courses; however, with prior approval of the principal, students may be allowed to enroll in repeat courses to be completed in no less than 70 clock hours of instruction per unit of credit. Students must also meet the requirements for SOL testing if appropriate.

C. Summer school instruction at any level, which is provided as part of a state-funded remedial program, shall be designed to improve specific identified student deficiencies. Such programs shall be conducted in accordance with regulations adopted by the board.

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8 VAC 20-131-130. Elective courses.

Locally developed elective courses offered for credit toward high school graduation shall be approved by the division superintendent and local school board.

8 VAC 20-131-140. College and career preparation programs and opportunities for postsecondary credit.

Each middle and secondary school shall provide for the early identification and enrollment of students in a college preparation program with a range of educational and academic experiences in and outside the classroom, including an emphasis on experiences that will motivate disadvantaged and minority students to attend college.

Beginning in the middle school years, students shall be counseled on opportunities for beginning postsecondary education and opportunities for obtaining industry certifications, occupational competency credentials, or professional licenses in a career and technical education field prior to high school graduation. Such opportunities shall include access to at least three Advanced Placement courses or three college-level courses for degree credit pursuant to 8 VAC 20-131-100. Students taking advantage of such opportunities shall not be denied participation in school activities for which they are otherwise eligible. Wherever possible, students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit (dual enrollment), under the following conditions:

1. Written approval of the high school principal prior to participation in dual enrollment must be obtained;
2. The college must accept the student for admission to the course or courses; and
3. The course or courses must be given by the college for degree credits (no remedial courses will be accepted).

Schools that comply with this standard shall not be penalized in receiving state appropriations.

Beginning with the ~~2010-2011~~ 2012-2013 academic year, all schools shall begin development of a personal Academic and Career Plan for each seventh-grade student with completion by the fall of the student's eighth-grade year. Students who transfer from other than a Virginia public school into the eighth-grade shall have the Plan developed as soon as practicable following enrollment. Beginning with the ~~2011-2012~~ 2013-2014 academic year, students who transfer into a Virginia public school after their eighth-grade year shall have an Academic and Career Plan developed upon enrollment. The components of the Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the student's program of study for high school graduation and a postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests. The Academic and Career Plan shall be developed in accordance with guidelines established by the Board of Education and signed by the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official(s) designated by the principal. The Plan shall be included in the student's record and shall be reviewed and updated, if necessary, before the student enters the ninth and eleventh grades. The school shall have

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met its obligation for parental involvement if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian of the responsibility for the development and approval of the Plan. Any personal academic and career plans prescribed by local school boards for students in grades 7 through 12 and in effect as of June 30, 2009, are approved to continue without further action by the Board.

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8 VAC 20-131-150. Standard school year and school day.

A. The standard school year shall be 180 instructional days. The standard school day for students in grades 1 through 12 shall average at least 5-1/2 instructional hours, excluding breaks for meals and recess, and a minimum of three hours for kindergarten.

B. All students in grades 1 through 12 shall maintain a full day schedule of classes (5-1/2 hours), unless a waiver is granted in accordance with policies defined by the local school board.

8 VAC 20-131-160. (Repealed.)

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8 VAC 20-131-170. Family Life Education.

Each school may implement the Standards of Learning for the Family Life Education program promulgated by the Board of Education or a Family Life Education program consistent with the guidelines developed by the board, which shall have the goals of reducing the incidence of pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases and substance abuse among teenagers.

8 VAC 20-131-180. Off-site instruction.

A. Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance based upon certification of need by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist. For students eligible for special education or related services, the Individualized Education Program committee must revise the IEP, as appropriate. Credit for the work shall be awarded when it is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, a person eligible to hold a Virginia license, or other appropriately licensed professional employed by the local school board, and there is evidence that the instructional time requirements or alternative means of awarding credit adopted by the local school board in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-110 have been met.

B. Students may enroll in and receive a standard and verified unit of credit for supervised correspondence courses with prior approval of the principal. Standard units of credit shall be awarded for the successful completion of such courses when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, or a person eligible to hold a Virginia license, approved by the local school board. Verified units of credit may be earned when the student has passed the SOL test associated with the correspondence course completed. The local school board shall develop policies governing this method of instruction in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-110 and the administration of required SOL tests prescribed by 8 VAC 20-131-30.

C. Schools are encouraged to pursue alternative means to deliver instruction to accommodate student needs through emerging technologies and other similar means. Standard units of credit shall be awarded for successful completion of such courses when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, or a person eligible to hold a Virginia teaching license and approved by the local school board. Verified units of credit may be earned when the student has successfully completed the requirements and passed the SOL test associated with the course. The local school board shall develop policies governing this method of delivery of instruction that shall include the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-110 and the administration of required SOL tests prescribed by 8 VAC 20-131-30.

8 VAC 20-131-190. Library media, materials and equipment.

A. Each school shall maintain an organized library media center as the resource center of the school and provide a unified program of media services and activities for students and teachers before, during, and after school. The library media center shall contain hard copy, electronic technological resources, materials, and equipment that are sufficient to meet research, inquiry, and reading requirements of the instructional program and general student interest.

B. Each school shall provide a variety of materials and equipment to support the instructional program.

8 VAC 20-131-200. Extracurricular and other school activities, recess.

A. School sponsored extracurricular activities shall be under the direct supervision of the staff and shall contribute to the educational objectives of the school. Extracurricular activities must be organized to avoid interrupting the instructional program. Extracurricular activities shall not be permitted to interfere with the student's required instructional activities. Extracurricular activities and eligibility requirements shall be established and approved by the superintendent and the school board.

B. Competitive sports of a varsity nature (scheduled league games) shall be prohibited as a part of the elementary school program.

C. Each elementary school shall provide students with a daily recess during the regular school year as determined appropriate by the school.

Part V  
School and Instructional Leadership

8 VAC 20-131-210. Role of the principal.

A. The principal is recognized as the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for effective school management that promotes positive student achievement, a safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn, and efficient use of resources. As a matter of policy, the board, through these standards, recognizes the critically important role of principals to the success of public schools and the students who attend those schools and recommends that local school boards provide principals with the maximum authority available under law in all matters affecting the school including, but not limited to, instruction and personnel, in a manner that allows the principal to be held accountable in a fair and consistent manner for matters under his direct control.

B. As the instructional leader, the principal is responsible for ensuring that students are provided an opportunity to learn and shall:

1. Protect the academic instructional time from unnecessary interruptions and disruptions and enable the professional teaching staff to spend the maximum time possible in the teaching/learning process by keeping to a minimum clerical responsibility and the time students are out of class;
2. Ensure that the school division's student code of conduct is enforced and seek to maintain a safe and secure school environment;
3. Analyze the school's test scores annually, by grade and by discipline, to:
  - a. Direct and require appropriate prevention, intervention, and/or remediation to those students performing below grade level or not passing the SOL tests;
  - b. Involve the staff of the school in identifying the types of staff development needed to improve student achievement and ensure that the staff participate in those activities; and
  - c. Analyze classroom practices and methods for improvement of instruction;
4. Ensure that students' records are maintained and that criteria used in making placement and promotion decisions, as well as any instructional interventions used to improve the student's performance, are included in the record;
5. Monitor and evaluate the quality of instruction, provide staff development, provide support that is designed to improve instruction, and seek to ensure the successful attainment of the knowledge and skills required for students by the SOL tests;

6. Maintain records of students who drop out of school, including their reasons for dropping out and actions taken to prevent these students from dropping out; and

7. Notify the parents of rising eleventh-grade and twelfth-grade students of:

a. the number of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation; and

b. the remaining number of such units of credit the individual student requires for graduation; and

8. Notify the parent or guardian of students removed from class for disciplinary reasons for two or more consecutive days in whole or in part. The school shall have met its obligation if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian.

C. As the school manager, the principal shall:

1. Work with staff to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy and to facilitate constructive communication by establishing and maintaining a current handbook of personnel policies and procedures;

2. Work with the community to involve parents and citizens in the educational program and facilitate communication with parents by maintaining and disseminating a current student handbook of policies and procedures that includes the school division's standards of student conduct and procedures for enforcement, along with other matters of interest to parents and students;

3. Maintain a current record of licensure, endorsement, and in-service training completed by staff; and

4. Maintain records of receipts and disbursements of all funds handled. These records shall be audited annually by a professional accountant approved by the local school board.

8 VAC 20-131-220. Role of professional teaching staff.

The professional teaching staff shall be responsible for providing instruction that is educationally sound in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy, which is conducive to learning, and in which all students are expected to achieve the objectives of the Standards of Learning for the appropriate grade level or course. The staff shall:

1. Serve as role models for effective oral and written communication with special attention to the correct use of language and spelling;
2. Strive to strengthen the basic skills of students in all subjects;
3. Establish teaching objectives to achieve the following:
  - a. Identify what students are expected to learn; and
  - b. Inform students of the achievement expected and keep them engaged in learning tasks;
4. Provide for individual differences of students through the use of differentiated instruction, varied materials, and activities suitable to their interests and abilities; and
5. Assess the progress of students and report promptly and constructively to them and their parents.

8 VAC 20-131-230. Role of support staff.

The school's support staff shall work with the principal and professional teaching staff to promote student achievement and successful attainment of the school's goals.

8 VAC 20-131-240. Administrative and support staff; staffing requirements.

A. Each school shall have at a minimum the staff as specified in the Standards of Quality with proper licenses and endorsements for the positions they hold.

B. The principal of each middle and secondary school shall be employed on a 12-month basis.

C. Each secondary school with 350 or more students and each middle school with 400 or more students shall employ at least one member of the guidance staff for 11 months. Guidance counseling shall be provided for students to ensure that a program of studies contributing to the student's academic achievement and meeting the graduation requirements specified in 8 VAC 20-131-50 is being followed.

D. The counseling program for elementary, middle, and secondary schools shall provide a minimum of 60% of the time for each member of the guidance staff devoted to counseling of students.

E. The middle school classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more than 5/6 of the instructional day with no more than 150 student periods per day or 30 class periods per week. Beginning with the academic year 2008-2009 a middle school classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more than 5/6 of the instructional day with no more than 150 student periods per day or 25 class periods per week.

F. The secondary classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more than 5/6 of the instructional day with no more than 150 student periods per day or 25 class periods per week. Teachers of block programs that encompass more than one class period with no more than 120 student periods per day may teach 30 class periods per week. Teachers who teach very small classes may teach 30 class periods per week, provided the teaching load does not exceed 75 student periods per day. If a classroom teacher teaches 30 class periods per week with more than 75 student periods per day, an appropriate contractual arrangement and compensation shall be provided.

G. Middle or secondary school teachers shall teach no more than 750 student periods per week; however, physical education and music teachers may teach 1,000 student periods per week.

H. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections E, F, and G each full-time middle and secondary classroom teacher shall be provided one planning period per day or the equivalent, unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.

I. Staff-student ratios in special and career and technical education classrooms shall comply with regulations of the Board of Education.

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J. Student services personnel as defined in the Standards of Quality shall be available as necessary to promote academic achievement and to provide support services to the school.

8 VAC 20-131-250. (Repealed.)

Part VI  
School Facilities and Safety

8 VAC 20-131-260. School facilities and safety.

A. Each school shall be maintained in a manner ensuring compliance with the Virginia Statewide Building Code (13 VAC 5-63) In addition, the school administration shall:

1. Maintain a physical plant that is accessible, barrier free, safe, and clean;
2. Provide for the proper outdoor display of flags of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Virginia;
3. Provide suitable space for classrooms, administrative staff, pupil personnel services, library and media services, and for the needs and safety of physical education;
4. Provide adequate, safe, and properly-equipped laboratories to meet the needs of instruction in the sciences, technology, fine arts, and career and technical programs; and
5. Provide facilities for the adequate and safe administration and storage of student medications.

B. Each school shall maintain records of regular safety, health, and fire inspections that have been conducted and certified by local health and fire departments. The frequency of such inspections shall be determined by the local school board in consultation with the local health and fire departments. In addition, the school administration shall:

1. Equip all exit doors with panic hardware as required by the Virginia Statewide Building Code (13 VAC 5-63); and
2. Conduct fire drills at least once a week during the first month of school and at least once each month for the remainder of the school term. Evacuation routes for students shall be posted in each room. Additionally, at least one simulated lock-down and crisis emergency evacuation activity should be conducted early in the school year.

C. Each school shall have contingency plans for emergencies that include staff certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the Heimlich maneuver, and emergency first aid. In addition, the school administration shall ensure that the school has:

1. Written procedures to follow in emergencies such as fire, injury, illness, allergic reactions, and violent or threatening behavior. The plan shall be outlined in the student handbook and discussed with staff and students during the first week of each school year;

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2. Space for the proper care of students who become ill;
3. A written procedure, in accordance with guidelines established by the local school board, for responding to violent, disruptive or illegal activities by students on school property or during a school sponsored activity ; and
4. Written procedures to follow for the safe evacuation of persons with special physical, medical, or language needs who may need assistance to exit a facility.

Part VII  
School and Community Communications

8 VAC 20-131-270. School and community communications.

A. Each school shall promote communication and foster mutual understanding with parents and the community. Each school shall:

1. Involve parents, citizens, community agencies, and representatives from business and industry in developing, disseminating, and explaining the biennial school plan; on advisory committees; in curriculum studies; and in evaluating the educational program.

2. Provide annually to the parents and the community the School Performance Report Card in a manner prescribed by the board. The information contained therein will be for the most recent three-year period. Such information shall include but not be limited to:

a. Virginia assessment program results by percentage of participation and proficiency and disaggregated by student subgroups.

b. The accreditation rating earned by the school.

c. Attendance rates for students.

d. Information related to school safety to include, but not limited to, incidents of crime and violence.

e. Information related to qualifications and educational attainment of the teaching staff.

f. In addition, secondary schools' School Performance Report Cards shall include the following:

(1) Advanced Placement (AP) information to include percentage of students who take AP courses and percentage of students who take AP tests;

(2) International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge course information to include percentage of students who are enrolled in IB or Cambridge programs and percentage of students who receive IB or Cambridge Diplomas;

(3) College-level course information to include percentage of students who take college-level courses including dual enrollment courses;

(4) Number and percentage of (i) graduates by diploma type as prescribed by the Board of Education, (ii) certificates awarded to the senior class including GED credentials, and (iii) students who do not complete high school;

(5) ~~The~~ As a separate category on the School Report Card, the number of students obtaining Board-approved industry certifications, and passing state licensure examinations, national occupational competency assessments and Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments ~~and occupational competency assessments~~ while still in high school and the number of career and technical education completers who graduated; and

(6) Number and percentage of drop-outs.

3. Cooperate with business and industry in formulating career and technical educational programs and conducting joint enterprises involving personnel, facilities, training programs, and other resources.

4. Encourage and support the establishment and/or continuation of a parent-teacher association or other organization and work cooperatively with it.

B. At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide to its students' parents or guardians information on the availability of and source for receiving:

1. The learning objectives developed in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-70 to be achieved at their child's grade level or, in high school, a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses, and a copy of the school division promotion, retention, and remediation policies;

2. The Standards of Learning applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date and potential impact of the child's next SOL testing; and

3. An annual notice to students in all grade levels of all requirements for Standard, Standard Technical, Advanced Studies, Advanced Technical and Modified Standard Diplomas, and the board's policies on promotion and retention as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-30.

The division superintendent shall report to the department compliance with this subsection through the pre-accreditation eligibility procedures in 8 VAC 20-131-290.

Part VIII  
School Accreditation

8 VAC 20-131-280. Expectations for school accountability.

A. Schools will be accredited annually based on compliance with pre-accreditation eligibility requirements and achievement of the school accountability requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-300 C.

B. Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on achievement of the criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50 as specified below:

1. The percentage of students passing the Virginia assessment program tests in the four core academic areas administered in the school, with the accreditation rating calculated on a trailing three-year average that includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or on the current year's scores, whichever is higher.
2. The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education. The accreditation rating of any school with a twelfth grade shall be determined based on achievement of required SOL pass rates and percentage points on the board's graduation and completion index. School accreditation shall be determined by the school's current year index points or a trailing three-year average of index points that includes the current year and the two most recent years, whichever is higher. The Board of Education's graduation and completion index shall include weighted points for diploma graduates (100 points), GED recipients (75 points), students not graduating but still in school (70 points), and students earning certificates of program completion (25 points). The Board of Education's graduation and completion index shall account for all students in the graduating class's ninth-grade cohort, plus students transferring in, minus students transferring out and deceased students. Those students who are not included in one of the preceding categories will also be included in the index.
3. The number of students who successfully complete a remediation recovery program.
4. Schools, with grade configurations that do not house a grade or offer courses for which SOL tests or additional tests approved by the Board of Education as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110 are administered, will be paired with another school in the division housing one or more of the grades in which SOL tests are administered. The pairing of such schools will be made upon the recommendation of the local superintendent. The schools should have a "feeder" relationship and the grades should be contiguous.

C. Subject to the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-350, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in § 22.1-26 of the Code of Virginia, 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. Schools offering alternative education programs and schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students as defined by the graduation rate formula adopted by the board may request that the board approve an alternative accreditation plan to meet the graduation and completion index benchmark. 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.

*In addition, pursuant to § 22.1-253.13:3 of the Code of Virginia, any school board, on behalf of one or more of its schools, may request the Board of Education for approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of one or more of its schools as authorized for special purpose schools.*

D. When calculating the passing rates on Virginia assessment program tests for the purpose of school accreditation, the following tolerances for limited English proficient (LEP) and transfer students will apply:

1. The scores of LEP students enrolled in Virginia public schools fewer than 11 semesters may be removed from the calculation used for the purpose of school accreditation required by 8 VAC 20-131-280 B and 8 VAC 20-131-300 C. Completion of a semester shall be based on school membership days. Membership days are defined as the days the student is officially enrolled in a Virginia public school, regardless of days absent or present. For a semester to count as a completed semester, a student must have been in membership for a majority of the membership days of the semester. These semesters need not be consecutive.
2. In accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-30, all students who transfer into Virginia public schools are expected to take and pass all applicable SOL tests in the content areas in which they receive instruction.
3. All students who transfer within a school division shall have their scores counted in the calculation of the school's accreditation rating. Students who transfer into a Virginia school from home instruction, or from another Virginia school division, another state, or another country, in grades kindergarten through 8 shall be expected to take all applicable SOL tests or additional tests approved by the board as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110. If the transfer takes place after the 20th instructional day following the opening of school, the scores on these tests may be used in calculating school accreditation ratings.

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4. Students who transfer into a Virginia middle or high school from home instruction, or from another state or country, and enroll in a course for which there is an end-of-course SOL test, shall be expected to take the test or additional tests for that course approved by the board as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110. If the transfer takes place after 20 instructional hours per course have elapsed following the opening of school or beginning of the semester, if applicable, the scores on those tests may be used in calculating school accreditation ratings in the year the transfer occurs.

5. Students who enroll on the first day of school and subsequently transfer to a school outside of the division for a total amount of instructional time equal to or exceeding 50 percent of a current school year or semester, whether the transfer was a singular or multiple occurrence, and return during the same school year shall be expected to take any applicable SOL test. The scores of those tests may be used in calculating the school accreditation rating in the year in which the transfers occur.

E. The Board of Education may adopt special provisions related to the administration and use of any Virginia assessment program test in a content area. The Board of Education may adopt special provisions related to the administration and use of the graduation and completion index, as prescribed by the board. The Board of Education may also alter the inclusions and exclusions from the accreditation calculations by providing adequate notice to local school boards. The board may add new tests or discontinue the use of existing tests in the Virginia Assessment Program by providing adequate notice to local school boards.

F. As a prerequisite to the awarding of an accreditation rating as defined in 8 VAC 20-131-300, each new or existing school shall document, in a manner prescribed by the board, the following: (i) the division's promotion/retention policies developed in accordance with the requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-30, (ii) compliance with the requirements to offer courses that will allow students to complete the graduation requirements in 8 VAC 20-131-50, (iii) the ability to offer the instructional program prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-70 through 8 VAC 20-131-100, (iv) the leadership and staffing requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-210 through 8 VAC 20-131-240, and (v) the facilities and safety provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-260. The division superintendent shall report to the department compliance with this subsection through the pre-accreditation eligibility procedures in 8 VAC 20-131-290.

8 VAC 20-131-290. Procedures for certifying accreditation eligibility.

A. Schools will be accredited under these standards annually based, in part, on compliance with the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements described in 8 VAC 20-131-280 F.

B. To be eligible for accreditation, the principal of each school and the division superintendent shall report to the Department of Education:

1. The extent to which each school continues to meet standards reported as met in the previous year described in 8 VAC 20-131-280 F.
2. That the SOL have been fully incorporated into the school division's curriculum in all accreditation-eligible schools and the SOL material is being taught to all students eligible to take the SOL tests. This shall be certified by each school division superintendent as part of the pre-accreditation eligibility determination process.
3. Actions taken to correct any noncompliance issues cited in the previous year.
4. Compliance with subsection B of 8 VAC 20-131-270.

The principal of each school and the division superintendent shall submit pre-accreditation eligibility reports in a manner prescribed by the board to the Department of Education. Failure to submit the reports on time will constitute grounds for denying accreditation to the school.

C. In keeping with provisions of the Standards of Quality, and in conjunction with the long-range comprehensive plan of the division, each school shall prepare and implement a biennial school plan which shall be available to students, parents, staff, and the public. Each biennial school plan shall be evaluated as part of the development of the next biennial plan. Schools may use other plans to satisfy the requirement for the biennial plan with prior written approval from the Department of Education.

D. With the approval of the local school board, local schools seeking to implement experimental or innovative programs, or both, that are not consistent with these standards shall submit a waiver request, on forms provided, to the board for evaluation and approval prior to implementation. The request must include the following:

1. Purpose and objectives of the experimental/innovative programs;
2. Description and duration of the programs;
3. Anticipated outcomes;

4. Number of students affected;
5. Evaluation procedures; and
6. Mechanisms for measuring goals, objectives, and student academic achievement.

Except as specified below, the board may grant, for a period up to five years, a waiver of these regulations that are not mandated by state or federal law or designed to promote health or safety. The board may grant all or a portion of the request. Waivers of requirements in 8 VAC 20-131-30, 8 VAC 20-131-50, 8 VAC 20-131-70, and 8 VAC 20-131-280 through 8 VAC 20-131-340 shall not be granted, and no waiver may be approved for a program which would violate the provisions of the Standards of Quality.

8 VAC 20-131-300. Application of the standards.

A. Schools that meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131- 280 F shall be assigned one of the following ratings as described in this section:

1. Fully Accredited;
2. Accredited with Warning in (specified academic area or areas and/or in achievement of the minimum threshold for the graduation and completion index);
3. Accreditation Denied;
4. Conditionally Accredited;
5. Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate;

B. Compliance with the student academic achievement expectations shall be documented to the board directly through the reporting of the results of student performance on SOL tests and other alternative means of assessing student academic achievement as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110. To facilitate accurate reporting of the graduation and completion index, the State Testing Identifier (STI) for students who transfer into a Virginia public school from another Virginia public school shall be retained by the receiving school. Compliance with other provisions of these regulations will be documented in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Board of Education.

C. Accreditation ratings defined. Accreditation ratings awarded in an academic year are based upon Virginia assessment program scores from the academic year immediately prior to the year to which the accreditation rating applies. Accreditation ratings are defined as follows:

1. Fully accredited.
  - a. With tests administered in the academic years ~~2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010~~ 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 for the accreditation ratings awarded for academic years ~~2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011~~ 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 respectively, a school will be rated Fully Accredited when its eligible students meet the pass rate of 70% in each of the four core academic areas except, the pass rates required shall be 75% in third-grade through fifth-grade English and 50% in third-grade science and history/social science.
  - b. For schools housing grade configurations where multiple pass rates apply, the results of the tests may be combined in each of the four core academic areas for the purpose of calculating the school's accreditation rating provided the school chooses

to meet the higher pass rate.

c. With tests administered beginning in the academic year ~~2010-2011~~ 2012-2013 for the accreditation ratings awarded for school year ~~2011-2012~~ 2013-2014 and beyond, a school will be rated Fully Accredited when its eligible students meet the pass rate of 75% in English and the pass rate of 70% in mathematics, science, and history and social science. Additionally, each school with a graduating class shall achieve a minimum of 85 percentage points on the Board of Education's graduation and completion index, as described in 8 VAC 20-131-280 B 2, to be rated Fully Accredited.

d. For accreditation purposes, the pass rate will be calculated as single rates for each of the four core academic areas by combining all scores of all tests administered in each subject area.

2. Accredited with Warning (in specific academic areas and/or in achievement of the minimum threshold for the graduation and completion index). A school will be Accredited with Warning (in specific academic areas and/or in achievement of the minimum threshold for the graduation and completion index) if it has failed to achieve Fully Accredited status. Such a school may remain in the Accredited with Warning status for no more than three consecutive years.

3. Accreditation Denied. Based on a school's academic performance and/or achievement of the minimum threshold for the graduation and completion index, a school shall be rated Accreditation Denied if it fails to meet the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate, for the preceding three consecutive years or for three consecutive years anytime thereafter.

In any school division in which one-third or more of the schools have been rated Accreditation Denied, the superintendent shall be evaluated by the local school board with a copy of such evaluation submitted to the Board of Education no later than December 1 of each year in which such condition exists. In addition, the Board of Education may take action against the local school board as permitted by the Standards of Quality due to the failure of the local board to maintain accredited schools.

4. Conditionally Accredited. New schools that are comprised of students from one or more existing schools in the division will be awarded a Conditionally Accredited-New status for one year pending an evaluation of the school's eligible students' performance on SOL tests or additional tests approved by the Board of Education to be rated Fully Accredited. A Conditionally Accredited-Reconstituted rating may be awarded to a school that is being reconstituted in accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-340 upon approval by the Board of Education. A school awarded this rating under those circumstances will revert to a status of Accreditation Denied if it fails to meet the

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requirements to be rated Fully Accredited by the end of the agreed upon term or if it fails to have its annual application for such rating renewed.

5. Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate. With tests administered in the academic years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015 for the accreditation ratings awarded for academic years 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 respectively, a school will be rated Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate when its eligible students meet SOL pass rates to be rated Fully Accredited but fails to achieve a minimum of 85 percentage index points on the Board of Education's graduation and completion index, but achieve the following minimum benchmarks for each year:

Graduation and Completion Index Benchmarks for Provisionally Accredited Ratings		
Academic Year	Accreditation Year	Index Percentage Points
2010-2011	2011-2012	80
2011-2012	2012-2013	81
2012-2013	2013-2014	82
2013-2014	2014-2015	83
2014-2015	2015-2016	84

The last year in which this rating shall be awarded is the 2015-2016 accreditation year, based on tests administered in the 2014-2015 academic year.

8 VAC 20-131-310. Action requirements for schools that are Accredited with Warning or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate.

A. With such funds as are appropriated by the General Assembly, the Department of Education shall develop a school academic review process and monitoring plan designed to assist schools rated as Accredited with Warning. All procedures and operations for the academic review process shall be approved and adopted by the board.

Schools rated Accredited with Warning or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate must undergo an academic review in accordance with guidelines adopted by the board and prepare a school improvement plan as required by subsection F of this section.

B. Any school that is rated Accredited with Warning in English or mathematics shall adopt a research-based instructional intervention that has a proven track record of success at raising student achievement in those areas as appropriate.

C. The superintendent and principal shall certify in writing to the Board of Education that such an intervention has been adopted and implemented.

D. The board shall publish a list of recommended instructional interventions, which may be amended from time to time.

E. Adoption of instructional interventions referenced in subsections B and D of this section shall be funded by eligible local, state, and federal funds.

F. A three-year School Improvement Plan must be developed and implemented, based on the results of an academic review of each school that is rated Accredited with Warning or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate upon receipt of notification of the awarding of this rating and receipt of the results of the academic review. The plan:

1. Shall be developed with the assistance of parents and teachers and made available to the public;
2. Must include the components outlined in subsection G of this section; and
3. Must be approved by the division superintendent and the local school board and be designed to assist the school in meeting the student achievement standard to be Fully Accredited as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-300.

G. The improvement plan shall include the following:

1. A description of how the school will meet the requirements to be Fully Accredited, for each of the years covered by the plan;

2. Specific measures for achieving and documenting student academic improvement;
3. A description of the amount of time in the school day devoted to instruction in the core academic areas;
4. Instructional practices designed to remediate students who have not been successful on SOL tests;
5. Intervention strategies designed to prevent further declines in student performance and graduation rates;
6. Staff development needed;
7. Strategies to involve and assist parents in raising their child's academic performance;
8. The need for flexibility or waivers to state or local regulations to meet the objectives of the plan; and
9. A description of the manner in which local, state, and federal funds are used to support the implementation of the components of this plan.

As part of its approval of the school improvement plan, the board may grant a local school board a waiver from the requirements of any regulations promulgated by the board when such a waiver is available.

H. The school improvement plan and related annual reports submitted to the board shall provide documentation of the continuous efforts of the school to achieve the requirements to become rated Fully Accredited. The board shall adopt and approve all policies and formats for the submission of annual reports under this section. The reports shall be due no later than October 1 of the school year.

8 VAC 20-131-315. Action requirements for schools that are denied accreditation.

A. Any school rated Accreditation Denied in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-300 shall be subject to actions prescribed by the Board of Education and shall provide parents of enrolled students and other interested parties with the following:

1. Written notice of the school's accreditation rating within 30 calendar days of the notification of the rating from the Department of Education;
2. A copy of the school division's proposed corrective action plan, including a timeline for implementation, to improve the school's accreditation rating; and
3. An opportunity to comment on the division's proposed corrective action plan. Such public comment shall be received and considered by the school division prior to finalizing the school's corrective action plan and a Board of Education memorandum of understanding with the local school board.

B. Any school rated Accreditation Denied in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-300 shall be subject to actions prescribed by the Board of Education and affirmed through a memorandum of understanding between the Board of Education and the local school board. The local school board shall submit a corrective action plan to the Board of Education for its consideration in prescribing actions in the memorandum of understanding within 45 days of the notification of the rating. The memorandum of understanding shall be entered into no later than November 1 of the academic year in which the rating is awarded.

The local board shall submit status reports detailing implementation of actions prescribed by the memorandum of understanding to the Board of Education. The status reports shall be signed by the school principal, division superintendent, and the chair of the local school board. The school principal, division superintendent, and the chair of the local school board may be required to appear before the Board of Education to present status reports.

The memorandum of understanding may also include but not be limited to:

1. Undergoing an educational service delivery and management review. The Board of Education shall prescribe the content of such review and approve the reviewing authority retained by the school division.
2. Employing a turnaround specialist credentialed by the state to address those conditions at the school that may impede educational progress and effectiveness and academic success.

C. As an alternative to the memorandum of understanding outlined in subsection B of this section, a local school board may choose to reconstitute a school rated Accreditation Denied and apply to the Board of Education for a rating of Conditionally Accredited. The application shall outline specific responses that address all areas of deficiency that resulted in the Accreditation Denied rating and may include any of the provisions of subsection B of this section.

If a local school board chooses to reconstitute a school, it may annually apply for an accreditation rating of Conditionally Accredited as provided for in 8 VAC 20-131-300 C 5. The Conditionally Accredited rating may be granted for a period not to exceed three years if the school is making progress toward a rating of Fully Accredited in accordance with the terms of the Board of Education's approval of the reconstitution application. The school will revert to a status of Accreditation Denied if it fails to meet the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited by the end of the three-year term or if it fails to have its annual application for such rating renewed.

D. The local school board may choose to close a school rated Accreditation Denied or to combine such school with a higher performing school in the division.

E. A local school board that has any school with the status of Accreditation Denied shall annually report each school's progress toward meeting the requirements to be rated Fully Accredited to the Board of Education. The local board shall submit such report in a manner prescribed by the Board of Education no later than October 1 of each year. Such reports on each school's progress shall be included in the Board of Education's annual report on the condition and needs of public education to the Governor, and the General Assembly submitted on November 15 of each year.

8 VAC 20-131-320. Provisional accreditation benchmarks. (Repealed.)

8 VAC 20-131-325. Recognitions and rewards for school and division accountability performance.

A. Schools and divisions may be recognized by the Board of Education in accordance with guidelines it shall establish for the Virginia Index of Performance (VIP) incentive program. *In order to encourage school divisions to promote student achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), the Board shall take into account in its guidelines a school division's increase in enrollments and elective course offerings in these STEM areas.*

Such recognition may include:

1. Public announcements recognizing individual schools and divisions;
2. Tangible rewards;
3. Waivers of certain board regulations;
4. Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or
5. Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.

In addition to board recognition, local school boards shall adopt policies to recognize individual schools through public announcements, media releases, participation in community activities for input purposes when setting policy relating to schools and budget development, as well as other appropriate recognition.

B. A school that maintains a passing rate on Virginia assessment program tests or additional tests approved by the board as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110 of 95% or above in each of the four core academic areas for two consecutive years may, upon application to the Department of Education, receive a waiver from annual accreditation. A school receiving such a waiver shall be Fully Accredited for a three-year period. However, such school shall continue to annually submit documentation in compliance with the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements described in 8 VAC 20-131-280 F.

C. Schools may be eligible to receive the Governor's Award for Outstanding Achievement. This award will be given to schools rated Fully Accredited that significantly increase the achievement of students within student subgroups in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the Board of Education.

8 VAC 20-131-330. Waivers. (Repealed.)

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8 VAC 20-131-340. Special provisions and sanctions.

A. Any school in violation of these regulations shall be subject to appropriate action by the Board of Education including, but not limited to, the withholding or denial of a school's accreditation.

B. A school's accreditation rating may be withheld by action of the Board of Education for any school found to be in violation of test security procedures pursuant to § 22.1-19.1 of the Code of Virginia. Withholding of a school's accreditation rating shall not be considered an interruption of the three-consecutive-year period for purposes of receiving an Accreditation Denied status pursuant to 8 VAC 20-131-300.

C. The Board of Education may exercise its authority to seek school division compliance with school laws pursuant to relevant provisions of the Code of Virginia when any school within a division is rated Accreditation Denied.

8 VAC 20-131-350. Waivers.

Waivers of some of the requirements of these regulations may be granted by the Board of Education based on submission of a request from the division superintendent and chairman of the local school board. The request shall include documentation of the need for the waiver. In no event shall waivers be granted to the requirements of Part III (8 VAC 20-131-30 et seq.) of these regulations VAC 20-131-60) of these regulations except that the Board of Education may provide for the waiver of certain graduation requirements in [8 VAC 20-131-50](#) (i) upon the Board's initiative or (ii) at the request of a local school board on a case-by-case basis in accordance with guidelines established by the Board.

8 VAC 20-131-360. Effective date.

The provisions in 8 VAC 20-131-30 B relating to double testing and the provisions in 8 VAC 20-131-60 C relating to Virtual Virginia shall become effective July 31, 2009. Schools with a graduating class shall meet prescribed thresholds on a graduation and completion rate index as prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-280 and 8 VAC 20-131-300 for accreditation ratings earned in 2010-2011 and awarded in 2011-2012. Unless otherwise specified, the remainder of these regulations shall be effective beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year.

- A. The provisions in 8 VAC 20-131-30 B relating to double testing and the provisions in 8 VAC 20-131-60 C relating to Virtual Virginia shall become effective July 31, 2009.
- B. Graduation requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50 B and D shall become effective with the ninth-grade class of 2011-2012.
- C. Graduation requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50 C and E shall become effective with the ninth grade class of 2012-2013.
- D. Schools with a graduating class shall meet prescribed thresholds on a graduation and completion rate index as prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-280 and 8 VAC 20-131-300 for accreditation ratings earned in 2010-2011 and awarded in 2011-2012.
- E. Accreditation ratings prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-300 C (1 a.) shall become effective with tests administered in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 for ratings awarded in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.
- F. Accreditation ratings prescribed in 8 VAC 20-121-300 C (1 c.) shall become effective with tests administered in 2012-2013 for ratings awarded in 2013-2014 and beyond.
- G. The Academic and Career Plan prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-140 shall become effective in 2012-2013.
- H. Unless otherwise specified, the remainder of these regulations shall be effective beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year.



## Exempt Action Final Regulation Agency Background Document

<b>Agency name</b>	Department of Education
<b>Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation</b>	8 VAC 20-131
<b>Regulation title</b>	Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia
<b>Action title</b>	Update for Legislative Changes Made by the 2010 and 2011 General Assembly
<b>Final agency action date</b>	The Board of Education is expected to take final action on these amendments on June 23, 2011.
<b>Document preparation date</b>	May 19, 2011

When a regulatory action is exempt from executive branch review pursuant to § 2.2-4002 or § 2.2-4006 of the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), the agency is encouraged to provide information to the public on the Regulatory Town Hall using this form.

Note: While posting this form on the Town Hall is optional, the agency must comply with requirements of the Virginia Register Act, the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual*, and Executive Orders 36 (06) and 58 (99).

### Summary

*Please provide a brief summary of all regulatory changes, including the rationale behind such changes. Alert the reader to all substantive matters or changes. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation.*

[The Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia](#) are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools. Legislative changes enacted by the 2010 and 2011 General Assembly have resulted in a need to amend the regulations. The proposed changes are as follows:

- 1) Delaying the effective date of these regulations as they relate to the establishment of two technical diplomas and an academic and career plan as well as delaying increases in accreditation benchmarks ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 2) Increasing and changing the credit requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma and changing the credit requirements for the Standard Diploma beginning in the 2011-2012 school year to include, among other changes, a graduation requirement related to economics and personal finance ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), 2011 General Assembly);

- 3) Providing that students who earn a Modified Standard Diploma could be eligible to receive the Virginia Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education ([House Bill 1793](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 4) Permitting the Virginia Board of Education to approve alternative accreditation plans for any public school ([House Bill 2494](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 5) Recognizing achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by permitting school divisions to be rewarded for increases in enrollments and elective course offerings in STEM ([House Bill 2172](#) and [Senate 953](#), 2011 General Assembly); and
- 6) Ensuring that school boards report annually the number of Virginia Board of Education approved industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations and national occupational competency assessments passed, Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments passed, and the number of career and technical education completers who graduated ([House Bill 566](#) and [Senate Bill 630](#), 2010 General Assembly).

### Statement of final agency action

*Please provide a statement of the final action taken by the agency including (1) the date the action was taken, (2) the name of the agency taking the action, and (3) the title of the regulation.*

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The Virginia Board of Education is expected to take final action to amend the effective date of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* on June 23, 2011, pursuant to legislation enacted by the 2011 General Assembly ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), [House Bill 1793](#), [House Bill 2494](#), and [House Bill 2172](#) and [Senate 953](#)) and legislation enacted by the 2010 General Assembly ([House Bill 566](#) and [Senate Bill 630](#)).

### Family impact

*Assess the impact of this regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability.*

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This proposal would permit students earning a Modified Standard Diploma to be eligible to receive the Virginia Board of Education's Seal of Excellence in Civics Education. This action could have a positive effect on the family in terms of recognizing and rewarding community service.

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: B.

Date: May 19, 2011

**Topic:** Final Review of a Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) to Revise the Definitions of At-Risk of Becoming Low-Performing and Low-Performing Institutions of Higher Education in Virginia as Required by Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)

**Presenters:** Mrs. Patty S. Pitts, Assistant Superintendent for Teacher Education and Licensure

**Telephone Number:** (804) 371-2522

**E-Mail Address:** Patty.Pitts@doe.virginia.gov

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action  
date September 26, 2001  
action The Board of Education approved definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia.

date November 20, 2008  
action The Board of Education approved the recommendation of ABTEL to revise the definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia as required by Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

date April 28, 2011  
action The Board of Education received for first review a recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) to revise the definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia as required by Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).

## Background Information:

In October 1998, the U.S. Congress enacted Title II provisions to the Higher Education Act (HEA) authorizing federal grant programs to improve the recruitment, retention, preparation, and support of new teachers. Title II also included accountability measures in the form of reporting requirements for institutions and states on teacher preparation and licensing.

Section 207 of Title II reporting requirements mandate that the U.S. Secretary of Education collect data on standards for teacher certification and licensure, as well as data on the performance of teacher preparation programs. The law requires the Secretary to use these data in submitting its annual report on the quality of teacher preparation to Congress. In addition, states were required to develop criteria, procedures, and processes from which institutions at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions could be identified. The following statement is an excerpt from the Title II “Reference and Reporting Guide for Preparing State and Institutional Reports on the Quality of Teacher Preparation,” April 19, 2000:

*To receive funds under this act, a state, not later than two years after the date of Enactment of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, shall have in place a procedure to identify, and assist, through the provision of technical assistance, low-performing programs of teacher preparation within institutions of higher education. Such state shall provide the U.S. Secretary an annual list of such low-performing institutions that includes an identification of those institutions at-risk of being placed on such list. Such levels of performance shall be determined solely by the state and may include criteria based upon information collected pursuant to this title. Such assessment shall be described in the report under section 207(b).*

On September 26, 2001, the Board of Education approved Virginia’s definitions for low-performing and at-risk of becoming low-performing institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs, beginning with approved program reviews on July 1, 2003. The designations of “approval, approval with stipulations, and denial of accreditation” were used in these definitions. The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, effective September 21, 2007, and amended January 19, 2011, separated the accreditation and program approval processes; therefore, revisions were needed in Virginia’s definitions for “low-performing” and “at-risk of becoming low-performing institutions.”

On November 20, 2008, the Board of Education approved the following revisions to the definitions to align with the accrediting bodies’ designations.

The three options for accreditation are as follows:

Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

Option III: Board of Education (BOE) Approved Accreditation Process

Each accreditation review results in one of the following decisions:

**Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education:**

*Accreditation Decisions After the first Visit:*

- Accreditation
- Provisional Accreditation
- Denial of Accreditation
- Revocation of Accreditation

*Continuing Accreditation Decisions:*

- Continuing Accreditation
- Accreditation with Conditions

- Accreditation with Probation
- Revocation of Accreditation

**Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council:**

- Accreditation
- Provisional Accreditation
- Accreditation Denied

[An institution also may be initially awarded “preaccreditation” on a one-time basis.]

**Option III: Board of Education (BOE) Approved Accreditation Process:**

- Accredited
- Accredited with Stipulations
- Accreditation Denied

**At-Risk of Becoming a Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** At-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that receives one of the following designations from the accreditation review:

NCATE:      *Accreditation After First Visit:* Provisional Accreditation  
                   *Continuing Accreditation:* Accreditation with Probation

TEAC:        Provisional Accreditation

BOE:         Accredited with Stipulations

**Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** Low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that has not made improvements by the end of the period designated by the accrediting body or not later than two years after receiving the designation of at-risk of receiving the designation of at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education.

When an institution receives one of the following designations, the low-performing designation will be removed:

NCATE:      Accreditation, Continuing Accreditation, or Accredited with  
                   Conditions

TEAC:        Accreditation

BOE:         Accredited

If an institution’s accreditation is revoked or denied, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) will be notified for appropriate action. The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, (8VAC20-542-20), effective September 21, 2007, stipulate that “If a professional education program fails to maintain accreditation, enrolled candidates shall be permitted to complete their programs of study. Professional education programs shall not admit new candidates. Candidates shall be notified of program approval status.”

Title II HEA, was reauthorized on August 14, 2008. Section 205 of Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) mandates that the Department of Education collect data on state assessments, other requirements, and standards for teacher certification and licensure, as well as data on the performance of teacher preparation programs. The law requires the Secretary to use these data in submitting an annual report on the quality of teacher preparation to the Congress.

### **Summary of Major Elements:**

The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, effective September 21, 2007, and amended January 19, 2011, define the standards that must be met and the review options available for the accreditation of professional education programs required. Based on recent changes made to accrediting body designations by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council, there is a need to align the definitions for at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia.

The three options for accreditation are as follows:

Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

Option III: Board of Education (BOE) Approved Accreditation Process

Each accreditation review results in one of the following decisions:

#### **Option I: National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education:**

- Accreditation for five years<sup>1</sup>
- Accreditation for seven years<sup>2</sup>
- Accreditation for two years with a focused visit
- Accreditation for two years with a full visit
- Defer decision [Accreditation decision is deferred for six months.]
- Deny accreditation
- Revoke accreditation

<sup>1</sup>*All standards are met, no serious problems exist across standards, and the state retains a five-year cycle.*

<sup>2</sup>*All standards are met and no serious problems exist across standards. (Note: Virginia maintains a seven-year cycle.)*

#### **Option II: Teacher Education Accreditation Council:**

- Accreditation (ten years)
- Accreditation (five years)
- Accreditation (two years)
- Initial accreditation (five years)
- Initial accreditation (two years)
- Deny

**Option III: Board of Education (BOE) Approved Accreditation Process:**

- Accredited
- Accredited with Stipulations
- Accreditation Denied

The proposed revisions to the definitions of at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education and low-performing institution of higher education are as follows:

**At-Risk of Becoming a Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** An at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that receives one of the following designations from the accreditation review:

NCATE: Accreditation for two years with a focused visit; or  
Accreditation for two years with a full visit

TEAC: Accreditation (two years)  
Initial Accreditation (two years)

BOE: Accredited with Stipulations

**Low-Performing Institution of Higher Education:** A low-performing institution of higher education means an institution with teacher preparation programs that has not made improvements by the end of the period designated by the accrediting body or not later than two years after receiving the designation of at-risk of receiving the designation of at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education.

When an institution receives one of the following designations, the low-performing designation will be removed:

NCATE: Accreditation for seven years

TEAC: Accreditation (ten or five years)<sup>3</sup>

BOE: Accredited

<sup>3</sup>The Virginia/TEAC Partnership currently allows for seven-year accreditation. The partnership with TEAC expires June 30, 2013.

If an institution's accreditation is revoked or denied, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) will be notified for appropriate action. The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*, (8VAC20-542-20), effective September 21, 2007 and amended January 19, 2011, stipulate that "If a professional education program fails to maintain accreditation, enrolled candidates shall be permitted to complete their programs of study. Professional education programs shall not admit new candidates. Candidates shall be notified of program approval status."

Federal reporting is required by states in October of each year. Institutions meeting these definitions at the end of the reporting year will be designated at-risk of becoming a low-performing institution of higher education or low-performing institution of higher education.

On March 21, 2011, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure unanimously recommended that the Board of Education approve the revised definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure's recommendation to revise the definitions of at-risk of becoming low-performing and low-performing institutions of higher education in Virginia.

**Impact on Resources:**

There is minimal impact on resources.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon approval by the Board, the Virginia Department of Education will submit the revised definitions to the Title II Office of the United States Department of Education and Virginia institutions of higher education.



2. the requirement of a reading instructional assessment for teachers of special education (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments), elementary prek-3, and elementary prek-6 no later than July 1, 2004. In addition, individuals seeking a reading specialist endorsement would be required to complete a reading instructional assessment no later than July 1, 2004.

In response to this resolution, the Virginia Department of Education contracted with National Evaluation Systems to develop the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) and Virginia Reading Assessment for Reading Specialists (VRA for Reading Specialists). Between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2006, the VRA was required of all candidates applying for an initial license with endorsements in Early/Primary PreK-3, Elementary Education PreK-6, Special Education (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments) and individuals seeking an endorsement as a Reading Specialist. Also, as a result of the Board's action on July 27, 2005, institutions of higher education with preparation programs in teaching endorsement areas requiring the VRA were given another year to continue aligning their programs with required reading competencies.

At the July 27, 2005, meeting, the Board of Education approved cut scores for the Virginia Reading Assessments (VRA) for elementary and special education teachers (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments) and reading specialists. The Board approved a score of 235 for elementary and special education teachers and a score of 245 for reading specialists, effective July 1, 2006.

Based on Virginia's procurement regulations, from time to time contracts for certain tests must be opened for competitive solicitation and new contracts awarded. As a result of the solicitation, the Virginia Department of Education contracted with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) on July 20, 2010, to develop the following two new reading assessments that will become effective July 1, 2011.

**Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment**

This assessment will be required for Virginia teachers seeking an initial license with an endorsement in Elementary Education PK-3, Elementary Education PK-6, Special Education-General Curriculum, Special Education-Hearing Impairments, and Special Education-Visual Impairments and will replace the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) for Elementary and Special Education Teachers.

**Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment**

This assessment will be required for individuals seeking the reading specialist endorsement and will replace the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) for Reading Specialists.

The Educational Testing Service worked with the Virginia Department of Education to assemble test development committees composed of Virginia teachers and higher education faculty involved in the preparation of reading teachers. These committees met in September 2010 to review the proposed test specifications and approve specific test items for the new assessments. ETS also conducted field tests of the two new assessments across Virginia in January and February 2011.

## Summary of Major Elements:

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) Assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level elementary and special education teachers with regards to teaching reading.

The study involved an expert panel comprised of teachers, administrators and college faculty. The Department of Education recommended panelists with (a) elementary or special education experience, either as elementary or special education teachers or college faculty who prepare elementary or special education teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning elementary or special education teachers with regards to teaching reading. A roster of participants is included in the Appendix of the attached report. The panel was convened on February 28 and March 1, 2011, in Richmond, Virginia.

The *RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Test at a Glance* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. In brief, the assessment measures whether entry-level elementary or special education teachers have the content knowledge and skills related to teaching reading believed necessary for competent professional practice. The specifications for the assessment were provided by the Virginia Department of Education and consistent with the current knowledge and skill content specified for licensure.

The two and one-half hour assessment is divided into two parts. Part A contains 100 multiple-choice questions covering *Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching* (approximately 19 questions), *Oral Language and Oral Communication* (approximately 19 questions), *Reading Development* (approximately 43 questions), and *Writing and Research* (approximately 19 questions). Part B contains three constructed-response questions covering three of the four content areas as Part A (*Oral Language and Oral Communication* is not covered by one of the constructed-response questions). While the sections are not separately timed, suggested time limits of 105 minutes for Part A and 45 minutes for Part B are provided.

Candidate scores on the two parts are combined and reported as an overall score; five category scores – one for each content area covered in Part A and one for the combined constructed-response questions in Part B – also are reported. The constructed-response questions in Part B are weighted to contribute 20 percent of the total raw-score points. The maximum total number of raw points that may be earned on the assessment is 100, 80 points from Part A and 20 points from Part B. The reporting scales for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points.

The panel's cut score recommendation for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment is 66.68. The value was rounded to 67 (out of 100 raw score points that could be earned on the assessment), the next highest whole number, to determine the functional recommended cut. The scaled score associated with 67 raw points is 163.

When reviewing the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) for the cut scores recommended by the Virginia Standard Setting Study, there is an overlap in the scaled scores. The SEM is a statistical phenomenon and is unrelated to the accuracy of scoring. All test results are subject to the standard error of measurement. If a test-taker were to take the same test repeatedly, with no change in his level of

knowledge and preparation, it is possible that some of the resulting scores would be slightly higher or slightly lower than the score that precisely reflects the test taker’s actual level of knowledge and ability. The difference between a test-taker’s actual score and his highest or lowest hypothetical score is known as the standard error of measurement. The Standard Error of Measurement for the recommended cut scores for the Virginia Standard Setting Study is shown below. Note that consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

**Standard Error of Measure Summary**  
**Reading for Virginia Educators: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment**

**Cut Scores Within 1 and 2 SEMs of the Recommended Cut Score**

<b><u>Recommended Cut Score (SEM)</u></b>	<b><u>Scale Score Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Field Test Pass Rate</u></b>	
	67 (4.55)	163 (Panel Recommendation)	52%
-2 SEMs	58	151	72%
-1 SEM	63	157 (ABTEL Recommendation)	63%
+1 SEM	72	169	40%
+2 SEMs	77	176	27%

*Note:* Consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

In addition to the results of the Standard Setting Study, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) also reviewed the results from the field test conducted by ETS. A total of 764 candidates participated in the field test for the RVE assessment conducted in January-February 2011. The percentage of field test candidates passing at the scale score equivalent is also shown above.

On March 21, 2011, ABTEL recommended that the Board of Education set a cut score of 157 for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure’s recommendation to adopt the cut score of 157 for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment.

**Impact on Resources:**

Costs associated with the administration of the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment will be incurred by the Educational Testing Service. Prospective elementary and special education teachers will be required to pay a fee for test administration and reporting results to the Virginia Department of Education.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon approval by the Board, school divisions and institutions of higher education will be notified of the cut score for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment.



*Listening. Learning. Leading.*

Standard Setting Technical Report

**READING FOR VIRGINIA EDUCATORS:  
ELEMENTARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS (0306)**

Prepared for the Virginia Department of Education

Educational and Credentialing Research

Educational Testing Service

Princeton, New Jersey

March 2011

## **Executive Summary**

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study on February 28 and March 1, 2011. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level elementary and special education teachers with regards to teaching reading.

### **Recommended Cut Score**

The recommended cut score is provided to help the VDOE determine an appropriate cut (or passing) score. For the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment, the average recommended cut score is 67 out of 100 (on the raw score metric). The scaled score associated with a raw score of 67 is 163 (on a 100 to 200 scale).

### **Summary of Content Specification Judgments**

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level elementary and special education teachers with regards to teaching reading. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content of the assessment is important for beginning practice.

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level elementary and special education teachers with regards to teaching reading.

The study involved an expert panel, comprised of teachers, administrators and college faculty. The VDOE recommended panelists with (a) elementary or special education experience, either as elementary or special education teachers or college faculty who prepare elementary or special education teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning elementary or special education teachers with regards to teaching reading.

The panel was convened on February 28 and March 1, 2011, in Richmond, Virginia. The following technical report is divided into three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the assessment. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods used. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

The passing score recommendation for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment is provided to the VDOE. The VDOE is responsible for establishing the final passing score in accordance with applicable state regulations. The study provides a recommended passing score, which represents the combined judgments of one group of experienced educators. The full range of the VDOE's needs and expectations could not be represented during the standard-setting study. The VDOE, therefore, may want to consider both the panel's recommended cut score and other sources to information when setting the final RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) cut score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). The VDOE may accept the recommended cut score, adjust it upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust it downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the VDOE's needs.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the cut score are the standard error of measurement (SEM) and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) scores and the latter the reliability of

panelists' cut-score recommendations. The SEM allows the VDOE to recognize that a RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) score—any test score on any test—is less than perfectly reliable. A test score only approximates what a candidate *truly* knows or *truly* can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allows the VDOE to consider the likelihood that the recommended cut score from the current panel would be similar to cut scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ, the more likely that another panel would recommend a cut score consistent with the recommended cut score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended cut score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), the VDOE should consider the likelihood of classification error. That is, when adjusting a cut score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false positive decision or to minimize a false negative decision. A false positive decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests he should receive a license/certificate, but his actual knowledge/skill level is lower (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false negative occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that she should not receive a license/certificate, but she actually does possess the required knowledge/skills. The VDOE needs to consider which decision error to minimize; it is not possible to eliminate both types of decision errors simultaneously.

### **Overview of the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment**

The *RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Test at a Glance* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. In brief, the assessment measures whether entry-level elementary or special education teachers have the content knowledge and skills related to teaching reading believed necessary for competent professional practice. The specifications for the assessment were provided by the Virginia Department of Education and consistent with the current knowledge and skill content specified for licensure.

The two and one-half hour assessment is divided into two parts. Part A contains 100 multiple-choice questions covering *Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching* (approximately 19 questions), *Oral Language and Oral Communication* (approximately 19 questions), *Reading Development*

(approximately 43 questions), and *Writing and Research* (approximately 19 questions)<sup>1</sup>. Part B contains three constructed-response questions covering three of the four content areas as Part A (*Oral Language and Oral Communication* is not covered by one of the constructed-response questions). While the sections are not separately timed, suggested time limits of 105 minutes for Part A and 45 minutes for Part B are provided.

Candidate scores on the two parts are combined and reported as an overall score; five category scores – one for each content area covered in Part A and one for the combined constructed-response questions in Part B – also are reported. The constructed-response questions in Part B are weighted to contribute 20% of the total raw-score points. The maximum total number of raw points that may be earned on the assessment is 100, 80 points from Part A and 20 points from Part B. The reporting scales for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points.

### **Processes and Methods**

The following section describes the processes and methods used to train panelists, gather panelists' judgments and to calculate the recommended passing score, or cut score. (The agenda for the panel meeting is presented in the Appendix.)

The panelists were sent an e-mail explaining the purpose of the standard-setting study and requesting that they review the test content specifications for the assessment (included in the *Test at a Glance* document, which was attached to the e-mail). The purpose of the review was to familiarize the panelists with the general structure and content of the assessment.

The standard-setting study began with a welcome and introduction by James Lanham, from the VDOE. The ETS facilitator, Jack Burke, then explained how the assessment was developed, provided an overview of standard setting, and presented the agenda for the study.

### **Reviewing the Assessment**

The first activity was for the panelists to “take the test.” (Each panelist had signed a nondisclosure form.) The panelists were given approximately two hours to respond to the multiple-choice questions and to sketch responses to the constructed-response questions. (Panelists were

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<sup>1</sup> The number of questions for each content area may vary slightly from form to form of the assessment.

instructed not to refer to the answer key for the multiple-choice questions while taking the test.) The purpose of “taking the test” was for the panelists to become familiar with the test format, content, and difficulty. After “taking the test,” the panelists checked their responses against the answer key for the multiple-choice questions and the scoring rubric for the constructed-response questions.

The panelists then engaged in a discussion of the major content areas being addressed by the assessment; they were also asked to remark on any content areas that they thought would be particularly challenging for entering elementary or special education teachers, and areas that addressed content that would be particularly important for entering elementary or special education teachers.

### **Defining the Just Qualified Candidate**

Following the review of the assessment, panelists internalized the definition of the Just Qualified Candidate (JQC). The JQC is the test taker who has the minimum level of knowledge and/or skills believed necessary to be a qualified elementary or special education teacher with regards to teaching reading. The JQC definition is the operational definition of the cut score. The goal of the standard-setting process is to identify the test score that aligns with this definition of the JQC.

The panelists were split into smaller groups, and each group was asked to write down their definition of a JQC. Each group referred to *RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Test at a Glance* to guide their definition. Each group posted its definition on chart paper, and a full-panel discussion occurred to reach consensus on a final definition (see the consensus JQC definition in the Appendix).

### **Panelists’ Judgments**

The standard-setting process for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment was conducted for the overall test, though one standard-setting approach was implemented for Part A (multiple-choice questions) and another approach was implemented for Part B (constructed-response questions). The panel’s passing score for the assessment is the sum of the interim cut scores recommended by the panelists for each section. As with scoring and reporting, the panelists’ judgments for Part B, the constructed-response questions, were weighted such that Part B contributed 20% of the overall score.

**Standard Setting for Part A (multiple-choice questions).** A probability-based Angoff method (Brandon, 2004; Hambleton & Pitoniak, 2006) was used for Part A (multiple-choice questions). In this approach, for each question, a panelist decides on the likelihood (probability or chance) that a JQC would answer it correctly. Panelists made their judgments using the following rating scale: 0, .05, .10, .20, .30, .40, .50, .60, .70, .80, .90, .95, 1. The lower the value, the less likely it is that a JQC would answer the question correctly, because the question is difficult for the JQC. The higher the value, the more likely it is that a JQC would answer the question correctly.

For each panel, the panelists were asked to approach the judgment process in two stages. First, they reviewed the definition of the JQC and the question and decided if, overall, the question was difficult for the JQC, easy for the JQC, or moderately difficult/easy. The facilitator encouraged the panelists to consider the following rule of thumb to guide their decision:

- difficult questions for a JQC were in the 0 to .30 range;
- moderately difficult/easy questions for a JQC were in the .40 to .60 range; and
- easy questions for a JQC were in the .70 to 1 range.

The second decision was for panelists to decide how they wanted to refine their judgment within the range. For example, if a panelist thought that a question was easy for a JQC, the initial decision located the question in the .70 to 1 range. The second decision was for the panelist to decide if the likelihood of answering it correctly was .70, .80, .90, .95, or 1.0. The two-stage decision-process was implemented to reduce the cognitive load placed on the panelists. The panelists practiced making their standard-setting judgments on four questions on the assessment.

The panelists engaged in two rounds of judgments. Following Round 1, question-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each question. The panelists' judgments were summarized by the three general difficulty levels (0 to .30, .40 to .60, and .70 to 1), and the panel's average question judgment was provided. Questions were highlighted to show when panelists converged in their judgments (at least two-thirds of the panelists located a question in the same difficulty range) or diverged in their judgments. Panelists were asked to share their rationales for the judgments they made. Following this discussion, panelists were provided an opportunity to change their question-level standard-setting judgments (Round 2).

**Standard Setting for Part B (constructed-response questions).** An Extended Angoff method (Cizek & Bunch, 2007; Hambleton & Plake, 1995) was used for Part B (constructed-response questions). In this approach, for each question, a panelist decides on the assigned score value that would most likely be earned by a JQC. The basic process that each panelist followed was first to review the definition of the JQC and then to review the question and the rubric for that question. The rubric for a question defines holistically the quality of the evidence that would merit a response earning a score of 3, 2, 1, or 0. During this review, each panelist independently considered the level of knowledge and/or skill required to respond to the question and the features of a response that would earn 3, 2, 1, or 0 points, as defined by the rubric.

A test taker's response to a constructed-response question is independently scored by two raters, and the sum of the raters' scores is the assigned score<sup>2</sup>; possible scores, therefore, range from zero (both raters assigned a score of zero) to six (both raters assigned a score of three). Each panelist decided on the score most likely to be earned by a JQC from the following possible values: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. For each of the constructed-response questions, panelists recorded the score (0 through 6) that a JQC would most likely earn. The panelists practiced making their standard-setting judgments on the first constructed-response question in Part B.

Consistent with the standard-setting process used for Part A, the panelists engaged in two rounds of judgments for Part B. Following Round 1, question-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each question. The panelists participated in a general discussion of the results. Panelists were asked to share their rationales for the judgments they made. Following this discussion, panelists were provided an opportunity to change their question-level standard-setting judgments (Round 2).

### **Judgment of Content Specifications**

In addition to the two-round standard-setting process, the panel judged the importance of the knowledge and/or skills stated or implied in the assessment content specifications for the job of an entry-level elementary or special education teacher with regards to teaching reading. These judgments addressed the perceived content-based validity of the assessment. Judgments were made using a four-

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<sup>2</sup> If the two raters' scores differ by more than one point (non-adjacent), the Chief Reader for that question assigns the score, which is then doubled.

point Likert scale — *Very Important, Important, Slightly Important, and Not Important*. Each panelist independently judged the knowledge/skills statements.

## Results

### Expert Panels

The panel included 14 educators. In brief, 10 panelists were teachers, one was an administrator, and three were college faculty. All three of the panelists who were college faculty were currently involved in the training or preparation of elementary or special education teachers. Eleven panelists were White and three were African American. Eleven panelists were female. Thirteen panelists reported being certified elementary or special education teachers in Virginia. Approximately a third of panelists (5 of the 14 panelists or 36%) had between four and seven years of experience as an elementary or special education teacher, and another third of the panelists (5 of the 14 panelists or 36%) had 12 or more years of experience.

A fuller demographic description for the members of the panel is presented in Table 1. (See Figure 1 in the Appendix for a listing of panelists.)

**Table 1**

***Panel Member Demographics***

	N	Percent
<b>Current Position</b>		
Teacher	10	71%
Administrator/Department Head	1	7%
College Faculty	3	21%
<b>Race</b>		
White	11	79%
Black or African American	3	21%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	11	79%
Male	3	21%
<b>Are you currently certified as an elementary or special education teacher in Virginia?</b>		
Yes	13	93%
No	1	7%

**Table 1 (continued)****Panel Member Demographics**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Are you currently an elementary or special education teacher in Virginia?</b>		
Yes	10	71%
No	4	29%
<b>Are you currently supervising or mentoring other elementary or special education teachers?</b>		
Yes	6	43%
No	8	57%
<b>How many years of experience do you have as an elementary or special education teacher?</b>		
3 years or less	0	0%
4 - 7 years	5	36%
8 - 11 years	4	29%
12 - 15 years	4	29%
16 years or more	1	7%
<b>At what K-12 grade level are you currently teaching?</b>		
Elementary (K-5 or K-6)	7	50%
Middle School (6-8 or 7-9)	1	7%
Elementary and Middle School (9 - 12 or 10 - 12)	1	7%
High School (9-12 or 10-12)	0	0%
Middle and High School	1	7%
Other	1	7%
Not currently teaching at the K-12 level	3	21%
<b>Which best describes the location of your K-12 school?</b>		
Urban	3	21%
Suburban	4	29%
Rural	4	29%
Not currently teaching at the K-12 level	3	21%
<b>If you are college faculty, are you currently involved in the training/preparation of elementary or special education teachers?</b>		
Yes	3	21%
No	0	0%
Not college faculty	11	79%

## **Initial Evaluation Forms**

The panelists completed an initial evaluation after receiving training on how to make question-level judgments. The primary information collected from this form was the panelists indicating if they had received adequate training to make their standard-setting judgments and were ready to proceed. All panelists indicated that they were prepared to make their judgments.

## **Summary of Standard Setting Judgments**

A summary of each round of standard-setting judgments for Part A (multiple-choice questions), Part B (constructed-response questions), and the overall assessment is presented in Table 2. The numbers in the table reflect the recommended cut scores — the number of raw points needed to “pass” the part or assessment — of each panelist for the two rounds. For Part B, weighted cut scores are presented; for the overall assessment, the weighted cut scores (i.e., sum of Part A and the weighted Part B cut scores) are presented. Note that the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment reports a single, overall score and that the panel is recommending a single cut score for the combination of Parts A and B. The separate “cut scores” for the two parts are intermediate steps in calculating the overall cut score. The panel’s average recommended cut score and highest and lowest cut scores are reported, as are the standard deviations (SD) of panelists’ cut scores and the standard errors of judgment (SEJ). The SEJ is one way of estimating the reliability of the judgments<sup>3</sup>. It indicates how likely it would be for other panels of educators similar in make-up, experience, and standard-setting training to the current panels to recommend the same cut score on the same form of the assessment. A comparable panel’s cut score would be within 1 SEJ of the current average cut score 68 percent of the time.

The panel’s cut score recommendation for the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment is 66.68 (see Table 2). The value was rounded to 67 (out of 100 raw score points that could be earned on the assessment), the next highest whole number, to determine the functional recommended cut. The scaled score associated with 67 raw points is 163.

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<sup>3</sup> An SEJ assumes that panel members are randomly selected and that standard-setting judgments are independent. It is seldom the case that panel members are randomly sampled, and only the first round of judgments may be considered independent. The SEJ, therefore, likely underestimates the uncertainty of cut scores (Tannenbaum & Katz, forthcoming).

**Table 2****Cut Score Summary by Round of Judgments**

<b>Panelist</b>	<b>Round 1</b>			<b>Round 2</b>		
	<b>Part A</b>	<b>Part B (weighted)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Part A</b>	<b>Part B (weighted)</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	51.10	16.65	67.75	51.90	16.65	68.55
2	53.70	14.43	68.13	54.70	14.43	69.13
3	47.80	15.54	63.34	48.80	15.54	64.34
4	43.80	14.43	58.23	45.00	14.43	59.43
5	51.70	14.43	66.13	51.70	14.43	66.13
6	51.70	14.43	66.13	51.20	14.43	65.63
7	56.10	13.32	69.42	55.50	14.43	69.93
8	54.55	11.10	65.65	54.95	13.32	68.27
9	51.20	15.54	66.74	51.05	13.32	64.37
10	45.00	12.21	57.21	46.40	14.43	60.83
11	46.30	14.43	60.73	49.85	15.54	65.39
12	44.50	13.32	57.82	44.50	13.32	57.82
13	53.60	15.54	69.14	55.50	15.54	71.04
14	66.55	16.65	83.20	66.00	16.65	82.65
<b>Average</b>	51.26	14.43	65.69	51.93	14.75	66.68
<b>SD</b>	5.93	1.57	6.59	5.47	1.10	6.05
<b>SEJ</b>	1.58	0.42	1.76	1.46	0.30	1.62
<b>Highest</b>	66.55	16.65	83.20	66.00	16.65	82.65
<b>Lowest</b>	43.80	11.10	57.21	44.50	13.32	57.82

Table 3 presents the estimated standard errors of measurement (SEM) around the recommended cut score. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score. The scaled scores associated with 1 and 2 SEMs above and below the recommended cut scores are provided. The standard errors provided are an estimate, given that the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment has not yet been administered operationally.

**Table 3**

**Cut Scores within 1 and 2 SEMs of the Recommended Cut Score**

<b>Recommended Cut Score (SEM)</b>		<b>Scale Score Equivalent</b>
	67 (4.55)	163
- 2 SEMs	58	151
-1 SEM	63	157
+1 SEM	72	169
+ 2 SEMs	77	176

*Note.* Consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

**Summary of Content Specification Judgments.**

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment content specifications were important for entry-level elementary or special education teachers with regards to teaching reading. Panelists rated the 13 knowledge/skills statements on a four-point scale ranging from *Very Important* to *Not Important*. All of the knowledge statements were judged to be *Very Important* or *Important* by at least 93% of the panelists. The panelists' ratings are summarized in Table 4 (in Appendix).

**Summary of Final Evaluations.**

The panelists completed an evaluation form at the conclusion of their standard-setting study. The evaluation form asked the panelists to provide feedback about the quality of the standard-setting implementation. Table 5 (in Appendix) present the results of the final evaluations.

All panelists *strongly agreed* that they understood the purpose of the study and that the facilitator's instructions and explanations were clear. All panelists *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they were prepared to make their standard-setting judgments. All panelists *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that the standard-setting process was easy to follow with 13 of the 14 panelists indicating they *strongly agreed*.

All panelists reported that the definition of the JQC was at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their standard-setting judgments; 11 of the panelists indicated the definition was *very influential*. All the panelists reported that between-round discussions were at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their judgments.

All but one of the panelists indicated they were *very* or *somewhat comfortable* with their recommendation. The remaining panelist indicated being *somewhat uncomfortable* with their recommendation. Thirteen of the 14 panelist indicated that the recommend cut score was *about right*. The remaining panelist indicated the cut score was *too low*.

### **Summary**

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing passing score, or cut score, for RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level elementary or special education teachers with regards to teaching reading.

The recommended cut score is provided to help the VDOE determine an appropriate cut (or passing) score. For the RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306) assessment, the average recommended cut score is 67 out of 100 (on the raw score metric). The scaled score associated with a raw score of 67 is 163.

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level elementary or special education teachers with regards to teaching reading. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content of the assessment is important for beginning practice.

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# Appendix

**AGENDA**  
**Reading for Virginia Educators:**  
**Elementary and Special Education Teacher (0306)**  
**Standard-setting study**

February 28, 2011

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 8:00 – 8:30   | Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview of Workshop Events</li></ul>   |
| 8:30 – 8:45   | Overview of Standard Setting & Workshop Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome by the Virginia Department of Education</li></ul> |
| 8:45 – 9:10   | Overview of the RVE: Elementary & Special Education Teacher Assessment   |
| 9:10 – 9:15   | Break  |
| 9:15 – 11:30  | “Take” the RVE: Elementary & Special Education Teacher Assessment  |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | Discuss the RVE: Elementary & Special Education Teacher Assessment   |
| 12:00 – 12:45 | Lunch  |
| 12:45 – 3:00  | Define the Knowledge/Skills of a JQC   |
| 3:00 – 3:05   | Break  |
| 3:05 – 3:30   | Standard Setting Training for M-C Items  |
| 3:30 – 5:15   | Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Multiple-Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 1-60</li></ul>                          |
| 5:15 – 5:30   | Collect Materials; End of Day 1  |

**AGENDA**  
**Reading for Virginia Educators:**  
**Elementary and Special Education Teacher (0306)**  
**Standard-setting study**

March 1, 2011

8:30 – 8:45	Overview of Day 2
8:45 – 9:30	Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Multiple-Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 61-100</li></ul>
9:30 – 10:00	Standard Setting Training for CR Items
10:00 – 10:30	Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Constructed-Response
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:00	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Multiple-Choice
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:25	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Multiple-Choice (continued)
2:25 – 2:30	Break
2:30 – 3:00	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Constructed-Response
3:00 – 3:30	Specification Judgments
3:30 – 3:45	Feedback on Round 2 Recommended Cut Score
3:45 – 4:00	Complete Final Evaluation
4:00 – 4:15	Collect Materials; End of Study

**Description of a Just Qualified Candidate**  
**RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers (0306)**  
**(Developed for the Virginia Department of Education)**

**A JQC ...**

1. understands that assessments are used to evaluate literacy proficiency.
2. understands how to interpret assessment data to plan differentiated reading instruction.
3. understands the developmental process of oral language acquisition and applies appropriate instructional strategies to meet diverse student needs.
4. understands the development of phonological awareness and applies appropriate instructional strategies to meet diverse student needs.
5. identifies and promotes the development of early literacy skills and strategies.
6. understands and applies explicit, systematic phonics instruction.
7. understands the development of word analysis skills and vocabulary and demonstrates knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.
8. understands the development of reading fluency and comprehension and demonstrates knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.
9. understands and applies appropriate instructional strategies to promote comprehension and develops enjoyment and appreciation of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.
10. understands the developmental writing process and its relationship to reading and demonstrates knowledge of instructional strategies.
11. understands how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics through appropriate instructional strategies.
12. understands and applies reading and writing techniques and tools for inquiry and research

## Figure 1

### Panelists Names and Affiliations (RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Standard Setting Panel)

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#### Panelist

Kim Albert  
Mary Alice Barksdale  
Ann Chatos  
Victoria R. Clements  
Kristen H. Corboy  
Beth Cruse  
Kent Faulcon  
Phyllis D. Hairston  
Denise Johnson  
David W. Parrish  
Jillian Smith  
Evie Tindall  
Steven Warren  
Latosha Wright

#### Affiliation

Clays Mill Elementary School (Halifax County)  
Virginia Tech  
King William County Public Schools  
Stanleytown Elementary School (Henry County)  
Giles County Public Schools  
Harrisonburg City Public Schools  
Chesterfield County Public Schools  
Martinsville City Public Schools  
The College of William and Mary  
Pace East High School (Prince William County)  
Charlottesville City Public Schools  
Regent University  
Manchester Middle School (Chesterfield County)  
Frederick County Public Schools

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**Table 4****Specification Judgments (RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Very Important</b>		<b>Important</b>		<b>Slightly Important</b>		<b>Not Important</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching</b>								
• Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students' language proficiency and reading skills	10	71%	3	21%	1	7%	0	0%
• Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction	12	86%	2	14%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>II. Oral Language and Oral Communication</b>								
• Understands the development of oral language and oral communication skills	10	71%	4	29%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness	11	79%	3	21%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>III. Reading Development</b>								
• Understands how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles	11	79%	3	21%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction	7	50%	7	50%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development	9	64%	5	36%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understands the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension	10	71%	4	29%	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 4 (continued)****Specification Judgments (RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Very Important</b>		<b>Important</b>		<b>Slightly Important</b>		<b>Not Important</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
• Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry	9	64%	5	36%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction	10	71%	4	29%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>IV. Writing and Research</b>								
• Understand writing skills and processes	13	93%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics	10	71%	4	29%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research	5	36%	8	57%	1	7%	0	0%

**Table 5****Final Evaluation (RVE: Elementary and Special Education Teachers Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
• I understood the purpose of this study.	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
• The instructions and explanations provided by the facilitators were clear.	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
• The training in the standard setting method was adequate to give me the information I needed to complete my assignment.	13	93%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
• The explanation of how the recommended cut score is computed was clear.	11	79%	3	21%	0	0%	0	0%
• The opportunity for feedback and discussion between rounds was helpful.	13	93%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
• The process of making the standard setting judgments was easy to follow.	13	93%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 5 (continued)**

**Final Evaluation (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

<b>How influential was each of the following factors in guiding your standard setting judgments?</b>	<b>Very Influential</b>		<b>Somewhat Influential</b>		<b>Not Influential</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>		
• The definition of the JQC	11	79%	3	21%	0	0%		
• The between-round discussions	8	57%	6	43%	0	0%		
• The knowledge/skills required to answer each test question	12	86%	2	14%	0	0%		
• The cut scores of other panel members	1	7%	11	79%	2	14%		
• My own professional experience	12	86%	2	14%	0	0%		
	<b>Very Comfortable</b>		<b>Somewhat Comfortable</b>		<b>Somewhat Uncomfortable</b>		<b>Very Uncomfortable</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
• Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended cut scores?	10	71%	3	21%	1	7%	0	0%
	<b>Too Low</b>		<b>About Right</b>		<b>Too High</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>		
• Overall, the recommended cut score is:	1	7%	13	93%	0	0%		



2. the requirement of a reading instructional assessment for teachers of special education (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments), elementary prek-3, and elementary prek-6 no later than July 1, 2004. In addition, individuals seeking a reading specialist endorsement would be required to complete a reading instructional assessment no later than July 1, 2004.

In response to this resolution, the Virginia Department of Education contracted with National Evaluation Systems to develop the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) and Virginia Reading Assessment for Reading Specialists (VRA for Reading Specialists). Between July 1, 2004, and June 30, 2006, the VRA was required of all candidates applying for an initial license with endorsements in Early/Primary PreK-3, Elementary Education PreK-6, Special Education (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments) and individuals seeking an endorsement as a Reading Specialist. Also, as a result of the Board's action on July 27, 2005, institutions of higher education with preparation programs in teaching endorsement areas requiring the VRA were given another year to continue aligning their programs with required reading competencies.

At the July 27, 2005, meeting, the Board of Education approved cut scores for the Virginia Reading Assessments (VRA) for elementary and special education teachers (Emotional Disturbances, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Hearing Impairments, and Visual Impairments) and reading specialists. The Board approved a score of 235 for elementary and special education teachers and a score of 245 for reading specialists, effective July 1, 2006.

Based on Virginia's procurement regulations, from time to time contracts for certain tests must be opened for competitive solicitation and new contracts awarded. As a result of the solicitation, the Virginia Department of Education contracted with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) on July 20, 2010, to develop the following two new reading assessments that will become effective July 1, 2011.

**Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment**

This assessment will be required for Virginia teachers seeking an initial license with an endorsement in Elementary Education PK-3, Elementary Education PK-6, Special Education-General Curriculum, Special Education-Hearing Impairments, and Special Education-Visual Impairments and will replace the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) for Elementary and Special Education Teachers.

**Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment**

This assessment will be required for individuals seeking the reading specialist endorsement and will replace the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA) for Reading Specialists.

The Educational Testing Service worked with the Virginia Department of Education to assemble test development committees composed of Virginia teachers and higher education faculty involved in the preparation of reading teachers. These committees met in September 2010 to review the proposed test specifications and approve specific test items for the new assessments. ETS also conducted field tests of the two new assessments across Virginia in January and February 2011.

## Summary of Major Elements:

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist (0304) Assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level reading specialists.

The study involved an expert panel comprised of teachers, administrators and college faculty. The Department of Education recommended panelists with (a) reading specialist experience, either as reading specialists or college faculty who prepare reading specialists and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning reading specialists. A roster of participants is included in the Appendix of the attached report. The panel was convened on February 28 and March 1, 2011, in Richmond, Virginia.

The *RVE: Reading Specialist Test at a Glance* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. In brief, the assessment measures whether entry-level reading specialists have the content knowledge and skills believed necessary for competent professional practice. The specifications for the assessment were provided by the Virginia Department of Education and consistent with the current knowledge and skill content specified for licensure.

The three and one-half hour assessment is divided into two parts. Part A contains 100 multiple-choice questions covering *Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching* (approximately 18 questions), *Oral Language and Oral Communication* (approximately 12 questions), *Reading Development* (approximately 40 questions), *Writing and Research* (approximately 12 questions) and *Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills* (approximately 18 questions). Part B contains a constructed-response question and a case study covering the same five content areas as Part A. While the sections are not separately timed, suggested time limits of 120 minutes for Part A, 30 minutes for the constructed-response question, and 60 minutes for the case study are provided.

Candidate scores on the two parts are combined and reported as an overall score; six category scores – one for each content area covered in Part A and one for the combined constructed-response question and case study in Part B – also are reported. The constructed-response question and case study in Part B are weighted to contribute 25 percent of the total raw-score points. The maximum total number of raw points that may be earned on the assessment is 107, 80 points from Part A and 27 points from Part B. The reporting scales for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points.

The panel's cut score recommendation for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment is 70.13. The value was rounded to 71, the next highest whole number, to determine the functional recommended cut. The value of 71 represents approximately 66 percent of the total available 107 raw-score points that could be earned on the assessment. The scaled score associated with 71 raw points is 162 (on a 100 to 200 scale).

When reviewing the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) for the cut scores recommended by the Virginia Standard Setting Study, there is an overlap in the scaled scores. The SEM is a statistical phenomenon and is unrelated to the accuracy of scoring. All test results are subject to the standard error of measurement. If a test-taker were to take the same test repeatedly, with no change in his level of knowledge and preparation, it is possible that some of the resulting scores would be slightly higher or slightly lower than the score that precisely reflects the test taker's actual level of knowledge and ability.

The difference between a test-taker’s actual score and his highest or lowest hypothetical score is known as the standard error of measurement. The Standard Error of Measurement for the recommended cut scores for the Virginia Standard Setting Study is shown below. Note that consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

**Standard Error of Measure Summary**  
**Reading for Virginia Educators: Reading Specialist Assessment**  
**Cut Scores Within 1 and 2 SEMs of the Recommended Cut Score**

<b><u>Recommended Cut Score (SEM)</u></b>	<b><u>Scale Score Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Field Test Pass Rates</u></b>	
	71 (4.69)	162 (Panel Recommendation) (ABTEL Recommendation)	70%
-2 SEMs	62	151	79%
-1 SEM	67	158	75%
+1 SEM	76	169	55%
+2 SEMs	81	175	38%

*Note:* Consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

In addition to the results of the Standard Setting Study, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) also reviewed the results from the field test conducted by ETS. A total of 164 candidates participated in the field test for the RVE: Reading Specialist assessment conducted in January-February 2011. The percentage of field test candidates passing at the scale score equivalent is also shown above.

On March 21, 2011, ABTEL recommended that the Board of Education set a cut score of 162 for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure’s recommendation to adopt the cut score of 162 for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment.

**Impact on Resources:**

Costs associated with the administration of the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment will be incurred by the Educational Testing Service. Prospective elementary and special education teachers will be required to pay a fee for test administration and reporting results to the Virginia Department of Education.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon approval by the Board, school divisions and institutions of higher education will be notified of the cut score for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment.



*Listening. Learning. Leading.*

## Standard Setting Technical Report

# **READING FOR VIRGINIA EDUCATORS: READING SPECIALIST (0304)**

Prepared for the Virginia Department of Education

Educational and Credentialing Research

Educational Testing Service

Princeton, New Jersey

March 2011

## **Executive Summary**

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist (0304) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study on February 28 and March 1, 2011. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level reading specialists.

### **Recommended Cut Score**

The recommended cut score is provided to help the VDOE determine an appropriate cut (or passing) score. For the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment, the average recommended cut score is 71 (on the raw score metric), which represents 66% of total available 107 raw score points. The scaled score associated with a raw score of 71 is 162 (on a 100 to 200 scale).

### **Summary of Content Specification Judgments**

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level reading specialists. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content of the assessment is important for beginning practice.

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level reading specialists.

The study involved an expert panel, comprised of teachers, administrators and college faculty. The VDOE recommended panelists with (a) reading specialist experience, either as reading specialists or college faculty who prepare reading specialists and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning reading specialists.

The panel was convened on February 28 and March 1, 2011, in Richmond, Virginia. The following technical report is divided into three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the assessment. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods used. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

The passing score recommendation for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment is provided to the VDOE. The VDOE is responsible for establishing the final passing score in accordance with applicable state regulations. The study provides a recommended passing score, which represents the combined judgments of one group of experienced educators. The full range of the VDOE's needs and expectations could not be represented during the standard-setting study. The VDOE, therefore, may want to consider both the panel's recommended cut score and other sources of information when setting the final RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) cut score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). The VDOE may accept the recommended cut score, adjust it upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust it downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the VDOE's needs.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the cut score are the standard error of measurement (SEM) and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) scores and the latter the reliability of panelists' cut score recommendations. The SEM allows the VDOE to recognize that a RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) score—any test score on any test—is less than perfectly reliable. A test score only approximates what a candidate *truly* knows or *truly* can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close

of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allows the VDOE to consider the likelihood that the recommended cut score from the current panel would be similar to cut scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ, the more likely that another panel would recommend a cut score consistent with the recommended cut score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended cut score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), the VDOE should consider the likelihood of classification error. That is, when adjusting a cut score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false positive decision or to minimize a false negative decision. A false positive decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests he should receive a license/certificate, but his actual knowledge/skill level is lower (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false negative occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that she should not receive a license/certificate, but she actually does possess the required knowledge/skills. The VDOE needs to consider which decision error to minimize; it is not possible to eliminate both types of decision errors simultaneously.

### **Overview of the RVE: Reading Specialist Assessment**

The *RVE: Reading Specialist Test at a Glance* document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. In brief, the assessment measures whether entry-level reading specialists have the content knowledge and skills believed necessary for competent professional practice. The specifications for the assessment were provided by the Virginia Department of Education and consistent with the current knowledge and skill content specified for licensure.

The three and one-half hour assessment is divided into two parts. Part A contains 100 multiple-choice questions covering *Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching* (approximately 18 questions), *Oral Language and Oral Communication* (approximately 12 questions), *Reading Development* (approximately 40 questions), *Writing and Research* (approximately 12 questions) and *Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills* (approximately 18 questions)<sup>1</sup>. Part B contains a constructed-response question and a case study covering the same five content areas as Part A. While the sections are not

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<sup>1</sup> The number of questions for each content area may vary slightly from form to form of the assessment.

separately timed, suggested time limits of 120 minutes for Part A, 30 minutes for the constructed-response question, and 60 minutes for the case study are provided.

Candidate scores on the two parts are combined and reported as an overall score; six category scores – one for each content area covered in Part A and one for the combined constructed-response question and case study in Part B – also are reported. The constructed-response question and case study in Part B are weighted to contribute 25% of the total raw-score points<sup>2</sup>. The maximum total number of raw points that may be earned on the assessment is 107, 80 points from Part A and 27 points from Part B. The reporting scales for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points.

### **Processes and Methods**

The following section describes the processes and methods used to train panelists, gather panelists' judgments and to calculate the recommended passing score, or cut score. (The agenda for the panel meeting is presented in the Appendix.)

The panelists were sent an e-mail explaining the purpose of the standard-setting study and requesting that they review the test content specifications for the assessment (included in the *Test at a Glance* document, which was attached to the e-mail). The purpose of the review was to familiarize the panelists with the general structure and content of the assessment.

The standard-setting study began with a welcome and introduction by James Lanham, from the VDOE. The ETS facilitator, Clyde Reese, then explained how the assessment was developed, provided an overview of standard setting, and presented the agenda for the study.

### **Reviewing the Assessment**

The first activity was for the panelists to “take the test.” (Each panelist had signed a nondisclosure form.) The panelists were given approximately two hours to respond to the multiple-choice questions and to sketch responses to the constructed-response question and case study. (Panelists were instructed not to refer to the answer key for the multiple-choice questions while taking the test.) The purpose of “taking the test” was for the panelists to become familiar with the test format, content,

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<sup>2</sup> The constructed-response question is weighted by a factor of 1.8 (maximum score of 10.8) and the case study is weighted by a factor 2.7 (maximum score of 16.2).

and difficulty. After “taking the test,” the panelists checked their responses against the answer key for the multiple-choice questions and the scoring rubric for the constructed-response question and case study.

The panelists then engaged in a discussion of the major content areas being addressed by the assessment; they were also asked to remark on any content areas that they thought would be particularly challenging for entering reading specialists, and areas that addressed content that would be particularly important for entering reading specialists.

### **Defining the Just Qualified Candidate**

Following the review of the assessment, panelists internalized the definition of the Just Qualified Candidate (JQC). The JQC is the test taker who has the minimum level of knowledge and/or skills believed necessary to be a qualified reading specialist. The JQC definition is the operational definition of the cut score. The goal of the standard-setting process is to identify the test score that aligns with this definition of the JQC.

The panelists were split into smaller groups, and each group was asked to write down their definition of a JQC. Each group referred to *RVE: Reading Specialist Test at a Glance* to guide their definition. Each group posted its definition on chart paper, and a full-panel discussion occurred to reach consensus on a final definition (see the consensus JQC definition in the Appendix).

### **Panelists’ Judgments**

The standard-setting process for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment was conducted for the overall test, though one standard-setting approach was implemented for Part A (multiple-choice questions) and another approach was implemented for Part B (constructed-response question and case study). The panel’s passing score for the assessment is the sum of the interim cut scores recommended by the panelists for each section. As with scoring and reporting, the panelists’ judgments for Part B, the constructed-response question and case study, were weighted such that Part B contributed 25% of the overall score.

**Standard Setting for Part A (multiple-choice questions).** A probability-based Angoff method (Brandon, 2004; Hambleton & Pitoniak, 2006) was used for Part A (multiple-choice questions). In this approach, for each question, a panelist decides on the likelihood (probability or chance) that a JQC

would answer it correctly. Panelists made their judgments using the following rating scale: 0, .05, .10, .20, .30, .40, .50, .60, .70, .80, .90, .95, 1. The lower the value, the less likely it is that a JQC would answer the question correctly, because the question is difficult for the JQC. The higher the value, the more likely it is that a JQC would answer the question correctly.

For each panel, the panelists were asked to approach the judgment process in two stages. First, they reviewed the definition of the JQC and the question and decided if, overall, the question was difficult for the JQC, easy for the JQC, or moderately difficult/easy. The facilitator encouraged the panelists to consider the following rule of thumb to guide their decision:

- difficult questions for a JQC were in the 0 to .30 range;
- moderately difficult/easy questions for a JQC were in the .40 to .60 range; and
- easy questions for a JQC were in the .70 to 1 range.

The second decision was for panelists to decide how they wanted to refine their judgment within the range. For example, if a panelist thought that a question was easy for a JQC, the initial decision located the question in the .70 to 1 range. The second decision was for the panelist to decide if the likelihood of answering it correctly was .70, .80, .90, .95, or 1.0. The two-stage decision-process was implemented to reduce the cognitive load placed on the panelists. The panelists practiced making their standard-setting judgments on five questions on the assessment.

The panelists engaged in two rounds of judgments. Following Round 1, question-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each question. The panelists' judgments were summarized by the three general difficulty levels (0 to .30, .40 to .60, and .70 to 1), and the panel's average question judgment was provided. Questions were highlighted to show when panelists converged in their judgments (at least two-thirds of the panelists located a question in the same difficulty range) or diverged in their judgments. Panelists were asked to share their rationales for the judgments they made. Following this discussion, panelists were provided an opportunity to change their question-level standard-setting judgments (Round 2).

**Standard Setting for Part B (constructed-response question and case study).** An Extended Angoff method (Cizek & Bunch, 2007; Hambleton & Plake, 1995) was used for Part B (constructed-response question and case study). In this approach, for each question, a panelist decides on the assigned score value that would most likely be earned by a JQC. The basic process that each panelist followed

was first to review the definition of the JQC and then to review the question and the rubric for that question. The rubric for a question defines holistically the quality of the evidence that would merit a response earning a score of 3, 2, 1, or 0. During this review, each panelist independently considered the level of knowledge and/or skill required to respond to the question and the features of a response that would earn 3, 2, 1, or 0 points, as defined by the rubric.

A test taker's response to a constructed-response question is independently scored by two raters, and the sum of the raters' scores is the assigned score<sup>3</sup>; possible scores, therefore, range from zero (both raters assigned a score of zero) to six (both raters assigned a score of three). Each panelist decided on the score most likely to be earned by a JQC from the following possible values: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. For the constructed-response question and case study, panelists recorded the score (0 through 6) that a JQC would most likely earn. The panelists practiced making their standard-setting judgments on the constructed-response question in Part B.

Consistent with the standard-setting process used for Part A, the panelists engaged in two rounds of judgments for Part B. Following Round 1, question-level feedback was provided to the panel. The panelists' judgments were displayed for each question. The panelists participated in a general discussion of the results. Panelists were asked to share their rationales for the judgments they made. Following this discussion, panelists were provided an opportunity to change their question-level standard-setting judgments (Round 2).

### **Judgment of Content Specifications**

In addition to the two-round standard-setting process, the panel judged the importance of the knowledge and/or skills stated or implied in the assessment content specifications for the job of an entry-level reading specialist. These judgments addressed the perceived content-based validity of the assessment. Judgments were made using a four-point Likert scale — *Very Important*, *Important*, *Slightly Important*, and *Not Important*. Each panelist independently judged the knowledge/skills statements.

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<sup>3</sup> If the two raters' scores differ by more than one point (non-adjacent), the Chief Reader for that question assigns the score, which is then doubled.

## Results

### Expert Panel

The panel included 16 educators. In brief, 11 panelists were reading specialists<sup>4</sup>, one was an administrator, three were college faculty, and one was a instructional coach. All three of the panelists who were college faculty were currently involved in the training or preparation of reading specialists. Twelve panelists were White, three were African American, and one indicated “other.” Fourteen panelists were female. Fourteen panelists reported being certified reading specialists in Virginia. The majority of panelists (11 of the 16 panelists or 69%) had 11 or fewer years of experience as a reading specialist, and the remainin panelsists (5 of the 16 panelists or 31%) had 16 or more years of experience.

A fuller demographic description for the members of the panel is presented in Table 1. (See Figure 1 in the Appendix for a listing of panelists.)

**Table 1**

***Panel Member Demographics***

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Current Position</b>		
Reading Specialist	11	69%
Administrator/Department Head	1	6%
College Faculty	3	19%
Instructional Coach	1	6%
<b>Race</b>		
White	12	75%
Black or African American	3	19%
Other	1	6%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	14	88%
Male	2	12%
<b>Are you currently certified as a reading specialist in Virginia?</b>		
Yes	14	88%
No	2	12%

<sup>4</sup> All but one of the 11 panelists who reported their current position as “reading specialist” also reported currently working at the elementary school level. While the reading specialist endorsement in Virginia is K-12, the VDOE indicated that the overwhelming majority of reading specialists work in elementary school settings; therefore, the composition of the panel is representative.

**Table 1 (continued)****Panel Member Demographics**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Are you currently a reading specialist in Virginia?</b>		
Yes	13	81%
No	3	19%
<b>Are you currently supervising or mentoring other reading specialists?</b>		
Yes	9	56%
No	7	44%
<b>How many years of experience do you have as a reading specialist?</b>		
3 years or less	1	6%
4 - 7 years	6	38%
8 - 11 years	4	25%
12 - 15 years	0	0%
16 years or more	5	31%
<b>At what K-12 grade level are you currently working as a reading specialist?</b>		
Elementary (K-5 or K-6)	11	69%
Middle School (6-8 or 7-9)	0	0%
Elementary and Middle School (9 - 12 or 10 - 12)	1	6%
Not currently teaching at the K-12 level	4	25%
<b>Which best describes the location of your K-12 school?</b>		
Urban	4	25%
Suburban	5	31%
Rural	4	25%
Not currently teaching at the K-12 level	3	19%
<b>If you are college faculty, are you currently involved in the training/preparation of reading specialists?</b>		
Yes	3	19%
No	0	0%
Not college faculty	13	81%

**Initial Evaluation Forms**

The panelists completed an initial evaluation after receiving training on how to make question-level judgments. The primary information collected from this form was the panelists indicating if they

had received adequate training to make their standard-setting judgments and were ready to proceed. All panelists indicated that they were prepared to make their judgments.

### **Summary of Standard Setting Judgments**

A summary of each round of standard-setting judgments for Part A (multiple-choice questions), Part B (constructed-response questions), and the overall assessment is presented in Table 2. The numbers in the table reflect the recommended cut scores — the number of raw points needed to “pass” the part or assessment — of each panelist for the two rounds. For Part B, weighted cut scores are presented; for the overall assessment, the weighted cut scores (i.e., sum of Part A and the weighted Part B cut scores) are presented. Note that the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment reports a single, overall score and that the panel is recommending a single cut score for the combination of Parts A and B. The separate “cut scores” for the two parts are intermediate steps in calculating the overall cut score. The panel’s average recommended cut score and highest and lowest cut scores are reported, as are the standard deviations (SD) of panelists’ cut scores and the standard errors of judgment (SEJ). The SEJ is one way of estimating the reliability of the judgments<sup>5</sup>. It indicates how likely it would be for other panels of educators similar in make-up, experience, and standard-setting training to the current panels to recommend the same cut score on the same form of the assessment. A comparable panel’s cut score would be within 1 SEJ of the current average cut score 68 percent of the time.

The panel’s cut score recommendation for the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment is 70.13 (see Table 2). The value was rounded to 71, the next highest whole number, to determine the functional recommended cut. The value of 71 represents approximately 66% of the total available 107 raw-score points that could be earned on the assessment. The scaled score associated with 71 raw points is 162 (on a 100 to 200 scale).

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<sup>5</sup> An SEJ assumes that panel members are randomly selected and that standard-setting judgments are independent. It is seldom the case that panel members are randomly sampled, and only the first round of judgments may be considered independent. The SEJ, therefore, likely underestimates the uncertainty of cut scores (Tannenbaum & Katz, forthcoming).

**Table 2****Cut Score Summary by Round of Judgments**

<b>Panelist</b>	<b>Round 1</b>			<b>Round 2</b>		
	<b>Part A</b>	<b>Part B (weighted)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Part A</b>	<b>Part B (weighted)</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	43.50	13.50	57.00	45.35	16.20	61.55
2	55.25	18.00	73.25	55.15	18.00	73.15
3	29.50	13.50	43.00	32.75	16.20	48.95
4	54.00	18.90	72.90	55.20	16.20	71.40
5	62.35	19.80	82.15	61.10	19.80	80.90
6	48.65	15.30	63.95	49.65	15.30	64.95
7	56.65	13.50	70.15	57.15	13.50	70.65
8	50.75	18.00	68.75	50.55	18.00	68.55
9	53.30	18.00	71.30	54.00	18.00	72.00
10	57.75	15.30	73.05	57.85	15.30	73.15
11	54.95	15.30	70.25	55.50	18.00	73.50
12	45.10	15.30	60.40	46.65	15.30	61.95
13	58.70	18.00	76.70	59.05	18.00	77.05
14	55.35	17.10	72.45	54.95	17.10	72.05
15	61.65	15.30	76.95	60.95	18.00	78.95
16	54.20	15.30	69.50	55.40	18.00	73.40
<b>Average</b>	52.60	16.26	68.86	53.20	16.93	70.13
<b>SD</b>	8.06	2.01	9.25	7.11	1.58	7.79
<b>SEJ</b>	2.01	0.50	2.31	1.78	0.40	1.95
<b>Highest</b>	62.35	19.80	82.15	61.10	19.80	80.90
<b>Lowest</b>	29.50	13.50	43.00	32.75	13.50	48.95

Table 3 presents the estimated standard errors of measurement (SEM) around the recommended cut score. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score. The scaled scores associated with 1 and 2 SEMs above and below the recommended cut scores are provided. The standard errors provided are an estimate, given that the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment has not yet been administered operationally.

**Table 3**

**Cut Scores within 1 and 2 SEMs of the Recommended Cut Score**

<b>Recommended Cut Score (SEM)</b>		<b>Scale Score Equivalent</b>
	71 (4.69)	162
- 2 SEMs	62	151
-1 SEM	67	158
+1 SEM	76	169
+ 2 SEMs	81	175

*Note.* Consistent with the recommended cut score, the cut scores at the different SEMs have been rounded to the next highest whole number.

**Summary of Content Specification Judgments.**

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment content specifications were important for entry-level reading specialists. Panelists rated the 18 knowledge/skills statements on a four-point scale ranging from *Very Important* to *Not Important*. All of the knowledge statements were judged to be *Very Important* or *Important* by at least 80% of the panelists. The panelists' ratings are summarized in Table 4 (in Appendix).

**Summary of Final Evaluations.**

The panelists completed an evaluation form at the conclusion of their standard-setting study. The evaluation form asked the panelists to provide feedback about the quality of the standard-setting implementation. Table 5 (in Appendix) present the results of the final evaluations.

All panelists *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they understood the purpose of the study and that the facilitator's instructions and explanations were clear with all but one of the panelists indicating they *strongly agreed*. All panelists *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they were prepared to make their standard-setting judgments. All the panelists *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that the standard-setting process was easy to follow.

The majority of panelists (14 of 16 or 88%) reported that the definition of the JQC was *very influential* in guiding their standard-setting judgments; all reported that it was at least *somewhat influential*. All the panelists reported that between-round discussions were at least *somewhat influential* in guiding their judgments.

All of the panelists indicated they were *very* or *somewhat comfortable* with their recommendation. Approximately 80% of the panelists indicated that the recommend cut score was *about right* (13 of the 16 panelists). The remaining panelists indicated the cut score was *too low*.

### **Summary**

To support the decision-making process for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) with regards to establishing passing score, or cut score, for RVE: Reading Specialist (0304) assessment, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level reading specialists.

The recommended cut score is provided to help the VDOE determine an appropriate cut (or passing) score. For RVE: Reading Specialist (0304), the average recommended cut score is 71 (on the raw score metric), which represents 66% of total available 107 raw score points. The scaled score associated with a raw score of 71 is 162.

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level reading specialist. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content of the assessment is important for beginning practice.

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# Appendix

# AGENDA

## Reading for Virginia Educators: Reading Specialist (0304) Standard-setting study

February 28, 2011

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 8:00 – 8:30   | Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome by the Virginia Department of Education</li><li>• Overview of Workshop Events</li></ul> |
| 8:30 – 8:45   | Overview of Standard Setting & Workshop Events   |
| 8:45 – 9:10   | Overview of the RVE: Reading Specialist Assessment   |
| 9:10 – 9:15   | Break  |
| 9:15 – 11:30  | “Take” the RVE Reading Specialist Assessment   |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | Discuss the RVE Reading Specialist Assessment  |
| 12:00 – 12:45 | Lunch  |
| 12:45 – 3:00  | Define the Knowledge/Skills of a JQC   |
| 3:00 – 3:05   | Break  |
| 3:05 – 3:30   | Standard Setting Training for M-C Items  |
| 3:30 – 5:15   | Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Multiple-Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 1-60</li></ul>  |
| 5:15 – 5:30   | Collect Materials; End of Day 1  |

# AGENDA

## Reading for Virginia Educators: Reading Specialist (0304) Standard-setting study

March 1, 2011

9:00 – 9:15	Overview of Day 2
9:15 – 10:00	Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Multiple-Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 61-100</li></ul>
10:00 – 10:30	Standard Setting Training for CR Items
10:30 – 11:00	Round 1 Standard Setting Judgments for Constructed-Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tasks A and B</li></ul>
11:00 – 11:15	Break
11:15 – 12:00	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Multiple-Choice
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:55	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Multiple-Choice (continued)
2:55 – 3:00	Break
3:00 – 3:30	Round 1 Feedback & Round 2 Judgments for Constructed-Response
3:30 – 4:00	Specification Judgments
4:00 – 4:15	Feedback on Round 2 Recommended Cut Score
4:15 – 4:30	Complete Final Evaluation
4:30 – 4:45	Collect Materials; End of Day 2

**Description of a Just Qualified Candidate**  
**RVE: Reading Specialist (0304)**  
**(Developed for the Virginia Department of Education)**

**A JQC ...**

1. knows the characteristics of types of tests (e.g., diagnostic, formative, summative, screening) and understands “common” reading assessments (e.g., sight words, fluency, comprehension, running record)
2. knows how to interpret data to determine strengths and weaknesses in order to plan appropriate instruction for groups and individuals
3. understands the development of oral language and communication skills as it relates to reading and knows a variety of instructional strategies to support oral language and communication skills development for all students
4. understands the concepts of phonological awareness and its relationship to beginning reading, and knows instructional strategies to promote phonemic awareness
5. understands concepts of print and basic phonetic principles as they relate to reading development and knows a variety of instructional strategies to promote student application of concepts of print and phonetic principles
6. understands explicit, systematic phonics instruction and its direct correlation to reading development, and knows a variety of strategies to promote reading development at all ages
7. understands word analysis skills (e.g., word referents, meaning clues) and knows a variety of instructional strategies to enhance vocabulary knowledge to promote reading comprehension
8. understands the role of automatic word recognition (automaticity) and fluency and knows a variety of instructional strategies to promote fluency and comprehension
9. understands reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry including text structures and features, and knows a variety of instructional strategies for before, during, and after reading
10. understands reading comprehension strategies for informational text including text structures and features, and knows a variety of instructional strategies for before, during, and after reading
11. knows how to select a wide variety of fiction and nonfiction literature at identified reading instructional levels for all students
12. understands writing skills and processes and knows instructional strategies for promoting students’ writing development
13. understands the steps in the development of writing as a process
14. knows how to promote students’ knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics and knows instructional strategies to promote student understanding of spelling, usage, and writing mechanics
15. understands writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research (e.g., reference materials, media) and knows instructional strategies to promote student understanding of writing and research
16. knows specialized knowledge and skills required to perform the role of a reading specialist (i.e., student assessment, remediation, resource to teachers)
17. knows the leadership role of the reading specialist in organizing and supervising reading programs and promoting staff development
18. knows strategies for communicating and collaborating with all members of the educational community to address the reading program

**Figure 1**

**Panelists Names and Affiliations (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

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**Panelist**

Terri Bredamus  
Frieda E. Cason  
Karen Fabrie  
Stacey M. Goode  
Kindel Holloman  
William I. Jones  
Gayle R. Kelley  
Kathie Carwile Morgan  
Dawn M. Plum  
Kenneth Schmidt  
Vickie K. Sessoms  
Christi Stapleton  
Susan Thompson  
Katherine Wiesendanger  
Carol Williams  
Joyce Winfield-Reeves

**Affiliation**

Henry County Schools  
Mack Benn, Jr. Elementary School (Suffolk)  
Roanoke County Public Schools  
Norfolk Public Schools  
Norfolk Public Schools  
Washington County Public Schools  
Arlington Public Schools  
Liberty University  
Henrico County Public Schools  
Magruder Elementary School (York County)  
Sealston Elementary School (King George County)  
Scott County Public Schools  
Lynchburg College  
Longwood University  
Venable Elementary School (Charlottesville)  
Clays Mills Elementary School (Halifax County)

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**Table 4****Specification Judgments (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

	Very Important		Important		Slightly Important		Not Important		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>I. Assessment and Diagnostic Teaching</b>									
• Understand the characteristics and uses of assessment and screening measures for evaluating students' language proficiency and reading skills	12	75%	4	25%	0	0%	0	0%	
• Understand the use of assessment data to plan reading instruction	15	94%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%	
<b>II. Oral Language and Oral Communication</b>									
• Understands the development of oral language and oral communication skills	5	31%	8	50%	3	19%	0	0%	
• Understand the development of phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness	13	81%	3	19%	0	0%	0	0%	
<b>III. Reading Development</b>									
• Understands how to promote students' understanding of concepts of print and basic phonetic principles	12	75%	4	25%	0	0%	0	0%	
• Understand explicit, systematic phonics instruction	9	56%	6	38%	1	6%	0	0%	
• Understand word-analysis skills and vocabulary development	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%	
• Understands the development of reading fluency and reading comprehension	12	75%	4	25%	0	0%	0	0%	
• Understand reading comprehension strategies for fiction and poetry	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%	
• Understand reading comprehension strategies for nonfiction	11	69%	5	31%	0	0%	0	0%	

**Table 4 (continued)**

**Specification Judgments (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Very Important</b>		<b>Important</b>		<b>Slightly Important</b>		<b>Not Important</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>IV. Writing and Research</b>								
• Understand writing skills and processes	8	50%	7	44%	1	6%	0	0%
• Understand how to promote students' knowledge of correct spelling, usage, and other writing mechanics	8	50%	6	38%	2	13%	0	0%
• Understand writing and reading as tools for inquiry and research	4	25%	11	69%	1	6%	0	0%
<b>V. Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills</b>								
• Understand specialized knowledge and skills required to perform the role of a reading specialist	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%
• Understand leadership roles of the reading specialist in organizing and supervising reading programs and promoting staff development	8	50%	7	44%	1	6%	0	0%
• Understand strategies for communicating and collaborating with all members of the educational community to address the goals of the reading program	6	38%	8	50%	2	13%	0	0%

**Table 4 (continued)**

**Specification Judgments (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Very Important</b>		<b>Important</b>		<b>Slightly Important</b>		<b>Not Important</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>VI. Analysis of Specialized Knowledge and Leadership Skills</b>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate will apply knowledge of the elements of reading, reading instruction, and leadership skills to prepare an organized written response to a constructed-response question.</li> </ul>	5	31%	10	63%	1	6%	0	0%
<b>VII. Integrated Knowledge and Understanding</b>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The candidate will apply knowledge of reading assessment and instruction to prepare an organized written response to a case study of an elementary school student.</li> </ul>	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 5****Final Evaluation (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
• I understood the purpose of this study.	14	88%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%
• The instructions and explanations provided by the facilitators were clear.	14	88%	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%
• The training in the standard setting method was adequate to give me the information I needed to complete my assignment.	15	94%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%
• The explanation of how the recommended cut score is computed was clear.	15	94%	1	6%	0	0%	0	0%
• The opportunity for feedback and discussion between rounds was helpful.	13	81%	3	19%	0	0%	0	0%
• The process of making the standard setting judgments was easy to follow.	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%

**Table 5 (continued)**

**Final Evaluation (RVE: Reading Specialist Standard Setting Panel)**

<b>How influential was each of the following factors in guiding your standard setting judgments?</b>	<b>Very Influential</b>		<b>Somewhat Influential</b>		<b>Not Influential</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>		
• The definition of the JQC	14	88%	2	13%	0	0%		
• The between-round discussions	8	50%	8	50%	0	0%		
• The knowledge/skills required to answer each test question	14	88%	2	13%	0	0%		
• The cut scores of other panel members	2	13%	10	63%	4	25%		
• My own professional experience	13	81%	2	13%	1	6%		
	<b>Very Comfortable</b>		<b>Somewhat Comfortable</b>		<b>Somewhat Uncomfortable</b>		<b>Very Uncomfortable</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
• Overall, how comfortable are you with the panel's recommended cut score?	10	63%	6	38%	0	0%	0	0%
	<b>Too Low</b>		<b>About Right</b>		<b>Too High</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>		
• Overall, the recommended cut score is:	3	19%	13	81%	0	0%		

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: May 19, 2011

Topic: Final Review of the Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016

Presenter: Mrs. Anne D. Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications

Telephone Number: (804) 225-2403

E-Mail Address: [Anne.Wescott@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Anne.Wescott@doe.virginia.gov)

## Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by

State or federal law or regulation

Board of Education regulation

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

Action requested at this meeting  Action requested at future meeting:

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action:

Date: September 23, 2010: First Review of Draft Document; November 17, 2010: Board of Education Work Session; April 27, 2011: Board planning session

Action: First review, followed by work session

## Background Information: The *Code of Virginia* requires the following:

§ [22.1-253.13:6](#). Standard 6. Planning and public involvement.

A. The Board of Education shall adopt a statewide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan based on data collection, analysis, and evaluation. Such plan shall be developed with statewide participation. The Board shall review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. . . .

This plan shall include the objectives of public education in Virginia, including strategies for improving student achievement then maintaining high levels of student achievement; an assessment of the extent to which these objectives are being achieved; a forecast of enrollment changes; and an assessment of the needs of public education in the Commonwealth. . . . The Board shall also develop, consistent with, or as a part of, its comprehensive plan, a detailed comprehensive, long-range plan to integrate educational technology into the Standards of Learning and the curricula of the public schools in Virginia, including career and technical education programs. The Board shall review and approve the comprehensive plan for educational technology and may require the revision of such plan as it deems necessary. . . .

The Board of Education's *Comprehensive Plan: 2007-2012* was adopted in 2007 and is currently in effect. The *Code* requires that the plan be reviewed and revised as needed every two years. The Board reviewed the current plan in 2009, with the understanding that the Board would do a more detailed review in 2010.

The plan for 2007-2012 described the Board's goals and strategies to be put in place to accomplish the goals as set forth in the document. In addition to detailing the Board of Education's goals for public education in Virginia, the plan contained timelines and activities related to implementing the various components of the goals. Following the plan's adoption in 2007, the activities and strategies associated with the goals have been completed or are now substantially underway.

An initial draft of the *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016* was presented to the Board at its meeting on September 23, 2010. At that time, the Board discussed topics that it wished to see added to the draft plan. Extensive additions and changes were made to the draft document following the September 23<sup>rd</sup> session.

The draft plan, as revised, was broadly distributed for public comment. Two written comments were received. One comment suggested that the Board include in its description of its goals a statement about the relevance and importance of international comparisons of achievement data. The second comment suggested additional emphasis be placed on teacher recruitment and retention, the addition of more demographic data on the teaching force and retention student rates, and urged the continued work to include all types of diplomas in the graduation rate calculations. Following public comment, additional revisions were made to the text.

On November 17, 2010, the Board held a work session in which the contents of the plan were discussed at length. The Board agreed on a number of additions and changes it wished to have reflected in the text of its plan. Those additions and changes were incorporated into the text of the plan, which was then reviewed again on April 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Board of Education's planning session.

**Summary of Major Elements:** Attached is the revised *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016*. The revised draft contains the changes and additions requested by the Board during its previous discussions. The major revisions are summarized below. Additional revisions suggested by Department of Education staff are shown in highlights in the attached document. These additional revisions reflect the latest information, actions, and data available.

Taken as a whole and compared to the plan for 2007-2012, the *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016* contains the following major revisions:

- Goal 1 has been clarified and stated as two sentences.
- Goal 2 and the text in several sections have been modified to incorporate a reference to the new longitudinal data system, which provides improved ways for schools to report closing the achievement gap. Additional text recognizes the importance of national and international assessments in gauging student progress.

- Goal 3 has been adjusted slightly to reflect the Board’s role in supporting and collaborating through partnerships to improve pre-K programs and services.
- Goal 5 and other sections of text have been significantly modified to address the Board’s concern that the statement, in its proposed form, was unclear. The goal and text have been revised for clarity and to emphasize highly qualified and effective teachers and staff for every classroom and every school, especially in teacher shortage areas and hard-to-staff school systems. The revised goal and text acknowledge the importance of strong professional development and extensive partnerships currently underway and in development with the public schools and the higher education community across the state.
- Goal 7 has been revised to simplify and clarify the statement. Text has been added to reflect the Board’s concern to address issues related to bullying and cyberbullying and to provide guidelines in the area of safe electronic communications between students and school personnel.
- The section on future challenges has been expanded to include recognition of the role of the Virginia Department of Education staff in supporting the Board of Education’s work and priorities for action. The revised language acknowledges the potential for adverse impact of hard economic times on the staffing at the state level as well as the local level.
- Demographic data on Virginia’s teachers and administrators have been added.
- Recognition of the Board’s concern for recruitment and retention of minority teachers in the work force has been added.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:** The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education make any additional changes, as agreed to by the Board, and adopt the *Comprehensive Plan 2011-2016*, with the understanding that department staff will make any additional technical and editorial adjustments as may be necessary.

**Impact on Resources:** Any costs associated with the development and dissemination of the document will be provided by Department of Education funds according to state procurement policies and procedures.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Following the final adoption of the comprehensive plan, it will be posted on the Board of Education’s Web page.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 2011-2016**



***DISCUSSION DRAFT***

*November 2010*

**ADDITIONAL REVISIONS NOT YET REVIEWED BY THE BOARD**

**May 19, 2011**

***(shown in highlights)***

**Board of Education  
Commonwealth of Virginia**

**Adopted  
(DATE)**

**Members of the Board of Education  
As of May 19, 2011**

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# BOARD OF EDUCATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 2011-2016

## *Executive Summary*

### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

The Board of Education's *Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016* updates the goals set forth in the Board's previous plan, which covered the years 2007-2012. Building upon the previous plan, the two-year update reflected in this document provides the framework for resources and policy development to continue Virginia's forward momentum in student achievement.

### **Board of Education's Mission: Ensuring Rigorous and High Quality Learning Standards**

Virginia's young people are the hope of a bright future not only for themselves and their families, but for the state, the nation, and the rapidly expanding global economy. Current economic conditions remind us more than ever that the key to economic recovery is education.

Within that context, the Board of Education's mission is to set education policies that support the life-long academic and career achievement of all students by establishing high standards and expectations for learning, utilizing evidence and research, measuring and effectively analyzing systemwide performance, as well as ensuring transparency and accountability to parents and the public.

The Board of Education's vision and mission statements and goals for public education provide the framework for a world-class statewide system of public schools. The statements are forward-looking and acknowledge the programs and services provided by Virginia's public schools to meet the increasingly diverse needs of students who will live, compete, and work in an expanding and complex global, high- tech economy.

The goals, strategies, and performance measures within this document describe how the Board of Education intends to accomplish its mission.

### **Gauging Student Achievement**

The standards and the accountability set by the Board of Education provide benchmarks to gauge the academic achievement of Virginia's students compared to their peers across the state, the nation, and internationally.

### **Goals for Public Education: 2011-2016**

**Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn:** The Board of Education will continue to improve the standards for public schools in Virginia in order to expand learning opportunities needed for Virginia's public schools. Our schools will lead the nation in rigor and quality and our students will compete and excel in postsecondary education and/or in the global workplace.

**Goal 2: Accountability for Student Learning:** The Board of Education will support accountability for all public schools by providing leadership and by establishing policies that help schools and school divisions increase the academic success of all students, especially those who are at-risk or in underperforming school systems. Using improved longitudinal data systems, the Board will monitor schools' progress in closing achievement gaps among groups of students.

**Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners:** The Board of Education will work cooperatively with partners and will promote new and innovative partnerships to help ensure that all young children are ready to enter kindergarten with the skills they need for success.

**Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills:** The Board of Education will establish policies that support the attainment of literacy and mathematics skills for all students, pre-K through grade 12.

**Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators:** The Board of Education will establish policies and standards that improve the preparation, recruitment, and retention of Virginia's educational personnel, including their meaningful and ongoing professional development, especially in teacher shortage areas and in hard-to-staff schools.

**Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success:** The Board of Education will provide leadership to develop and implement the provisions of state and federal laws and regulations in ways that improve and expand opportunities for all of Virginia's schoolchildren to excel academically.

**Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools:** The Board of Education will provide leadership to create safe and secure school environments.

### **Opportunities for All Students to Learn and Excel**

The Board of Education is adamant that all of Virginia's children—regardless of their personal circumstances—must have the school environment, the resources, and the teachers to help them be successful at school. However, there remain persistent differences in the achievement level of students. Some students continue to struggle academically and need costly, intensive instructional support to succeed in school.

### **Record Enrollment Will Continue**

Record enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools will continue over the next five years, according to research conducted by The University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service (2010). Total enrollment will increase from the current 1.21 million to 1.27 million students in the 2014-15 school year. Enrollment growth is centered in certain geographic regions of the state, while other areas are expected to shrink in enrollment. The variance in enrollment growth will have significant impact—a rippling effect on funding, school construction, school closings, consolidation of programs, the teaching work force, and economic viability of localities.

## Statutory Requirement for Updating the Comprehensive Plan

§ [22.1-253.13:6](#). Standard 6. Planning and public involvement.

A. The Board of Education shall adopt a statewide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan based on data collection, analysis, and evaluation. Such plan shall be developed with statewide participation. The Board shall review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. The Board shall post the plan on the Department of Education's website if practicable, and, in any case, shall make a hard copy of such plan available for public inspection and copying.

This plan shall include the objectives of public education in Virginia, including strategies for improving student achievement then maintaining high levels of student achievement; an assessment of the extent to which these objectives are being achieved; a forecast of enrollment changes; and an assessment of the needs of public education in the Commonwealth. In the annual report required by § [22.1-18](#), the Board shall include an analysis of the extent to which these Standards of Quality have been achieved and the objectives of the statewide comprehensive plan have been met. The Board shall also develop, consistent with, or as a part of, its comprehensive plan, a detailed comprehensive, long-range plan to integrate educational technology into the Standards of Learning and the curricula of the public schools in Virginia, including career and technical education programs. The Board shall review and approve the comprehensive plan for educational technology and may require the revision of such plan as it deems necessary...

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## BOARD OF EDUCATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: 2011-2016

*This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history, and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the work force.*

National Center on Education and the Economy's  
Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (2007)

### **Preparing Today's Students for the Future**

Virginia's students are the hope of a bright future not only for themselves and their families, but for the state, the nation, and the rapidly expanding global economy. Virginia's economic strength is directly tied to the quality of our work force and our education system. Can there be any doubt that Virginia's students will work and compete in a global economy---one that was almost unimaginable just a few years ago?

This theme is echoed in the report of the National Center on Education and the Economy's Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (2007), which describes the education challenges ahead:

*It is a world in which comfort with ideas and abstractions is the passport to a good job, in which creativity and innovation are the key to the good life, in which high levels of education — a very different kind of education than most of us have had — are going to be the only security there is. . . . The best employers the world over will be looking for the most competent, most creative and most innovative people on the face of the earth and will be willing to pay them top dollar for their services. This will be true not just for the top professionals and managers, but up and down the length and breadth of the work force.*

The obvious questions for the Board of Education as it sets its goals for the coming years are: *Will Virginia's young people be ready? Will they be equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the global economy? What is the role of the Board of Education in leading the charge for academic excellence?*

With these questions about the future sharply in mind, the Board of Education has set its vision, mission, and goals for the next several years. By working with many partners, the Board of Education intends to move Virginia's education system dramatically forward by fostering the development of a 21st century skills pipeline that will prepare today's students to be tomorrow's working adults in our increasingly complex and diverse global society.

## **Board of Education Vision and Mission**

Virginia intends to be the best. The standards and the accountability set by the Board of Education provide benchmarks to gauge the academic achievement of Virginia's students compared to their peers across the state, the nation, and internationally.

The Board of Education's vision and mission statements and goals for public education provide the framework for a world-class statewide system of public schools for Virginia. The statements are forward-looking and acknowledge the programs and services provided by Virginia's public schools to meet the increasingly diverse needs of students who will live, compete, and work in an expanding and complex global, high tech economy.

### The Board's Vision for the Public Schools in Virginia

The vision of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, in cooperation with their partners, is to create an excellent statewide system of public education that derives strength from our diversity and that ensures equality of opportunity for each student in a safe and healthy learning environment that prepares all students to be capable, responsible, and self-reliant citizens in the global society.

### The Board's Mission

The mission of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, in cooperation with their partners, is to set education policies that support the life-long academic and career achievement of all students by establishing high standards and expectations for learning, utilizing evidence and research, measuring and effectively analyzing systemwide performance, as well as ensuring transparency and accountability to parents and the public.

## **Goals for Public Education in Virginia: 2011-2016**

The Board of Education's goals are a roadmap for providing excellent educational opportunities for Virginia's public schools. The goals outline the important priorities for the actions and strategies the Board will use to set policies and directions for the public schools. The Board of Education's goals support holding schools accountable for measurable results, expanding learning opportunities for all students, and sustaining a public school system in which all students learn at high academic levels. The goals reaffirm the Board of Education's obligation to see each child as a unique learner and to ensure that Virginia's schools and teachers are equipped to tailor instruction to each child's needs. Finally, the goals, taken as a whole, embrace the student-centered approach that is instrumental in helping all of Virginia's children, regardless of their personal circumstance, make great strides in achievement.

**Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn:** The Board of Education will continue to improve the standards for public schools in Virginia in order to expand learning opportunities needed for Virginia's public schools. Our schools will lead the nation in rigor and quality and our students will compete and excel in postsecondary education and/or in the global workplace.

**Goal 2: Accountability for Student Learning:** The Board of Education will support accountability for all public schools by providing leadership and by establishing policies that help schools and school divisions increase the academic success of all students, especially those who are at-risk or in underperforming school systems. Using improved longitudinal data systems, the Board will monitor schools' progress in closing achievement gaps among groups of students.

**Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners:** The Board of Education will work cooperatively with partners and will promote new and innovative partnerships to help ensure that all young children are ready to enter kindergarten with the skills they need for success.

**Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills:** The Board of Education will establish policies that support the attainment of literacy and mathematics skills for all students, pre-K through grade 12.

**Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators:** The Board of Education will establish policies and standards that improve the preparation, recruitment, and retention of Virginia's educational personnel, including meaningful and ongoing professional development, especially in teacher shortage areas and in hard-to-staff schools.

**Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success:** The Board of Education will provide leadership to develop and implement the provisions of state and federal laws and regulations in ways that improve and expand opportunities for all of Virginia's schoolchildren to excel academically.

**Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools:** The Board of Education will provide leadership to create safe and secure school environments.

### **Achievement Measures for Goals**

The Virginia Board of Education is committed to assessing its progress in leading Virginia to create an excellent statewide system of public education. The metrics used to assess the Board's progress will provide information that describes how well the Board meets its goals and the current status of education in Virginia.

The Board's actions are intended to support all students' ability to achieve to their highest potential. The Board, however, is limited in the direct impact it can have on student achievement. As well, many of the actions taken by the Board will take years for any impact to be seen in achievement scores. Therefore, measures related to student outcomes will be considered over time and in conjunction with metrics that provide immediate information about the Board's progress in achieving its goals. There are several key indicators of student outcomes that provide critical information about the successes and challenges our schools face. These indicators are:

- High school graduation and dropout rates.
- Percent of graduates earning advanced studies diplomas.
- Percent of graduates who meet or exceed college or career ready performance expectations.
- Percent of graduates who enroll and are successful in postsecondary education.
- Percent of third-grade students reading on grade level.
- Percent of students scoring advanced proficient on statewide assessments.

- Number and percent of schools and divisions meeting or exceeding state and federal accountability measures.
- Number and percent of schools and divisions that demonstrate relatively high growth in student achievement, as measures become available.
- Number and percent of schools earning recognition under the Virginia Index of Performance.
- Number and percent of schools that are chronically low performing by state and federal standards.

Goal Statement	Measures to Gauge Progress in Meeting the Goal
<p><b>Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn:</b> The Board of Education will continue to improve the standards for public schools in Virginia in order to expand learning opportunities needed for Virginia’s public schools. Our schools will lead the nation in rigor and quality and our students will compete and excel in postsecondary education and/or in the global workplace.</p>	<p>Regularly review and revise the Standards of Quality (SOQ), Standards of Accreditation (SOA), and Standards of Learning (SOL); collect data and information that support ability to thoughtfully and deliberately make revisions that are research-based, cost-effective, and clearly aligned with student expectations.</p> <p>Use data from fourth and eighth grade NAEP scores to inform the Board’s work to review and revise Standards of Learning.</p> <p>Continue to review all Standards of Learning (SOL) to ensure they are college and career ready.</p> <p>Continue to review the accreditation standards in light of the assessment programs currently in place and consider new ways of testing and assessment of student achievement.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2: Accountability for Student Learning:</b> The Board of Education will support accountability for all public schools by providing leadership and by establishing policies that help schools and school divisions increase the academic success of all students, especially those who are at-risk or in underperforming school systems. Using improved longitudinal data systems, the Board will monitor schools’ progress in closing achievement gaps among groups of students.</p>	<p>Review longitudinal data (e.g., the Educational Information Management System) to examine student progress from early childhood to postsecondary and beyond.</p> <p>Review key indicators ensuring that the data are disaggregated by student groups, including ESEA subgroups, and gender.</p> <p>Document major Board of Education activities that assist chronically low-performing schools in becoming institutions that meet or exceed minimum accountability requirements.</p>
<p><b>Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners:</b> The Board of Education will work cooperatively with partners and will promote new and innovative partnerships to help ensure that all young children are ready to enter kindergarten with the skills they need for success.</p>	<p>Document major Board of Education activities that support schools’ ability to facilitate pre-kindergarten children’s success.</p> <p>Calculate changes over time in the percent of students in kindergarten who are considered ready for kindergarten upon entry, based on screening or proficiency assessments provided in kindergarten.</p> <p>Calculate changes over time in the percentage of at-risk children served by the Virginia Preschool Initiative or other preschool programs with known quality standards.</p>

<p><b>Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills:</b> The Board of Education will establish policies that support the attainment of literacy and mathematics skills for all students, pre-K through grade 12.</p>	<p>Document new Board of Education policies that support literacy in all students.</p> <p>Assess Virginia's outcomes on NAEP assessments.</p> <p>Assess outcomes on other national assessments, such as SAT, ACT, Advanced placement Exams.</p> <p>Assess statewide SOL assessment results.</p> <p>Use national and international assessment data to analyze the progress of Virginia's students (e.g., TIMSS and PISA comparisons to NAEP).</p>
<p><b>Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators:</b> The Board of Education will establish policies and standards that improve the preparation, recruitment, and retention of Virginia's educational personnel, including meaningful and ongoing professional development, especially in teacher shortage areas and in hard-to-staff schools.</p>	<p>Calculate changes over time in the percent of teachers who are highly qualified, as defined by the ESEA provisions. Incorporate measures of teacher effectiveness as they become available.</p> <p>Document that school divisions are meeting the SOQ professional development requirements.</p> <p>Calculate annual retention rates for educational personnel in Virginia.</p> <p>Evaluate results of field study for the new Model Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Systems.</p>
<p><b>Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success:</b> The Board of Education will provide leadership to develop and implement the provisions of state and federal laws and regulations in ways that improve and expand opportunities for all of Virginia's schoolchildren to excel academically.</p>	<p>Review Board of Education policies and regulations with an eye toward helping schools do more with less, increasing effectiveness and efficiency, and ensuring that regulations are cost-effective and research-based to the extent possible.</p> <p>Document Board of Education policies and practices that demonstrate leadership in and compliance with implementing provisions of state and federal laws and regulations.</p> <p>Evaluate initial implementation procedures for the criteria for charter school proposals, which are reviewed by the Board of Education.</p> <p>Evaluate initial implementation procedures for the criteria for college partnership laboratory school proposals, which are reviewed by the Board of Education.</p> <p>Evaluate initial implementation procedures for the Virtual School criteria and application process, which are reviewed by the Board of Education.</p>
<p><b>Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools:</b> The Board of Education will provide leadership to create safe and secure school environments.</p>	<p>Document the Board's actions that demonstrate leadership in creating safe and secure environments, especially in the area of electronic communications and in bullying and cyberbullying prevention programs.</p> <p>Calculate changes over time in quantitative measures of school safety and security. Measures will be developed using Virginia's Web-based reporting system and evidence from other sources, as available.</p>

## Strategies to Implement Goals: 2011-2016

The Board of Education's goals for Virginia's public education system are constantly evolving. The goals are revised every two years; therefore, they must be viewed as a continuous process of assessment and evaluation, all of which lead to adjustments as needed. Perhaps most importantly, the Board of Education's goals, as well as the strategies and activities to implement them, are tied closely to the requirements of state and federal statutes and regulations and on the availability and appropriation of funding for public education.

### Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn

*The Board of Education will continue to improve the standards for public schools in Virginia in order to expand learning opportunities needed for Virginia's public schools. Our schools will lead the nation in rigor and quality and our students will compete and excel in postsecondary education and/or in the global workplace.*

The Board wishes to be clear in its intent to lead the country in the rigor and quality of standards. This clarity of intent is especially important in light of the national discussion on Common Core State Standards. Virginia will continue to monitor work at the national level related to the Common Core State Standards and the Common Assessments. The state will take the opportunity to benefit from Common Core products and processes, which are being developed in the public domain. The Board recently revised the curriculum framework for both the *English Standards of Learning* and the *Mathematics Standards of Learning*. Taken together, the revised curriculum frameworks have a strong alignment with the English/Language Arts and the Mathematics Common Core State Standards, and in some areas, exceed the content of the Common Core State Standards. Thus, Virginia's standards meet or exceed national standards in English as well as mathematics.

In the meantime, Virginia's Curriculum Framework, other instructional material, and professional development events continue to support teaching and learning in the Commonwealth. For example, in 2010 the Board adopted revised curriculum frameworks for both science and English. New enhanced mathematics assessments will be administered for the first time in Virginia in 2011-2012, two years before the Common Standards assessment consortia anticipate administration of the common assessments, followed by new Virginia English SOL assessments in 2012-2013. In addition, the Virginia Board of Education recently took several important actions related to the revision of the state textbook approval process. The new procedures will strengthen and guide the adoption process for future years.

The Board of Education's constitutional responsibility is "to determine and prescribe" the Standards of Quality (SOQ) for Virginia's school divisions. The Standards of Accreditation (SOA) and the Standards of Learning (SOL) are both integral parts of the requirements contained in the SOQ, as established in the *Code of Virginia*. Thus, the SOQ, the SOA, and the SOL form the three-pronged foundation of quality standards for public schools in Virginia.

Revising and updating the SOQ to ensure that the standards are adequate and appropriate for today's schools and students is ongoing. The *Code* requires the Board to review the SOQ in even-numbered years. During 2009, the Board conducted a review of the Standards of Quality and proposed recommendations for revisions to the Standards of Quality, which were

communicated to the 2010 session of the General Assembly. In 2010, the Board reviewed the 2009 recommendations and authorized a 30-day public comment period. In January 2011, the Board of Education reaffirmed its support for those recommendations. The Board's legislative proposal was adopted by the General Assembly, effective on July 1, 2011. The legislation codifies flexibility already in the Appropriation Act to permit school divisions to use existing sources of funds for data coordinators, reading specialists, mathematics specialists, and additional instruction for English language learners. The legislation also provides school divisions with flexibility in the deployment of principals.

Revisions to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (SOA) were adopted by the Board of Education on February 19, 2009. Legislation passed by the 2009, 2010, and 2011 General Assembly delayed the effective date for some of the new provisions. The provisions prohibiting students from having to take more than one test in any content area in any year, requiring the same State Testing Identifier (STI) to be used when students transfer from one Virginia public school to another, requiring credits earned through Virtual Virginia to be accepted in Virginia public schools became effective in 2009-2010. Implementation of the Graduation and Completion Index became effective in 2010-2011 for accreditation ratings awarded for 2011-2012. The new graduation requirements for Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas, including the requirement for a standard credit in economics and personal finance will become effective with the ninth-grade class of 2011-2012. The provisions requiring the Academic and Career Plan, the new accreditation benchmarks (75 percent for English in grades 6-12, and 70 percent for science and history/social science in grade 3), and the implementation of the new technical diplomas are now scheduled to become effective in 2012-2013.

Standards of Learning (SOL) are revised by content area according to an existing schedule. The SOL describe the Commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education. As students move through the grades---whether they remain in a Virginia public school or move to another state---they must not be at an academic disadvantage.

The Board is also working to implement new initiatives for charter schools, college partnership laboratory schools, and multidivision online providers. The Board approved the criteria, the application, and the process and procedures for receiving and reviewing the applications, and established new charter school and college partnership laboratory school committees to focus attention on priorities for action. The Board has set procedures for action that will move the Board closer to meeting its goal of expanding learning opportunities for all students. In addition, the Board will continue to support work undertaken by the Virginia Department of Education that directly relates to the priorities of the Board, such as the college and career readiness initiative and the uniform evaluation system for classroom teachers.

In the planning period ahead, the Board will undertake review of a significant part of its education regulations to ensure that all regulations currently in place are relevant, necessary for the promotion of student and teacher success, and as effective as possible.

## STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 1

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Review and revise the Standards of Quality; required review in even-numbered years.	X		X		X		X
Review and revise (as needed) the Standards of Accreditation.	X				X		
Review and revise the Standards of Learning in:							
Computer Technology			X				
Fine Arts				X			
Foreign Languages					X		
Health, Physical Education, & Driver Ed						X	
History and Social Sciences						X	
Mathematics							X
English	X						(2017)
Science	X						(2017)
Review the English Language Proficiency standards	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implement Academic and Career Plan requirements	X	X	X				
Implement Technical Diploma requirements	X	X	X				
Implement Economics and Personal Finance Standards of Learning	X	X	X				

### **Goal 2: Accountability for Student Learning**

*The Board of Education will support accountability for all public schools by providing leadership and by establishing policies that help schools and school divisions increase the academic success of all students, especially those who are at-risk or in underperforming school systems. Using improved longitudinal data systems, the Board will monitor schools' progress in closing achievement gaps among groups of students.*

The Board of Education's priority for providing challenging academic standards is that they be student-centered, results-oriented, and supportive of local flexibility. This priority also addresses the need to support the skill development and accountability of local school leaders—superintendents, principals, and teachers. Moreover, the Board of Education intends to help build capacity of school divisions to address their issues successfully with limited intervention from the state and with maximum flexibility for local decision making.

A priority of the Board of Education is to support a variety of learning opportunities that hold

promise for increasing student academic success, such as charter school programs, Governor’s Schools, STEM academies, online learning programs, and college partnership laboratory programs.

There is a great deal of data available to measure the performance of the state’s public schools and its students. The Board has a number of ways to support school accountability, including taking the lead in developing solutions for schools and school divisions that are not meeting accountability requirements. The Board will continue to study and consider new ways to assess student performance. The Board also wants to ensure rigor and ensure that all students increase their academic achievement by continuing to examine and revise cut-scores for the assessment program. One example of the actions taken by the Board in the past year is the adoption of revised passing scores for the new end-of-course history/social science tests that measure the 2008 Standards of Learning.

Virginia now has a powerful resource to examine student progress. Virginia is one of 20 states to receive a 2010 Longitudinal Data Systems Grant, funded through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* of 2009. The grant supports the development and implementation of data systems to examine student progress from early childhood to postsecondary and beyond, including matching teachers to students, while protecting student privacy and confidentiality.

Virginia’s grant improves the Educational Information Management System (EIMS) and puts additional high quality, actionable data into the hands of teachers, administrators, researchers, policymakers and the public.

There is much to be learned from divisions that are seeing real improvements within and among student subgroups. In addition to recognizing these divisions for their success, the Board has the opportunity to provide leadership to help schools and school divisions eliminate the achievement gap through greater use of disaggregated data, including test results and graduation rates by subgroups. The Board can emphasize the importance of using data throughout the public school system to manage school performance. The Board should also do more to highlight and share best practices from divisions that are seeing real improvement in achievement gaps.

## STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 2

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Support the establishment of data manager/ test coordinator positions to serve as a resource to principals and classroom teachers in analyzing and interpreting data for instructional purposes.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support professional development and technical assistance for instructional staff, especially in low-performing schools.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Support a focus on civics, international education, technological literacy, and financial literacy to ensure the preparation of all students to be productive citizens.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Encourage school divisions to find innovative ways to bring foreign language study for all students, starting at the earliest elementary school level possible.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support effective use of federal funds to provide supplemental instruction and services to disadvantaged students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support policies that promote opportunity and access to postsecondary study for all students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote the use of the Academic and Career Plan to help students identify the areas of strength and interest and pursue a high school course of study that will prepare them to pursue additional training or education.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support and encourage school divisions in efforts to establish and maintain Governor's Schools, STEM academies, and participate in Foreign Language Academies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Receive periodic reports of findings of academic review teams, review and adopt policies to address recommendations in team reports, and continue to refine the academic review and division level review procedures.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Adopt policies that promote student preparation for college and work readiness in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establish modified achievement standards for students with disabilities who can make significant progress but may not reach grade-level achievement standards within the same time frame as other students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Seek opportunities for assessing LEP students' English language proficiency and content knowledge in an equitable manner.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support school divisions in conducting annual assessment in English language proficiency for all limited English proficient (LEP) students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establish policies that promote accountability for graduation and dropout rates for all student subgroups in schools and school divisions.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide incentives to schools and school divisions that succeed in closing the achievement gap and in improving student achievement.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support programs and initiatives that make it clear that high schools take all steps possible to help students earn a high school diploma.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Support opportunities for students to have access to college-level courses in high school, including Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, Cambridge courses, and dual enrollment courses.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support strategies for improving the academic success of both high- and low-performing groups of students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote the identification of industry certification opportunities for CTE teachers who lack such credentials and for students who seek them.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote technical assistance on research-based instructional interventions that help improve the academic achievement in schools that are low-performing and those that are identified as in need of improvement under the ESEA Act.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establish and monitor the memorandum of understanding with and monitor the reconstitution of schools denied accreditation.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establish and monitor the memorandum of understanding of school divisions in division level academic review.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establish recognitions and incentives for schools, school divisions, and school personnel that demonstrate significant improvement in student achievement, closing the achievement gap, and addressing overall educational excellence.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Recognize Highly Distinguished Title I schools and school divisions.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide innovative options to support school improvement, such as charter schools and lead turnaround partners.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

### **Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners**

*The Board of Education will work cooperatively with partners and will promote new and innovative partnerships to help ensure that all young children are ready to enter kindergarten with the skills they need for success.*

This goal reflects the commitment of the Board to ensure that all children are adequately prepared for school when they enroll. Research shows that from the time of birth to the first day of kindergarten, childhood development proceeds at a pace exceeding that of any subsequent stage of life. Efforts to understand this process have revealed the many remarkable accomplishments of the pre-school years, as well as the serious problems that confront some young children and their families. Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter kindergarten.

A study by Virginia’s Joint Legislative Audit Review Commission found that “test results indicate that Virginia Preschool Initiative students gain in literacy skills during the pre-K year and outperform other kindergarteners. Longer term student-level data are needed to assess VPI’s impact on test scores in later grades. A survey of kindergarten teachers and principals indicates that most at-risk pre-K graduates are well prepared for kindergarten and later elementary grades.”

Pre-K programs provide a school turnaround strategy. The Board of Education will seek new and effective ways to work cooperatively with other agencies and organizations concerned with the development of children of pre-school age. Closing the achievement gap requires close alignment with the entire spectrum of community and social services, as well as with programs for Virginia’s youngest children (age 0-5).

If funding for such programs decreases, the Board will encourage collaborations to maintain and enhance current programs. The Department of Education collaborates with the Department of Social Services in the implementation of programs, initiatives, and funding opportunities that care for and educate young children. The goal of the collaboration efforts is to promote quality preschool education programs and policies proven to reduce achievement gaps; improve literacy; reduce grade retention; improve graduation rates through teacher training; enhance pre-K to third-grade teacher certification; and develop school readiness standards.

### STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 3

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Continue to collaborate with other entities in maintaining and enhancing learning standards for preschool education, preparation programs for preschool teachers, and professional development opportunities for preschool teachers.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support the Virginia Preschool Initiative, the Title I Preschool Program, the Early Childhood Special Education Program, Start Strong, and the Even Start Family Literacy Program.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Seek ways to cooperate with and encourage the Head Start programs.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support a coordinated approach to delivering preschool programs with a variety of service delivery options.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote increased participation in and expansion of high quality preschool components, such as the Foundation Blocks for Early Learning and the QRIS rating system.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collaborate with VCCS and SCHEV to promote consistent standards and a smooth transition to licensure for early childhood educators.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to collaborate with the Department of Social Services and other partners to promote quality preschool education programs and policies proven to reduce achievement gaps, improve literacy, reduce grade retention and to improve graduation rates through teacher training, pre-K to third-grade teacher certification, developing school readiness standards.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support coordination and alignment between early childhood programs and the K-12 system, including the inclusion of school readiness in school assessment criteria.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support assessment tools to support and recognize Pre-K quality as well as facilitate a smooth transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills**

*The Board of Education will establish policies that support the attainment of literacy and mathematics skills for all students, pre-K through grade 12.*

Literacy has traditionally been described as the ability to read and write. Mathematical literacy refers to ways “to use and engage with mathematics in ways that meet the needs of that individual’s life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen.” This goal reflects the Board’s understanding that skills in reading and writing as well as in mathematics are absolutely essential for all students to master---and master well---if they are to perform successfully in school and in a career later on. Literacy implies that a person is able to read, write, speak, reason, analyze, and solve problems in a real-world setting. Literate individuals are informed citizens and intelligent consumers. They have the ability to interpret, analyze, and communicate the vast amount of information they are inundated with daily in newspapers, on television, and on the Internet.

The Board of Education will continue and expand efforts to support and improve family/parent and student literacy. As stated by the National Council on Family Literacy: “Literacy is at the root of a person’s ability to succeed, and the family is at the heart.” Family literacy ensures the cycle of learning and progress passes from generation to generation, and the Board can be a bully pulpit through various programs and policies. The Lexile Measure program is a good example of strategies the Board can encourage. The Board also has the ability to influence policy in areas that affect the teaching and learning of reading and mathematics through supporting efforts to enhance the literacy, mathematics, and science skills of all teachers, especially those in the early grades.

**STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 4**

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Implement the requirement for the reading assessment for initial licensure for elementary teachers, specified special education teachers, and reading specialists.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide leadership for preschool to adult literacy initiatives, including programs that address the needs of speakers of languages other than English and students with disabilities.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support teacher preparation programs and pre-service programs for teachers to improve their skills in teaching reading and mathematics.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support programs to promote improved adolescent reading in all content areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to establish and enhance policies in the SOQ and SOA to promote increased reading, writing, and mathematics skills.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support initiatives that provide additional information to parents and teachers to help them identify areas of strength in reading and mathematics among students and target assistance to students in areas of greatest weakness.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Review and amend, as needed, the State Literacy Plan, as may be promoted by the U.S. Department of Education.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators**

*The Board of Education will establish policies and standards that improve the preparation, recruitment, and retention of Virginia’s educational personnel, including meaningful and ongoing professional development, especially in teacher shortage areas and in hard-to-staff schools.*

The Board of Education will take a strong leadership stance to advocate for and develop new and innovative partnerships with school systems and the colleges and universities that prepare, develop, and support classroom teachers and school personnel. At its heart, teacher education is a shared responsibility. Partnerships between school systems and the higher education community are critical in providing the training and clinical practice experiences that “teachers need to be prepared to use research-based developmentally appropriate strategies, assess student progress, and change practice as appropriate for the purpose of improving student learning and meeting students' developmental needs.” (NCATE. *Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning*, 2010)

In developing this goal, the Board of Education can play an important role in coordinating and exploring effective strategies for ensuring quality and results. The Virginia Department of Education licenses teachers and administrators according to regulations adopted by the Board of Education. The department also administers regulations governing educator preparation programs to ensure that teachers enter the classroom with content knowledge and instructional skills aligned to the Standards of Learning and other objectives for learning and achievement.

The department also administers programs to help school divisions recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and recognize instructional excellence. This goal encompasses the training and quality of educational administrators, such as principals, assistant principals, counselors, and other key school personnel. Woven into the Board’s work is the need to promote policies to recruit and retain minority teachers.

The Board can evaluate license renewal policy and identify and disseminate national “best practices” for recruiting and retaining teachers. The Board may also want to consider partnering with teacher education schools to teach their students how to use data at the teacher and administrator levels.

**STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 5**

<b>Action</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Support initiatives to increase the number of high quality teachers, especially for hard-to-staff schools, such as the mentoring programs in hard-to-staff schools, the Virginia Middle School Teacher Corps, and other incentive programs for qualified teachers.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote increasing the pool of teachers entering the profession by supporting strategies such as the career switcher program, the Teaching Scholarship Loan Program, and Teacher Cadet programs, to teach in general and critical shortage areas.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Supporting incentives for National Board Certification that are aligned with efforts to help hard-to-staff schools including placing National Board Certified Teachers in such schools, and encouraging teachers from these schools to pursue National Board Certification.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support ways to attract and retain career and technical education teachers whose training and expertise meet the demands of students and employers in the Commonwealth.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support executive education opportunities to assist established school administrators in providing skilled leadership in chronically low-performing schools.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support professional development and technical assistance for educational personnel, working with professional education associations and teacher educators.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support, in conjunction with school divisions, professional development strategies that the local schools will use to help ensure the development of highly qualified professional educational personnel and paraprofessionals.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Study and develop model teacher and administrative evaluation systems, field test the models, and develop related guidance documents	X	X	X				
Establish STEM credentialing program for Career and Technical education teachers and for other teachers as needed.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Seek new ways and opportunities to form partnerships with colleges and universities as well as other organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

### **Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success**

*The Board of Education will provide leadership to develop and implement the provisions of state and federal laws and regulations in ways that improve and expand opportunities for all of Virginia's schoolchildren to excel academically.*

The Board will focus on ways to help school divisions do more with less by reviewing state standards and expectations and with an eye towards effectiveness and efficiency. The Board also strives to give flexibility to local schools so that alternative and effective approaches to problems may be utilized.

Much of what the Board does during the course of its work is either directly or indirectly related to its constitutional, statutory, or regulatory requirements. The Board plays a key role in assuring the smooth functioning and administration of state and federal requirements and is keenly concerned about efficient and effective implementation and communication of such rules. Consistent with Governor McDonnell's Executive Order No. 14 (2010), the Board intends that its regulations shall be designed to achieve their intended objectives in the most efficient, cost-effective manner and in a way that enhances student achievement.

## STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 6

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Continue to monitor progress of schools, divisions, and the state in meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Receive annual report cards on progress of students in meeting state standards, graduation rates, elementary school attendance rates, names of schools needing improvement, professional qualifications of teachers, percentages of students not tested, and other information as required by ESEA.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support Virginia's participation in NAEP program in reading and mathematics for 4 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grades.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support programs of technical assistance for schools identified as in the first and second year of school improvement.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support procedures and disseminate via Web site notice to parents and the public of any pending corrective actions.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support efforts to enlarge the pool of Supplemental Educational Services providers to provide remediation for low-performing students in Title I schools.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continue to assist school divisions in implementing charter schools and other public school choice options.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop and submit the state plan for the Carl D. Perkins Act.				X	X	X	X
Receive reports on the Workforce Investment Act, as necessary.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Review and revise annually Virginia's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook under ESEA.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Monitor the reauthorization of ESEA and take appropriate action as needed.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support the Turnaround Partners program.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Respond to the increased demand for data related to the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds and other programs under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Increase transparency in reporting and posting (on the Internet) all information for the public, including expenditures, school division improvement grant applications, jobs created with federal stimulus funds, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Review and approve criteria and processes for Virtual School offerings and provide ongoing technical assistance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop and implement procedures for receiving, reviewing and ruling on applications to create college laboratory schools and provide ongoing technical assistance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide technical assistance and guidance in the development of charter school program proposals to be received by school divisions.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Support efforts to maintain the state-level Educational Information Management System (EIMS) to enable the department to meet increasing state and federal reporting requirements and to enable stakeholders at all levels of education to make informed educational decisions based on accurate and timely information.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conduct a periodic review and revision of all Board of Education regulations that have not undergone such review within the past four years.		X	X				
Review guideline documents and policy statements to update as necessary to comport with state or federal legislative changes.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

### Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools

*The Board of Education will provide leadership to create safe and secure school environments.*

Everyone wants safe schools in which students, teachers and support staff can concentrate on learning and not have to worry about disruption due to misbehavior, crime, or violence. Especially in the earliest years, the nonacademic skills (motivation, self-control) are critical. These are the skills that make a person more likely to graduate and a good employee, as well.

The Board of Education supports programs and policies for schoolwide and divisionwide safety and prevention plans that consistently address the needs of all students and encourage a safe and healthy learning environment. The Board is committed to policies that provide a healthy positive learning environment for all children and teachers. This includes emphasis on healthy nutrition programs. Through partnerships, resources, data collection, and evaluation, the Board of Education can do much to address the needs of children as well as those who are providing services that protect our children.

As more and more research in Internet safety shows, it is clear that cyberbullying is one of the most pressing issues involved in keeping public schools and the children in them safe. The Virginia Department of Education has provided resources on the use of online, interactive, story-based lessons on various Internet safety issues, including cyberbullying. The department has also published two information briefs to help divisions update their own policies and procedures relating to current issues. Additionally, in the area of electronic communications the Board of Education is issuing guidelines to help school divisions create and implement policies and procedures that establish clear and reasonable boundaries for electronic interactions between students and teachers, other school board employees, and adult volunteers.

### STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOAL 7

Action	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Promote annual, and ongoing, staff training that address the health, nutrition, and safety needs of students and staff.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Build a foundation to work towards the goal of establishing a coordinated school health program.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Encourage school divisions to find innovative ways to keep students with behavioral challenges in school; Support opportunities for students with behavioral challenges to have access to high quality alternative programs in lieu of suspension or expulsion.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support professional development and technical assistance in classroom management for instructional staff.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support programs and initiatives that emphasize prevention and creation of a positive school climate, especially including antibullying and cyberbullying awareness and prevention.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide incentives and rewards to schools that maintain low rates of, or reduce, disciplinary incidents, suspensions and expulsions, and threats to school safety.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Support technical assistance for conducting threat assessments.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Promote the establishment of student assistance programs to provide comprehensive services to address the needs of students.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Collect and analyze discipline data and support the use of the Prevention through Information data system and programs.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Encourage annual training to school divisions on discipline-related data collection to ensure accurate and consistent data collection, analysis, and statewide reporting.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide technical assistance and resources to school divisions for policies and programs to create and implement policies and procedures for electronic interactions between students and school personnel.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

### **Enrollment Projections for Virginia's Schools**

Between 2000 and 2009, Virginia's population grew by more than 800,000 —a growth rate of 11.4 percent over nine years. The growth rate has huge implications for Virginia's public school system. Dr. Michael Spar, research associate for the Demographics and Workforce Section of the Weldon Cooper Center at the University of Virginia, explained it this way in the 2010 study, *Enrollment Projections for Virginia Public Schools, 2009-10 to 2014-15*:

Enrollment in Virginia's public schools has increased steadily for the past ten years, and projections for the next five years indicate this trend will continue. Nearly ten thousand additional students will enroll each year, amounting to an increase of over 50,000 by the end of the projection period. Total enrollment will increase from 1.21 million to 1.27 million students in the 2014-15 school year.

Digging deeper, the Weldon Cooper Center's research finds that the growth is centered in certain areas, while other areas are expected to shrink in enrollment. (The full text, along with detailed tables, may be viewed at: <http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/school-forecasts#fallmembership>.) Excerpts from the 2010 report show the following variance in the growth and reduction of enrollments across the state:

### Enrollment Projections

The Weldon Cooper Center's forecast indicates that most enrollment growth will be confined to the elementary grades. Exactly two-thirds of total statewide growth will occur in elementary grades. Increases in the number of middle school students will account for nearly a third of total student growth. Only two percent of school population growth will be due to an increase in the number of high school students.

### Local Trends

Statewide school enrollment growth over the next five years is attributable largely to growth in a relatively small number of metropolitan and suburban school divisions. Most school divisions are not growing. Particularly rapid growth in several northern Virginia divisions account for much of the statewide growth. The report states that three northern Virginia divisions—Loudoun, Prince William, and Fairfax—will experience large student increases next year. Other school divisions in northern Virginia, around Richmond, and in Tidewater will experience moderate growth. Most of the school divisions expected to grow are located in an arc running from Hampton Roads in the south, through the Richmond metropolitan area, west to Albemarle, and then northeast to northern Virginia.

### Impact of Enrollment Trends

The Weldon Cooper Center's sums up the impact of enrollment trends by stating:

*In this time of declining state fiscal resources, the impact of school enrollment changes will depend on factors unique to each school division. Divisions with declining enrollment will receive fewer state funds to support education; yet local tax dollars will stretch further. Divisions with growing student enrollment may receive increases in state support, but possibly not enough to offset the additional costs of educating more children. Additionally, local budgetary adjustments to compensate for declining revenues; the willingness of localities to raise property tax rates to mitigate the impact of budget cuts; and other fiscal resources available to each jurisdiction (including the extent to which federal assistance may become available) will determine how school enrollment changes impact each locality*

### **Important Demographic Trends for Virginia's Schools**

The challenges for our public schools become more acute in light of Virginia's changing demographics, which show clearly that diverse population groups (i.e., limited English proficient and economically disadvantaged) are increasingly making up a larger proportion of the overall population. Some students often require additional labor-intensive and cost-intensive services in order to be successful in school. Important demographic trends include the following that have powerful implications for our public school system.

### Growth in the enrollment of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students

In Virginia, the Limited English Proficient population has doubled in just the past five years, and this trend is expected to continue. In 1998, Virginia's public schools enrolled 37,000 LEP students. In 2010, that number had increased to more than 90,300.

The latest data (2010) show that more than 90 percent of Virginia's school divisions now have Limited English Proficient (LEP) students enrolled. While more than two-thirds of Virginia's LEP students are enrolled in divisions in the northern Virginia region, pockets of sizable concentrations of LEP students dot many areas of the state.

Virginia's population is becoming increasingly diverse. International immigrants comprise one quarter of the Commonwealth's recent population growth. Until 1970, one in every 100 Virginians was born outside the United States. In 2006, one in every 10 Virginians was foreign-born. (Weldon Cooper Center, 2009)

### Diversity of economic and educational opportunity factors

For the 2010-2011 school year, more than 38 percent of the students in Virginia's public schools were eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. The percent varies widely across the school divisions, from a high of more than 75 percent to a low of 8 percent.

Based on the latest census data (2000), more than 700,000 adults in Virginia are without high school credentials. Virginia has the 21st highest percentage of adults without high school diplomas (18.5 percent) among the 50 states. (Weldon Cooper Center, 2009)

On the other side of the economic spectrum, Virginia has the highest percentage of the work force in science and engineering occupations of the 50 states. The relatively high percentage reflects Virginia's large knowledge-intensive sector. (Weldon Cooper Center, 2009)

Clearly, this is a case of the educational haves and have-nots with profound implications for the economic well-being of our citizens and the state as a whole. The public schools have a huge role in providing the education necessary for equal opportunities for economic success.

### Virginia's teacher work force

Virginia had a total of 99,524 classroom teachers in 2009-2010, compared to 100,908 in 2008-2009. Slightly more than 80 percent were female. Eighty-two percent were white, 13 percent were African American, two percent were Hispanic, and 1.4 percent were Asian.

Data show that more than 21 percent of Virginia's current classroom teachers are aged 55 or more; thus, many may be eligible to retire or are very near retirement. This has potential to exacerbate teacher supply and demand in the coming few years. Moreover, close to 16 percent of Virginia's school principals are at or near retirement age.

## **Additional Planning Documents**

The *Code of Virginia* requires the Board of Education to include in its comprehensive plan an assessment of the needs of public education and a plan to integrate educational technology into the Standards of Learning and the curricula, including career and technical education programs.

Pursuant to that requirement, the Board of Education has adopted three documents in addition to its comprehensive plan: (1) the Board of Education's Annual Report on the Condition and Needs of the Public Schools in Virginia; (2) the Six-Year Plan for Technology; and (3) the state plan for career and technical education. When viewed with the comprehensive plan contained herein, the documents provide a comprehensive view of the Board's priorities, the condition and needs upon which the priorities are based, and the future direction and needs of our system of public education.

The Board of Education's Annual Report on the Condition and Needs of the Public Schools in Virginia may be viewed at [http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/VA\\_Board/home.shtml](http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/VA_Board/home.shtml) and the Six-Year Plan for Technology may be viewed at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Technology/OET/resources.shtml#etp>. Information about Virginia's career and technical programs may be viewed at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/CTE/>.

### **Key Policy Documents for Implementing Goals**

Of particular note, the Board of Education's priorities for Virginia's public schools are embedded throughout the provisions of the Standards of Quality, the Standards of Accreditation, and the Standards of Learning. These and other key policy and regulatory documents of the Board of Education may be viewed on the Department of Education's Web site: [www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov).

### **The Challenges Ahead**

The Board of Education's goals contained in this document address critical areas of need and attention. The Board's primary actions will focus on achieving those goals.

In addition, the Board of Education anticipates a number of critical issues arising during the next year or two that will need to be dealt with head-on. The full impact and the response required to deal with the fallout are not totally known at this point. Emerging issues that must be addressed include the following:

- Maintaining the capacity of the Virginia Department of Education staff to provide background data, advice, and expertise, all of which are essential for the Board of Education to make solid and informed policy decisions. In these hard economic times, department staff may be adversely impacted by recruitment freezes, staff reductions, and elimination of some programs. More services must be provided by fewer persons, putting increased pressure on already razor-thin resources.
- Continuing the interventions and technical assistance by the Virginia Department of Education to assist divisions previously identified as low-performing, especially in this time of agency budget and staffing restrictions.
- Anticipating the impact of the fiscal climate on local school divisions that is destined to become even more difficult as the flow of federal stimulus funds ends.

- Dealing effectively with schools that do not meet full accreditation because of difficulty in meeting the aggressive objective for graduation rates set by the Board of Education.
- Funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ) and other valued initiatives and programs in the current fiscal and economic climate.
- Keeping up with increasingly burdensome and time-consuming federal reporting and accountability requirements, especially those related to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (previously known as No Child Left Behind), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

The Board of Education sees challenging years ahead as the state faces economic headwinds that have developed over the last several years. A critical part of the Board's ability to accomplish its mission is the interwoven, day-to-day partnership with the Virginia Department of Education. The department staff provides arms and legs for the Board's work—the advice, expertise, and background data needed for the Board to make informed policy decisions—and to build a stronger system of public schools here in Virginia. Today, the Board asks for major efforts, and the department staff is being asked to do more tasks with fewer staff.

State funding for public education across Virginia was deeply impacted by the recent recession. It is no surprise that it has been a difficult time for almost all of Virginia localities. Local schools—as well as the Virginia Department of Education—are under a tremendous amount of pressure to reduce costs, trim programs, streamline the work force, and redefine how work gets done. Finding ways to maintain positive momentum and do more with less has been and will continue to be a challenge.

Current economic conditions remind us more than ever that the key to economic recovery is education. As always, the Board of Education will continue to think creatively and make sure that its goals and strategies are relevant, evidence-based, practical, and cost-effective.



**Summary of Major Elements:**

As indicated in Attachment A, the mission of Albemarle County Community Public Charter School is to provide an innovative learning environment, using the arts to help children in grades six through eight to learn in ways that match their learning styles; and to develop the whole child intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially.

Albemarle County Public Schools is requesting approval of an alternative accreditation plan for Albemarle County Community Public Charter School. The school has been open for three years and has been *Accredited with Warning* for two consecutive years. Student achievement data is provided below.

<b>Unadjusted AYP Pass Rates</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>
	<b>Percent Passing</b>	
English Performance		
All Students	39%	55%
Mathematics Performance		
All Students	4%	91%
History Performance		
All Students	9%	55%
Science Performance		
All Students	Not Tested*	Not Tested*

\*There were no eighth grade students in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010. The proposed alternative education plan, Attachment A, includes student achievement criteria.

As part of its request for an alternative accreditation plan for Albemarle County Community Public Charter School, Albemarle County Public Schools is requesting waivers of the following section of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* so that adjustments may be made to the accreditation calculations for accountability purposes.

8 VAC 20-131-280. Expectations for school accountability.

B. Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on achievement of the criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50 as specified below:  
1. The percentage of students passing the Virginia assessment program tests in the four core academic areas administered in the school, with the accreditation rating calculated on a trailing three-year average that includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or on the current year's scores, whichever is higher.

Albemarle County Public Schools is not requesting waivers from section 8 VAC 20-131-90 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Virginia Board of Education accept for first review the request for an alternative accreditation plan from Albemarle County Public Schools for the Albemarle County Community Public Charter School.

**Impact on Resources:**

None

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Final action will be requested at the June 23, 2011, meeting.

SA.0201 8/04

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

*Community Public Charter School  
Albemarle County Public Schools*

*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.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to 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.*

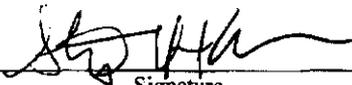
We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

3/10/2011

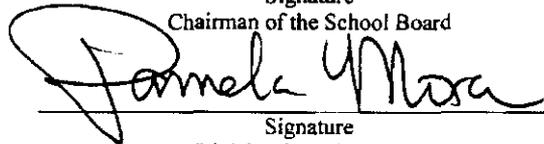
Date Approved  
by the Local School Board

3/18/2011

Submission Date



Signature  
Chairman of the School Board



Signature  
Division Superintendent

Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
**Community Public Charter School**  
**Albemarle County Public Schools**

**School Name:** Community Public Charter School

**Division:** Albemarle County

**School Address:** 901 Rose Hill Drive. Charlottesville Virginia, 22903

**Contact Person:** Ashby Kindler or Don Vale\_ **Phone:** 434 972-1607

**Email:** [akindler@k12albemarle.org](mailto:akindler@k12albemarle.org); [dvale@k12albemarle.org](mailto:dvale@k12albemarle.org)

**Proposed Duration of the Plan:** Three Years

**Grade Levels Served:** 6-8

**No. of Students Enrolled by Grade Level:**

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 13 Students
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 6 Students
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 17 Students

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

The mission of the Community Public Charter School is to provide an alternative and innovative learning environment, using the arts to help children in grades six through eight to learn in ways that match their learning styles; and to develop the whole child intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. The program will serve students who have not succeeded in schools by offering a balance of literacy tutorials and the arts-infused curriculum.

**Goals:**

- Expand opportunities for students who have not been successful in school, using the arts as a means of increasing literacy skills, expression, discovery, invention and reflection;
- Create an intimate educational setting designed to engage and empower each student to think critically, creatively and reflectively;
- Provide opportunities for students to achieve in literary, performing, and visual arts;
- Help students learn self-responsibility, self-discipline, self-direction and self-nurturing;
- Create possibilities in which all students are an important part of something larger than themselves: family, school, community, and world.
- Design extensive process-oriented activities that result in a balance of process and product;
- Integrate educational experiences within the community and solicit active involvement from parents and others;
- Provide quality instruction by engaging and retaining a team of dedicated teachers and professional artists;
- Give students the skills to pursue their own goals and evaluate their own performance;

- Encourage family involvement as a contributor to success; and
- Teach students to think like artists.

**II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

Community Public Charter School serves students in grades 6-8 who are behind grade level in mathematics and /or reading, who are not performing up to their potential in traditional schools, and who may benefit from a smaller environment with an arts-infused focus. All Albemarle County Public School students entering grades 6-8 are eligible to apply for enrollment. Our target population includes students who are one or more years below grade level, or who have not experienced optimum success in school. Students are identified by their teachers, counselors, administrators or parents and with parent/guardian support, apply for admission to CPCS. We accept, but do not specifically target, students who are identified as needing special education services. If there are more applicants than spaces, students will be selected by lottery. Current enrollment demographics provide for a fully diverse school with percentages within the range of demographics found in other Albemarle County Public Middle Schools.

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

Community Public Charter School teaches the core subjects of language arts, social studies, math, and science with an arts infused and technology focus. The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a comprehensive curriculum that is customized through an arts and technology focus to support the mission of the school. All students have access to the full range of courses offered in Albemarle County Public Middle Schools.

With Choice Theory as our philosophical base, we strive to help students gain more responsibility in their socio-emotional lives as well as in their academics. We offer much choice in learning activities and place a high value on student/teacher and student/student relationships. Choice Theory and William Glasser's Quality Schools movement guide the ways in which we interact with students. When students are disruptive or unable to attend to the behavioral or work expectations in a class, we use Choice Theory practices to help them identify root causes and make a plan for their return to class rather than simply assigning more traditional disciplinary consequences. This may take the form of a short individual conference with the classroom teacher or a more formal process with the administration to create a written plan of action.

Reading intervention is core to students' curriculum with an integration of several reading programs: "Istation", Read 180, and Wilson Reading. These three programs are research-based reading programs showing excellent potential for rapid growth. Assessments measure growth frequently and provide immediate feedback to both students and the teachers identifying strengths and weaknesses. Focus areas and lesson recommendations are provided based upon the results.

Istation supports reading for all students through the content areas of science and social studies. Content area teachers use this program to support literacy, comprehension, decoding and vocabulary. Assessments are administered at least monthly and provide specific information on

overall reading, comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and text fluency based upon a tier growth model.

Read 180 is for students who are two years behind. Whole group and small group materials provided systematic instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary. Small group rotations provide individualized instruction through matched “rBooks” and computer-based programs working on fluency, reading comprehension and vocabulary through modeled and independent reading. This is taught by a reading specialist.

Wilson Reading is designed for those students who are significantly behind. Throughout the program, a ten step lesson plan, designed to be interactive between teacher and student, is followed, assuring that all essential components of reading instruction are addressed in each lesson. A systematic and cumulative approach to teaching total word structure for decoding and encoding is a primary focus. Frequent criterion-based assessments at each of the 12 levels provide feedback and direction for student growth. This is taught by a reading specialist/special education teacher.

Students participate in arts related activities on and off our campus including blacksmithing, music lessons with professional musicians, visiting artists, and community service.

Community Public Charter School is staffed with highly qualified teachers certified to teach all core areas. Currently, teacher/pupil ratio is 8-1 in core classes. We have a half-time art teacher. Paraprofessionals are utilized to serve as instructional assistants and resources for students. We have one full-time special education teacher. Additional pupil support is provided by two full-time counselors provided by local mental health agencies, by Albemarle County special education support, and by volunteers.

Our students will transition either to one of three comprehensive high schools, or to a smaller alternative charter high school in Albemarle County. All students are provided with guidance services and transition planning to optimize their transition to the high school level. Academic and socio-emotional growth are key components within our program design. Students will be fully prepared to enter the high school programs offered in Albemarle County Public Schools. Our goal is for our students to be placed in standard level or higher classes as opposed to self-contained or remedial classes.

#### **IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

All students will participate in grade level SOL tests in all core areas. All requirements of NCLB will be met through the planned assessments and program offerings. Additionally, students will be assessed using MAP, “Istation” monthly assessments, CRI’s, Read 180 assessments, SOL released tests, school division common benchmark assessments, and authentic standards based assessments.

#### **V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F. of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, because we are a school within an existing middle school that meets all pre-accreditation eligibility requirements, all students have access to the full offerings and required accreditation standards of any middle school student in Albemarle County.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* are not available.)**

No waivers are being requested. The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a full comprehensive grade level curriculum that is customized to support the mission of the school. Assessment will be provided as required by NCLB.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

The alternative accreditation index model will hold the Community Public Charter School accountable for increasing the achievement levels of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) in reading and mathematics and use science and history and social science and other indicators of school and student performance that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school as value-added components. The plan includes academic achievement measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school.

Student achievement is a fundamental component in determining the accreditation status of Virginia's public schools. The alternative accreditation index model will measure student achievement based on students' progress in moving from proficient to advanced levels of performance on Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. The index will have a primary focus on reading and mathematics achievement. The index is based on a set of core achievement objectives and measures (SOL test scores and other indicators).

An alternative accreditation index score (0 to 100 points) will be calculated primarily based on the total number of students performing at each proficiency level in reading and mathematics.

Standards of Learning index points are assigned for student performance on the SOL tests by multiplying the number of student scores at each level by the points awarded, adding the total points earned, and dividing by the total number of student scores. Additional index points may be earned for meeting performance measures in the core "other academic" and optional objectives categories.

The alternative accreditation index score for each content area (English and mathematics) is calculated by combining the SOL index score and the additional index points.

An alternative accreditation composite index score of at least 70 points must be earned in both English and mathematics in grades 6-8 to achieve *Fully Accredited* status. 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.

Basis for Accreditation:

Strategies used to evaluate student progress are aligned to the mission and purpose of our school and include academic achievement measures for all students.

If the Community Public Charter school does not meet full accreditation based on the SOA, then for the purposes of calculating state accreditation, test results for all students in reading and mathematics will be included as follows:

- A scale score of 500-600 will be weighted at 110 points
- A scale score of 400-499 will be weighted at 100 points
- A scale score of 375-399 will be weighted at 60 points
- A scale score below 375 will carry no points in the calculation

Additionally the school will receive recognition in the calculation for core other academic indicators for improvement in the following categories measuring reading:

- Istation Reading Program Tier Growth\*
- Read 180 Growth grade level equivalent from Lexile score\*
- Wilson Reading program growth\*
- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in reading\*
- CRI (composite reading index) growth\*

Each student will only be counted in only one of the reading categories.\* This will depend on the program in which they receive instruction. Various programs are used to meet the individual needs of students.

There are assessments used to track student growth in reading. Since every student is not enrolled in Wilson or Read 180, each student will be tracked for accountability purposes with one of the assessments above. This will also address the various assessment needs of students with disabilities enrolled in the program. For example, one type of assessment may be more visual in nature than verbal, but all assess reading growth. Students may demonstrate growth in reading through these various assessments but may only be counted once toward earning points in this accreditation model.

For other areas:

- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in mathematics
- Recovering students pass rates in mathematics and reading
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade science SOL pass rate
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade civics SOL pass rate
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade writing SOL pass rate

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) is a research based assessment program that is nationally normed and provides a “Rasch unIT” (RIT) score as well as a growth goal target score. MAP assessments provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on his/her unique learning path. It is information teachers can use in the classroom to help every child, every day. Understanding each student’s academic level gives teachers the power to help them excel. MAP computerized adaptive assessments are the tools that make it possible to build curriculum and meet students’ needs, one child at a time. Rasch unIT is a unit of measure that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement. Rasch unIT scores create an equal-interval scale. This score is independent of the age or grade of the student, and reflects the instructional level at which the student is currently performing.

Growth is defined as the change in a student's score and improvement in achievement over time. Individual growth targets are defined as the average amount of RIT growth observed for students who started the year with the same RIT score as the individual student.

The spring assessment in both reading and math will provide evidence of the number of students who are able to meet or exceed their growth goal. No students will be double counted which means points in reading or math can only be earned once in this accreditation model when looking at the multiple measures and assessments.

Social studies and science were given less focus in assessment and accreditation since reading and mathematics are the target focus areas in our school.

The recovery pass rate (students in grades 3-8 who failed a previous year's assessment in reading and mathematics, but subsequently passed the assessment at the next grade level in the current year) for Albemarle County Public schools overall ranges from 40% for students with disabilities in reading to 72% for Hispanic students in mathematics. For all students, the recovery pass rate in reading is 55% and in mathematics is 62%. Recovery rates are considered in the proposed alternative accreditation plan.

SOL Scaled Score	SOL Proficiency Level	Points Awarded Each SOL Score
500 - 600	Pass Advanced	110
400 - 499	Pass Proficient	100
375 - 399	Fail	60
Below 375	Fail	0

<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (Students counted once in any of the reading categories)</b>	
<b>Istation Reading Program</b> Tier Growth Grades 6-8 Current Fall 2010: Tier 3 students (13 students) 6 <sup>th</sup> - 25%, (3 students) 7 <sup>th</sup> - 29%, (2 students) 8 <sup>th</sup> - 47% (8 students)	Tier 3 movement to Tier 2 1 point Tier 2 movement to Tier 1 2 points Tier 3 movement to Tier 1 3 points  Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (Students counted once in any of the reading categories)</b>	
<b>Read 180 Growth</b> grade level equivalent from Lexile score Current Fall 2010 6 students participating – grade level equivalent range 1-4	Growth of 1 year 1 point Growth of 1.5 years 2 points Growth of 2 or more years 3 points  Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (Students counted once in any of the reading categories)</b>	
<b>Wilson Reading</b> program growth Current Fall 2010 4 students participating	Growth of 1 year 1 point Growth of 1.5 years 2 points Growth of 2 or more years 3 points  Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (Students counted once in any of the reading categories)</b>	
<b>MAP</b> (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in Reading and Mathematics administered 3 times/yr Current Fall 2010 Reading 19 of 29 below benchmark (65.5%) Math 25 of 36 below benchmark (69.4%)	Each student who meets or exceeds their <b>Rasch unIT</b> (RIT) growth goal will earn 1 point.

<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (Students counted once in any of the reading categories)</b>		
<b>CRI</b> (composite reading index) growth Current Fall 2010 13 of 17 below grade level (76.4%)	Growth of 1 year	1 point
	Growth of 1.5 years	2 points
	Growth of 2 or more years	3 points
	Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points	
<b>Optional Objectives</b>		
<b>Recovering</b> students pass rates in mathematics and reading Current number of students in recovery Math 11 of 36      30.5% Reading 13 of 36    36.1%	70% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	2 point
	80% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	3 points
	90% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	4 points
	<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)</b>	
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science SOL</b> pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)</b>		
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Civics SOL</b> pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
<b>Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)</b>		
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing SOL</b> pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points

**VIII. Describe who was involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

The plan was developed by Albemarle staff and was approved by the local board.

**IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

Community Public Charter School targets students who have not felt successful in other public schools. As a result, many of our students are below grade level in reading, have never passed an SOL test or have had significant failure in school. For this reason, our plan includes multiple measures of student growth in addition to the SOL targets. Student success is viewed in terms of gains made as well as achieving objective targets.

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Community Public Charter School  
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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>			
8. 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		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		



## **Summary of Major Elements:**

As indicated in Attachments A and B, both the Kilmer and Key Centers are special purpose schools. Fairfax County Public Schools is requesting approval of alternative accreditation plans for the Kilmer and Key Centers.

Students attending the Kilmer and Key Centers are ages 5-21 and have been found eligible for special education services. Students are identified with the following special education designations: intellectually disabled--severe, intellectually disabled--moderate, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, and/or autism. All students have significant cognitive disabilities, are significantly below age-/grade-level in their academic performance and receive instruction in self-contained classrooms.

For the accreditation ratings in 2010 based on assessments in 2009-2010, both Kilmer and Key Centers met full accreditation without the use of the alternative accreditation plan approved by the Virginia Board of Education on February 19, 2009.

All students at the Kilmer and Key Centers participate in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP). In order to participate in the VAAP, students meet the following criteria as required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE):

- have an IEP;
- demonstrate severe cognitive disabilities;
- need extensive, direct instruction in a curriculum based on Aligned Standards of Learning;
- require intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in a variety of settings to show achievement; and
- are working on goals other than those for a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma.

The VAAP is administered to all students. It has been determined that students at both Kilmer and Key Centers demonstrate skills from the 3-month level up to approximately the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade levels (up through age 21). This significant gap between the functioning level of many Kilmer and Key Center students and the lowest levels of the VAAP make it extremely difficult for students to demonstrate proficiency on many of the Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL). Thus, these students require additional measures to determine if they are making sufficient progress in their instructional programs. These measures are proposed as part of the alternative accreditation plan outlined in Attachments A and B.

Students with severe intellectual disabilities require additional time to learn and generalize the most basic skills and, thus, remain in school longer than the typical four years. Kilmer and Key Center students remain in school until their eligibility runs out at age 22, at which time they are transitioned into a private facility. Both centers work closely with the Fairfax County Community Services Board (CSB) to place students in appropriate facilities. However, CSB will not accept clients who still have school eligibility, and with no placement options, students remain at Kilmer and Key Center until age 22.

Most of the Kilmer and Key Center students who leave the school before age 22 do so for medical reasons. These students appear as dropouts when they withdraw for health reasons. Due to the fragility of some of the Kilmer and Key Center students, extreme medical conditions should not equate to dropping out of school. For this reason, Kilmer and Key Centers propose adjustments to the graduation rate as indicated in Attachments A and B.

As part of its request for alternative accreditation plans for Kilmer and Key Centers, Fairfax County Public Schools is requesting waivers of the following sections of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* so that adjustments may be made to accreditation calculations and to the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) for accountability purposes.

8 VAC 20-131-280. Expectations for school accountability.

B. Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on achievement of the criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50 as specified below:

1. The percentage of students passing the Virginia assessment program tests in the four core academic areas administered in the school, with the accreditation rating calculated on a trailing three-year average that includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or on the current year's scores, whichever is higher.
2. The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education. The accreditation rating of any school with a twelfth grade shall be determined based on achievement of required SOL pass rates and percentage points on the board's graduation and completion index. School accreditation shall be determined by the school's current year index points or a trailing three-year average of index points that includes the current year and the two most recent years, whichever is higher. The Board of Education's graduation and completion index shall include weighted points for diploma graduates (100 points), GED recipients (75 points), students not graduating but still in school (70 points), and students earning certificates of program completion (25 points). The Board of Education's graduation and completion index shall account for all students in the graduating class's ninth-grade cohort, plus students transferring in, minus students transferring out and deceased students. Those students who are not included in one of the preceding categories will also be included in the index.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Virginia Board of Education accept for first review the request for alternative accreditation plans from Fairfax County Public Schools for Kilmer and Key Centers.

**Impact on Resources:**

None

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Final action will be requested at the June 23, 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.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to 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.*

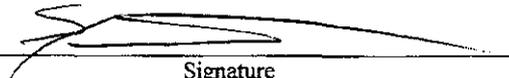
We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

3/24/11

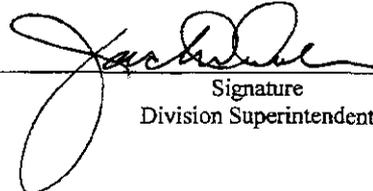
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Date Approved  
by the Local School Board

3/28/11

\_\_\_\_\_  
Submission Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Chairman of the School Board



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Division Superintendent

**Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
Kilmer Center  
Fairfax County Public Schools**

**School Name:** Kilmer Center  
**Division:** Fairfax County Public Schools  
**School Address:** 8102 Wolftrap Road, Vienna, VA 22182  
**Contact Person:** Mr. Michael Marsallo  
**Telephone Number:** 571-226-8449  
**Email:** [Michael.Marsallo@fcps.edu](mailto:Michael.Marsallo@fcps.edu)  
**Proposed Duration:** Three Years  
**Grade Levels Served:** Ages 5-21, Special Education, ungraded  
**Number of Students enrolled by grade:** 78 students: 1@K; 2@ 1; 5@ 2; 5@3; 1@4; 5@ 5;  
2@ 6; 1@ 7; 6@ 8; 8@9; 6@ 10; 33@ 11 (ages 16-20);  
3@ 12

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

**Mission:** Kilmer Center strives to be a school that

- provides an enriched, stimulating, and safe educational environment for all, where students can be challenged toward greater levels of independence and integrated into the community;
- provides opportunities for students to experience the general curriculum; and
- works with families to promote cooperative relationships that enhance their quality of life.

**Vision:** Kilmer Center will be a school in which

- students are taught by qualified, enthusiastic staff;
- collaborative teaching occurs;
- students are taught from a structured curriculum;
- technology is used to enhance instruction and communication; and
- a school-wide approach to discipline is incorporated.

**Commitments:** To achieve our shared vision, we will

- develop curricular opportunities that are based upon students' strengths;
- utilize current technology and other strategies that maximize student involvement;
- align curriculum with local, state and national expectations;
- use data to make curricular/behavioral decisions/develop common assessments;
- attend relevant staff development opportunities and use acquired information to improve instruction;
- develop relevant communication systems that all students will use;
- group students as a team, for educational and behavioral purposes; and
- celebrate our successes together!

**Goals:** Through our shared mission, common vision, and collaborative commitments, we will

- improve student performance on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives, and
- improve student performance on local, state, and national assessments.

**II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

**Students**

- The 78 students at Kilmer Center are ages 5-21 and have been found eligible for special education services. Students are identified with the following special education designations: intellectually disabled--severe, intellectually disabled, multiple disabilities, and/or autism.
- All students have significant cognitive disabilities, are significantly below age/grade level in their academic performance and receive instruction in self-contained classrooms.
- Fifteen (15) students receive homebound instruction and are unable to attend school (even with nursing services) because of their medically fragile condition.
- Thirty (30) students receive services as students who are intellectually disabled--severe, use wheelchairs, and function in the 3-12 month range, based upon testing used for eligibility for special education services and IEP team decisions.
- Twenty-three (23) students receive services as students who are intellectually disabled--severe, are ambulatory, and function in the 6-18 month range based upon testing used for eligibility for special education services and IEP team decisions.
- Five (5) students receive services as intellectually disabled, based upon testing for eligibility for special education services and IEP team decisions. These students function no higher than the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade level.
- Five (5) students have autism and are functioning no higher than the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade level, based upon educational testing, IEP team decisions, and classroom performance.
- Thirty-eight (38) of the above students receive support from teachers of students with visual and hearing impairments and an audiologist.
- Sixty-six (66) students receive speech/language services; 49 receive occupational therapy services; 34 receive physical therapy services; and four (4) receive nursing services while in school and during transport to and from school.
- Student demographics reflect: 60% male; 40% female; Asian 37%; Black 8%; Hispanic 20%; white 39%; other 6%; 32% of the students receive free/reduced priced meals.

**Placement**

- Kilmer Center is a public day school and is considered the most restrictive educational placement along the continuum of options available within Fairfax County Public Schools, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA).
- Students are placed at Kilmer Center through the IEP process, based upon a consensus of the IEP team (including parents) that the school is the least restrictive educational placement for the student. Prior to the IEP meeting, a student's goals and objectives are drafted by the educational team consisting of classroom staff and related service providers. Parental input is also sought, and the goals and objectives are formally presented at the meeting.
- Parents must sign an agreement at the IEP meeting to place their student at the Kilmer Center. Parents participate in the placement process and have the right to appeal the recommended placement if they disagree with the consensus of the IEP team. IEPs are conducted at least annually.
- At least every three years, more extensive evaluations may be completed to access the most up-to-date information available when determining placement. This re-evaluation may include a psychological evaluation, social case history, and updated evaluations by the teacher and other specialists.

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

- Students at Kilmer Center follow a modified instructional program based upon the following areas: personal management, recreation and leisure, school and community, vocational, motor skills, functional academics, communication, and social competence. Additionally, instruction in the core academic areas of reading, mathematics, science, and social studies is embedded throughout instruction which support the Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL).
- Students are taught by highly-qualified teachers who are licensed and endorsed as special education teachers (severe disabilities, mental retardation, special education, adapted curriculum) by the Virginia Department of Education and as directed in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004*. Students are also provided support by classroom assistants.
- Because of their unique and complex medical and behavioral needs, students are supported by the following specialists: adapted physical education teachers; a music therapist; itinerant teachers for the visually impaired and hearing impaired; speech/language clinicians; physical and occupational therapists; a psychologist; a social worker; a vocational coordinator; and nurses (as a related service for four students).
- Students are placed at Kilmer Center because of the following conditions: cognitive and physical limitations; very challenging behaviors; and complex medical reasons that warrant such a restrictive placement. Thus, it is not a “neighborhood” school—Kilmer Center draws students from approximately half of the school system’s boundary areas.
- The school has arranged for a monthly consultation from a psychiatrist to assist families in the behavioral/medical management of the child.
- In-home support to families is coordinated by the school social worker through child specific teams, which has identified resources for respite, behavior management, and day-to-day supplies and care.
- Students are transported on special education buses from their homes to school and back. Every bus has an attendant to monitor health and behavioral concerns during transport. Nurses ride the bus to and from school with the students they support.
- The instructional program utilizes modified instructional materials, such as the Edmark reading and mathematics programs, mathematics for non-readers, step-up mathematics, e-books developed by teachers, online resources (News-to-You; EdHelper), augmentative communication devices, and the use of picture symbols for communication.
- Students are placed in classes with four to seven students supported by a teacher and two support staff.
- A majority of instruction has a teacher to student ratio of 1:1, and every student is on schedule to receive a Special Diploma.
- Technology is used to provide a means to communicate (augmentative communication devices), access/control of the environment (switches), and instructional support (e-books).
- The instructional program is drawn from the Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL) and IEP goals in essential life skills areas.

**Transition Planning**

- Students are provided regular opportunities to develop skills outside of the school through community based instruction for academic, leisure, and vocational skills.

- At least annually, each student is considered for placement in a less restrictive educational setting by the IEP team. Approximately five to ten students successfully transition to less restrictive educational placements annually.
- Due to the nature of the challenging behaviors of some students, it may be necessary to refer the student to a more restrictive educational placement, either in a private day school or private residential school, if successful intervention strategies cannot be implemented.
- Prior to graduation, students and parents are invited to visit potential sites where adult services are offered. If acceptable, the student transitions from school to adult services.

**IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

- Quarterly progress reports are issued on IEP goals and objectives.
- Data are collected at regular intervals through checklists, observations, and noting student participation as determined by the individual student's IEP.
- Brigance Inventory of Early Development is administered annually, at the time of the IEP.
- Re-evaluation testing is conducted at least every three years, which may include testing by the psychologist, social worker, teacher(s), and related service providers (speech, physical and occupational therapy).

**V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, Kilmer Center meets Virginia's pre-accreditation eligibility requirements in terms of promotion/retention policies, coursework that promotes graduation, instructional programs to accommodate the student population, leadership and staffing requirements, and safety provisions.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* and the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* are not available.)**

8 VAC 20-131-280.B.1 Expectations for School Accountability – Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; The percentage of students passing the Virginia assessment program tests in the four academic areas administered in the school, with the accreditation rating calculated on a trailing three-year average that includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or on the current year's scores, whichever is higher.

All students at Kilmer Center participate in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP), as determined through the IEP process. In order to participate in the VAAP, students meet the following criteria as required by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE):

- have an IEP;
- demonstrate severe cognitive disabilities;
- need extensive, direct instruction in a curriculum based on Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL);
- require intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in a variety of settings to show achievement; and

- are working on goals other than those for a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma.

The VAAP, which identifies ASOL, is first administered at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level with identified skills as low as the Kindergarten level. It has been determined that students at Kilmer Center demonstrate skills from the three-month level up to approximately the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade levels (up through age 21). This significant gap between the functioning level of many Kilmer Center students and the lowest levels of the VAAP make it extremely difficult for our students to demonstrate proficiency on many of the ASOL and, thus, they require additional measures to determine if they are making sufficient progress in their instructional programs.

- 8 VAC 20-1313-280.B.2 Expectations for School Accountability – Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; (in part) The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education. Specifically,
- a. A benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation rating
  - b. A “Provisionally Accredited” rating may be achieved in years 2011 to 2015, with 80 to 84 points respectively
  - c. The graduation and completion index is based upon program completion four years after a student enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade

Students with intellectual disabilities (severe) require additional time to learn and generalize the most basic skills and thus remain in school longer than the typical four years. Kilmer Center students remain in school until their eligibility runs out at age 22, at which time they are usually transitioned into a private facility. Kilmer Center works closely with the Fairfax County Community Services Board (CSB) to place students in appropriate facilities. However, CSB will not accept clients who still have school eligibility, and with no placement options, students remain at Kilmer Center until age 22. Those Kilmer Center students who leave the school before age 22 often do so for medical reasons. These students appear as dropouts when they withdraw for health reasons (Code W830). Under the current Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) guidelines, all dropouts receive 0 points. Due to the fragility of some of Kilmer Center’s students, extreme medical conditions should not equate to dropping out of school.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school’s accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

- Virginia Alternate Assessment Program
- Graduation Data
- Alternative Accreditation Plan (below)

**Alternative Accreditation Plan – Academic Content Areas**

All Kilmer Center students participate in the VAAP for the purpose of determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and meeting the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. To determine state accreditation, scores from the VAAP will be the first measure used, followed by the consideration of alternative criteria based upon data from the VAAP and other measures of student progress.

**Measure # 1**

Virginia Alternate Assessment Program scores will be used to determine student achievement during the previous academic year and over a three-year average when state adjustments are applied. If student scores on the VAAP meet the accreditation benchmarks for Standard 8 VAC20-131-280, no adjustment will be necessary. If a core academic area fails to meet accreditation standards, an alternate accreditation calculation (Measure #2) will be implemented.

**Measure # 2 – Alternate Accreditation Calculation**

Points will be assigned to each student’s score in the grade level and content area (i.e., English, mathematics, science, and history/social science) that did not meet the accreditation benchmark, based on the performance level each student achieved on the VAAP and the cut scores identified by the VDOE.

**Alternative Accreditation Index Score Calculations Illustrated****Calculation:****Total Points/Total Number of Students = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Content Area:</b>		<b>Accreditation Benchmark:</b>		
<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Pass Advanced		125		
Pass Proficient		100		
1 point below VAAP cut score		90		
More than 1 point below cut score		0		
<b>TOTAL</b>				

To achieve VDOE accreditation for each content area of the VAAP, student scores must meet the grade-level accreditation benchmarks or alternate benchmarks as determined by VDOE.

Example of Measure #2 Alternative Accreditation Index Score Calculations**Calculation:****Total Points/Total Number of Students = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Content Area:</b> English – Grades 6 to 12		<b>Accreditation</b>		
<b>Benchmark:</b> 70				
<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Pass Advanced	8	125	1000	
Pass Proficient	5	100	500	
1 point below VAAP cut score	0	90	0	
More than 1 point below cut score	9	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>1500</b>	<b>68.2</b>

If the accreditation benchmark is not achieved after Measure #2 adjustments are applied, Measure #3 criteria will be utilized.

### Measure # 3

- A. Three (3) points will be added to the total score for each student who transitions from Kilmer Center to a special education placement in a less restrictive educational setting.
- B. Three (3) points will be added to the total score if 90% of all students participated in at least four technology-based lessons (e.g., SmartBoard, e-books, etc.) per month according to Achievement Indicators from the Kilmer Center School Improvement Plan (FCPS) for the current year.
- C. Three (3) points will be added to the total score if 90% of all secondary students accessed vocational workshops and participated in vocational activities at least once a week, as identified in the achievement indicators from the Kilmer Center School Improvement Plan (FCPS) for the current year.

### Example of Measure #3 Alternative Accreditation Index Score Calculations

The following table reflects the addition of six points for meeting two of the criteria listed in Measure #3.

#### Calculation:

**Total Points/Total Number of Students + Additional Points = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Content Area:</b> English – Grades 6 to 12		<b>Accreditation Benchmark:</b>		
70				
<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Pass Advanced	8	125	1000	
Pass Proficient	5	100	500	
1 point below VAAP cut score	0	90	0	
More than 1 point below cut score	9	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	22		1500	68.2
<b>ADDITIONAL POINTS for: A &amp; B</b>				6.0
<b>TOTAL</b>				74.2

### Alternative Accreditation Plan – Graduation and Completion index

As stated earlier, Kilmer Center students historically attend public school until their eligibility runs out. Therefore, students will be counted in GCI calculations when they receive a Special Education Diploma or reach the age of 22. Also, due to the fragility of some of Kilmer Center's students, students who leave due to extreme medical reasons will be removed from this cohort. (Documentation will be kept on file at the school.)

Under VDOE regulations, a benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation using the following point values assigned to the GCI:

<b>Diploma/Certificate/Other</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Board recognized diplomas	100
Dropouts	0

In addition, five (5) points will be added to the total score if 50% of the graduating class transitions into adult services placement upon graduation.

## Example of Graduation and Completion Index Calculations

**Calculation:**  
**Total Points/Total Number of Students = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Diploma/Certificate/Other</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Board recognized diplomas	100	9	900	
Dropouts	0	2	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>		11	900	81.8
ADDITIONAL POINTS for successful transition of 50% of graduates	5			5
<b>TOTAL</b>				86.8

Kilmer Center will be *Fully Accredited* when its eligible students meet the grade level or alternate benchmarks for achievement and the 85 point accreditation benchmark for graduation as outlined under the alternative measures above.

### **VIII. Identify those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

Michael Marsallo, Principal, Kilmer Center

Carol Jordan, Assistant Principal, Kilmer Center

Selected staff members, Kilmer Center School and PTA

Kathy Oliver, Director, Office of Student Testing, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

Michelle Rahal, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

Kendra Chapman, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

### **IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

- Virginia Alternate Assessment Program test results as determined by VDOE
- Virginia On-time Graduation data and graduation data collected via Fairfax County Public School's Student Information System
- Achievement indicators from the annual Kilmer Center School Improvement Plan

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.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to 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.

3/24/11

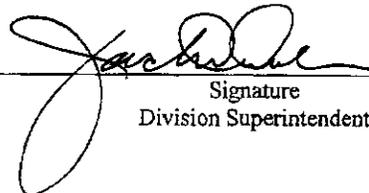
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved  
by the Local School Board

3/28/11

\_\_\_\_\_  
Submission Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Chairman of the School Board



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Division Superintendent

**Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
Key Center  
Fairfax County Public Schools**

**School Name:** Key Center  
**Division:** Fairfax County Public Schools  
**School Address:** 6404 Franconia Road, Springfield, VA 22150  
**Contact Person:** Mr. Tom Flick  
**Telephone Number:** 703-313-4000  
**Email:** [Thomas.Flick@fcps.edu](mailto:Thomas.Flick@fcps.edu)  
**Proposed Duration:** Three Years  
**Grade Levels Served:** Ages 5-22, Special Education, ungraded  
**Number of Students enrolled by grade:** 113 total students: 7@K; 4 @1<sup>st</sup>; 5 @2<sup>nd</sup>; 6@3<sup>rd</sup>; 9@4<sup>th</sup>; 12 @5<sup>th</sup>; 5 @6<sup>th</sup>; 3 @7<sup>th</sup>; 5@8<sup>th</sup>; 7 @ 9<sup>th</sup>; 11@10<sup>th</sup>; 33 @11<sup>th</sup>(ages 16-20); 6 @12<sup>th</sup>

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

**Vision**

Key Center School creates an educational climate where diversity and individuality are celebrated and respected, and where all staff continually strives to maximize the potential of each student through increasingly higher expectations.

**School Mission Statement**

Key Center School will set high expectations, create opportunities, and expect success for all students.

**Core Values/Beliefs**

- Relationships built upon the unique differences of our staff, students, and families create a dynamic learning environment.
- All students are capable of learning and deserve an engaging, challenging, and motivating environment.
- Learning occurs at all times and across all domains of a student's life.
- All students have a voice.
- The teacher's role is to motivate, provide instruction, check for understanding, and continuously assess student needs.

**II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

Students attending Key Center School are between five (5) and twenty-two (22) years of age. Areas of eligibility for students include mental retardation, moderate retardation, severe disabilities, autism, and traumatic brain injury. Nearly forty percent (40%) of Key Center's students are on free or reduced status for school meals. Students who attend Key Center may live forty minutes from the school, but still reside in the half of Fairfax County served by the center.

Key Center School is a public day school with all students found eligible for special education services. Integration opportunities are provided by bringing general education peers into Key Center. One group of students from Key Middle School assists on a daily basis. Another integration opportunity takes Key Center students to a neighborhood elementary school, and a third integration program has peer groups from Lee High School visiting Key Center students on a monthly basis.

Concurrent conditions occur with most, if not all, Key Center students; these may include motorical or physical challenges, medical needs, and behavioral issues. A majority of students need support and close monitoring during mealtime for safe consumption of meals. Thirty-one (31) students have gastronomy tubes for caloric intake; some in this group may take additional nutrition orally. Five (5) students require full-time private nursing supports during the school day which is approved through the county health department. Some students are building their resistance and/or endurance for the school day; therefore, they attend classes on a part-time basis until their strength or condition improves, if possible. Student health conditions often develop over the course of the school year that may require extended absences; this includes surgical needs and/or hospitalizations. Consequently, the school has a full-time homebound teacher to provide homebound services as needed.

Key Center students are grouped within classroom settings based on their educational needs and supports for programming. Center-based classrooms contain seven to eight students supported by a classroom teacher, a public health training assistant, and a public health attendant. In addition, Key Center has a reduced ratio group of classes entitled "Transition Program" for the purpose of providing intensive behavioral interventions. Students who attend these classes have demonstrated frequent and intense challenges in their previous classroom settings and require specific behavior plans and supports. The classroom teams have the same staffing for personnel to more adequately address the needs of these students. The overall goal is to assist these students in managing their skill and/or communication deficits in order to return to a school-based setting.

Parent involvement is both encouraged and expected with regard to educational programming. Parents attend annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and advocate for their child's needs. Additional parent meetings or IEPs are often held throughout the school year to address changes in student performance or to discuss concerns about a student's involvement in their educational program. In addition to teachers and parents attending these meetings, specialists, clinical team members, and administrative personnel offer multiple perspectives and a variety of resources for the benefit of the students. Parent groups and trainings are held throughout the school year to expand parental expertise, as well as to inform families of additional support for students and their families.

Each student has an opportunity to undergo a full evaluation every three years. The school psychologist performs psychological testing when needed, and the social worker completes an adaptive skill review and updates the family socio-cultural information. In addition, classroom teachers perform yearly educational testing that provides consistent reflection on student performance in all areas.

Students may demonstrate a more consistent response to their educational programming at Key Center School. When this occurs, a review of the student's educational setting and transitions are discussed to consider alternative options for school settings. Additional resources and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) staff members are accessed to help make the transition positive for the student. Parents visit and observe these recommended settings so that they may also ensure that adequate supports will be in place to facilitate a smooth transition into a successful educational setting for the student. Students who age out of Key Center are often moved to a day support facility. Key Center's vocational coordinator and social worker are heavily involved in supporting these secondary-aged students and their families as they move from our setting to a post-secondary option after they finish their education with FCPS.

**THREE-YEAR DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY  
KEY CENTER SCHOOL**

**Student Membership Demographics and Supplemental Programs (as of June for each school year)**

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>Enrollment</b>	#	%	#	%	#	%
English for Speakers of Other Languages	22	20.18	21	18.26	22	18.33
Special Education Services	109	100.00	115	100.00	120	100.00

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>Gender</b>	#	%	#	%	#	%
Female	33	30.28	36	31.30	42	35.00
Male	76	69.72	79	68.70	78	65.00

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	#	%	#	%	#	%
Asian or Pacific Islander	14	12.84	17	14.78	17	14.17
Black (Not of Hispanic Origin)	23	21.10	22	19.13	23	19.17
Hispanic	23	21.10	26	22.61	30	25.00
White (Not of Hispanic Origin)	42	38.53	42	36.52	39	32.50
Other	7	6.42	8	6.96	11	9.17

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>English Proficiency</b>	#	%	#	%	#	%
English Proficient	55	50.46	66	57.39	68	56.67
Limited English Proficient	54	49.54	49	42.61	52	43.33

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>Free/Reduced - Priced Meals</b>	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	38	34.86	39	33.91	46	38.33
No	71	65.14	76	66.09	74	61.67

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
<b>Mobility Rate</b>	%		%		%	
Division	14.76		14.59		13.40	
School	NA		NA		NA	

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

**Staff/Methodologies**

Key Center School has highly-qualified staff. Most classroom teachers have received a master's degree or are in the process of earning one. Many have also reached the status of 'highly-qualified' and/or have an additional endorsement in severe disabilities. Teachers who have not yet reached highly-qualified

status or completed their endorsement are actively pursuing the status and anticipate receiving it by the end of this school year.

Teachers are teamed by grade level in order to participate in common planning time to meet, to discuss lessons, and to brainstorm curricular challenges. Planning time is available while students participate in specials, which consist of Music/Sensory class or Adapted Physical Education. Starting in the 2010-11 school year, Key Center initiated two new specials: Quest and Adaptive Dance. Quest involves activities built to expand literacy for students. During Quest class, students participate in guided reading, self-selected reading, working with words, and writing activities that make literacy interactive, fun, challenging, and engaging. Adaptive Dance is a creative movement-based program that encourages students to participate in a variety of movement and sensory related activities. Each student is given opportunities to internalize concepts while improving their balance and mobility, listening skills, and interactions with others. Students also have access to a modified Art class in order to access additional sensory and multi-modal experiences.

In addition to the many classroom-based and related service staff, Key Center has a clinical team composed of the principal, assistant principal, social worker, school nurse, a Fairfax County public health nurse, two part-time school psychologists, a vocational coordinator, and two behavior specialists. The team meets weekly to address school-wide, classroom-based, and individual student issues and concerns. Each clinical topic is reviewed, required actions are determined and a clinical team member is assigned to follow-up and report back on progress. Additional support personnel visit Key Center on a very frequent basis, including an audiologist, itinerants for vision and hearing, speech and language clinicians, occupational therapists, and physical therapists. These staff members support additional schools yet are based at Key Center, and they are often in our building over the course of the school day. Speech and language clinicians, itinerants, and therapists consult frequently with teachers to enhance the students' curricular program. Key Center School also has a teacher for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) who supports both students and our Parents as Educational Partners (PEP) program.

Key Center provides a wealth of training for staff members. In addition to professional development for classroom teachers and related service providers on topics specific to our student and staff needs, we offer paraprofessional training for public health assistants and public health attendants to promote and expand the skills of these staff members who support classroom programming. School based and district based staff members offer these trainings on a bi-weekly basis over the course of the school year. Staff members assisting in the Behavior Transition Program for students with behavioral challenges receive Professional Crisis Management (PCM) training to support students who are not always able to maintain positive responses to school challenges.

### **Special Purpose/ Methodologies**

Key Center School offers a functional life skills' curriculum that includes opportunities for improving academics, communication, and social skills. Our school improvement plan (SIP) reveals our commitment to addressing skills within a focus of Academics, Life Skills, and Responsibility to the Community. The school met annual measureable objectives for performance and participation in reading and mathematics under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 in each of the last three years as a result of the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) submissions. Students in grades 3-8 and 11 participate in the VAAP based on the school district testing schedule, as required by law. Despite academic success, Key Center did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) last year due to the other academic indicator--graduation.

All students receive accommodations in the classroom and through the transportation services of the district. Many students require an air conditioned vehicle as prescribed by a physician. A small number of students utilize a cab for their transportation to and from school. All buses and cabs include an

attendant to offer medical, social, and/or behavioral support. Students who have been assigned a nurse for medical stability also have the nurse accompany them on the bus to/from school.

Key Center emphasizes language development, as many students must rely on augmentative devices or alternative communication styles to express themselves. Each Key Center student has IEP goals that include mathematics and reading skills in addition to specific life skills. Adding mathematics and reading goals to IEP documents allows all students to consistently experience parallel portions of the VAAP that align to the Standards of Learning (SOL), yet the skills are task analyzed or broken down into increments to best meet individual learning needs. Students also participate in writing experiences to help foster familiarity and build writing skills. The Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL) are described to equate to student performance at the cognitive level of 60 months and are, therefore, extremely difficult for our students to attempt and master due to their cognitive deficits.

**IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

The student's goals and objectives are established and agreed upon by parents, teachers, and related service personnel at the annual IEP meeting. These IEP goals and objectives are reported to parents on a quarterly basis.

Teachers and related staff determine a score for each objective and goal based on a compilation of information from various sources. With the goals and objectives individualized, the method of data collection has to be individualized as well (one standard form would not meet everyone's needs). All teachers use some variation of data sheets. They may be data sheets provided by specific sources (ABA data sheet adaptation), probe data sheets provided by administrators, or excel documents created by teachers and therapists. Some of the data points used are frequency, prompting, reinforcement, and task/trial.

Re-evaluations are completed every three years. This includes testing by the classroom teacher, related service providers, the assigned school psychologist, and school social worker. In addition, all students are given the Brigance Inventory of Early Development on a pre- and post-school year assessment schedule.

**V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, Key Center meets Virginia's pre-accreditation eligibility requirements in terms of promotion/retention policies, coursework that promotes graduation, instructional programs to accommodate the student population, leadership and staffing requirements, and safety provisions.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia are not available.)**

8 VAC 20-131-280.B.1 Expectations for School Accountability – Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; The percentage of students passing the Virginia assessment program tests in the four academic areas administered in the school, with the accreditation rating calculated on a trailing three-year average that

includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or on the current year's scores, whichever is higher.

Key Center School students are assessed with the VAAP as determined by the IEP process. Every Key Center student meets the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) criteria for the alternate assessment because every student has a severe cognitive disability and has an IEP in effect. All students need direct and extensive instruction in a curriculum based on the ASOL. There is a significant gap between the functioning level of the students at Key Center, and the lowest levels of the VAAP, which make it extremely difficult for students to demonstrate proficiency in the ASOL. In addition, the students require frequent, intensive, and individualized instruction in a variety of settings to show progress. Key Center students are working on goals to achieve a Special Diploma; they are not eligible for a Modified Standard, Standard, or Advanced Studies Diploma. Therefore, Key Center students require a different measure to determine if they are making sufficient progress in their instructional programs.

8 VAC 20-1313-280.B.2 Expectations for School Accountability – Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; (in part) The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education. Specifically,

- a. A benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation rating
- b. A “Provisionally Accredited” rating may be achieved in years 2011 to 2015, with 80 to 84 points respectively
- c. The graduation and completion index is based upon program completion four years after a student enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade

Key Center students remain in school until their eligibility runs out at age 22, at which time they are usually transitioned into a private facility. Key Center works closely with the Fairfax County Community Services Board (CSB) to place students in appropriate facilities, but under the CSB bylaws, students cannot be placed until age 22. Those Key Center students who leave the school before age 22 often do so for medical reasons. These students appear as dropouts when they withdraw for health reasons (Code W830). Under the current GCI guidelines, all dropouts receive zero (0) points. Due to the fragility of some of Key Center's students, extreme medical conditions should not equate to dropping out of school.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

- Students will be assessed with the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program
- Graduation and accreditation will be based on the Alternate Accreditation Plan (described below)

**Alternative Accreditation Plan**

All Key Center students participate in the VAAP for the purpose of determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and meeting the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. To determine state accreditation, scores from the VAAP will be the first measure used, followed by the consideration of alternative criteria based upon data from the VAAP and other measures of student progress.

**Measure #1**

Virginia Alternate Assessment Program scores will be used to determine student achievement during the previous academic year and over a three-year average when state adjustments are applied. If student scores on the VAAP meet the accreditation benchmarks for Standard 8 VAC20-131-280, no adjustment

will be necessary. If a core academic area fails to meet accreditation standards, an alternate accreditation calculation (Measure #2) will be implemented.

**Measure #2 – Alternate Accreditation Calculation**

Points will be assigned to each student’s score in the grade level and content area (i.e., English, mathematics, science, and history/social science) that did not meet the accreditation benchmark, based on the performance level each student achieved on the VAAP and the cut scores identified by the VDOE.

<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Pass Advanced</b>	<b>Pass Proficient</b>	<b>1 point below cut score</b>	<b>More than 1 point below cut score</b>
<b>Point Value</b>	125	100	90	0

**Total Points/Total Number of Students = Composite Score (Accreditation Rating)**

To achieve VDOE accreditation for each content area of the VAAP, student scores must meet the grade-level accreditation benchmarks or alternate benchmarks as determined by VDOE.

Example of Measure #2

**Calculation:**

**Total Points/Total Number of Students = Composite Score (Accreditation Rating)**

<b>Content Area:</b> English - Grades 6 to 12		<b>Accreditation Benchmark:</b> 70		
<b>Performance Level</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Points</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Pass Advanced	11	125	1375	
Pass Proficient	32	100	3200	
1 point below VAAP cut score	3	90	270	
More than 1 point below cut score	10	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	56		4845	86.5

If the benchmark is not achieved in a content area, an alternate accreditation calculation (Measure #3) will be implemented.

**Measure #3 – Alternate Accreditation Calculation**

The composite scores from all four core academic areas (English, mathematics, history, and science) will be averaged to determine one overall composite score (accreditation rating).

Example of Measure #3

**Calculation:**

**Total Composite Score/4 (academic areas) = Composite Score (Accreditation Rating)**

<b>Accreditation Benchmark:</b> 75				
<b>Subject</b>	<b>English Composite</b>	<b>Mathematics Composite</b>	<b>History Composite</b>	<b>Science Composite</b>
<b>Composite Score</b>	98.0	89.0	85.0	92.0
			<b>Total Composite Score:</b> <b>365.0</b>	
			<b>Accreditation Rating:</b> <b>91.0</b>	

## Alternative Accreditation Plan – Graduation and Completion Index

As stated earlier, Key Center students historically attend public school until their eligibility runs out. Therefore, students will be counted in the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) calculations when they receive a Special Education Diploma or reach the age of 22. Also, due to the fragility of some of Key Center’s students, students who leave due to extreme medical reasons will be removed from this cohort. (Documentation will be kept on file at the school.)

Under VDOE regulations, a benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation using the following point values assigned to the GCI:

Diploma/Certificate/Other	Point Value
Board recognized diplomas (Special Diploma)	100
Dropouts (other than those who leave due to medical reasons, are placed in a private facility, or pass away)	0

In addition, five (5) points will be added to the total score if 50% of the graduating class transitions into adult services placement upon graduation.

### Example of Graduation and Completion Index Calculations

#### Calculation:

**Total Points/Total Number of Students + Additional Points = Accreditation Rating**

Diploma/Certificate/Other	Point Value	Number of Students	Total Points	Accreditation Rating
Board recognized diplomas	100	25	2500	
Dropouts	0	3	0	
TOTAL		28	2500	89.3
ADDITIONAL POINTS for successful transition of 50% of graduates	5			5
TOTAL				94.3

Key Center will be *Fully Accredited* when its eligible students meet the grade level or alternate benchmarks for achievement and the 85 point accreditation benchmark for graduation as outlined under the alternative measures above.

### VIII. Describe who was involved in the development of the proposed plan.

Tom Flick, Principal, Key Center

Ann Smith, Assistant Principal, Key Center

Kathy Oliver, Director, Office of Student Testing, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

Michelle Rahal, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

Kendra Chapman, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

**IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

Student progress will be measured against the evaluative criteria in the plan using VAAP results, Virginia On-time Graduation data, and Key Center School Improvement Plan indicators.

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Kilmer Center  
Fairfax County Public Schools  
Alternative Accreditation Plans for Special Purpose Schools**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
<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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
8. 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 Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA).	X		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Key Center  
Fairfax County Public Schools  
Alternative Accreditation Plans for Special Purpose Schools**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
<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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
8. 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 Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA).	X		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: I. Date: May 19, 2011

**Topic:** First Review of a Request for Approval of Alternative Accreditation Plans from Fairfax County Public Schools for Mountain View High School, Woodson Adult High School, and Bryant Alternative High School

**Presenters:** Dr. Kathleen M. Smith, Director of the Office of School Improvement  
Dr. Terri Breeden, Assistant Superintendent of Professional Learning and Accountability, Fairfax County Public Schools

**Telephone Number:** (804) 225-2865 **E-Mail Address:** Kathleen.Smith@doe.virginia.gov

**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 June 23, 2011

**Previous Review/Action:**

No previous board review/action  
 Previous review/action  
date \_\_\_\_\_  
action \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

**Summary of Major Elements:**

Mountain View High School, Woodson Adult High School, and Bryant Alternative High School are alternative schools as indicated in Attachments A-C.

Fairfax County Public Schools is requesting approval of alternative accreditation plans for Mountain View High School, Woodson Adult High School, and Bryant Alternative High School. The calculation of the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) will be used to meet the accountability requirements of the regulation. However, as part of its request for an alternative accreditation plan, Fairfax County Public Schools is requesting a waiver of the following section of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* so that adjustments may be made to the GCI for accountability purposes.

8 VAC 20-131-280. Expectations for school accountability B.

2. The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education. The accreditation rating of any school with a twelfth grade shall be determined based on achievement of required SOL pass rates and percentage points on the board’s graduation and completion index. School accreditation shall be determined by the school’s current year index points or a trailing three-year average of index points that includes the current year and the two most recent years, whichever is higher. The Board of Education’s graduation and completion index shall include weighted points for diploma graduates (100 points), GED recipients (75 points), students not graduating but still in school (70 points), and students earning certificates of program completion (25 points). The Board of Education's graduation and completion index shall account for all students in the graduating class’s ninth-grade cohort, plus students transferring in, minus students transferring out and deceased students. Those students who are not included in one of the preceding categories will also be included in the index.

In addition to the GCI, each school proposes a different set of accountability measures to be used to determine if the school meets full accreditation. These are summarized below:

**Additional Considerations to the GCI**

Component	Mountain View High School	Woodson Adult High School	Bryant Alternative High School
GCI bonus for maintaining a dropout rate below 25% for students over the age of 18	Yes	Yes	Yes
GCI bonus when 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	Yes	Yes	Yes
GCI bonus if 75% or more of graduates enroll in postsecondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	Yes	Yes	Yes
GCI bonus when 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	Yes	Yes	Yes
GCI bonus if 80% of the student population placed by the Hearings Office are still enrolled or graduate	Yes	No students from WAHS are placed by the Hearings Office	Yes

Component	Mountain View High School	Woodson Adult High School	Bryant Alternative High School
GCI bonus if 80% or more of JVG participants enroll in postsecondary education or obtain a full-time job upon graduation	No	No	Yes
GCI bonus when 25% or more graduates participate in school-based career development program	No	Yes	No
GCI bonus when 25% or more graduates participate in the NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program	No	Yes	No

In addition, the plans propose that certain students be removed from the cohort as indicated:

- Students 18 years of age or older who move out of the country; and,
- Students who enter Fairfax County Public Schools as their first Virginia public school at age 18 years or older.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Virginia Board of Education accept for first review the request for alternative accreditation plans from Fairfax County Public Schools for Mountain View High School, Woodson Adult High School, and Bryant Alternative High School.

**Impact on Resources:**

None

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Final action will be requested at the June 23, 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.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to 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:

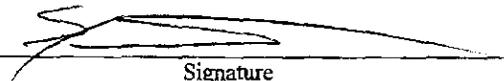
*Schools described in this section are those that serve as a student's school of principal enrollment and where students are reported in fall membership for the school. Fall membership determines whether or not these schools are subject to the provisions of the accrediting standards; therefore, schools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

3/24/11

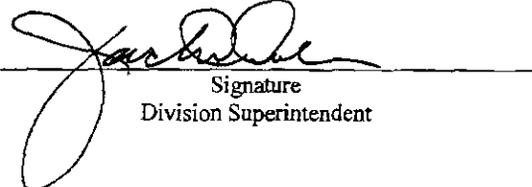
Date Approved  
by the Local School Board



Signature  
Chairman of the School Board

3/28/11

Submission Date



Signature  
Division Superintendent

**Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
Mountain View High School  
Fairfax County Public Schools**

**School Name:** Mountain View High School  
**Division:** Fairfax County Public Schools  
**School Address:** 5775 Spindle Ct., Centerville, VA 20120  
**Contact Person:** Mr. Eric Kinneman  
**Telephone Number:** 703-227-2310  
**Email:** [Eric.Kinneman@fcps.edu](mailto:Eric.Kinneman@fcps.edu)  
**Proposed Duration:** Three Years  
**Grade Levels Served:** Grades 9-12  
**Number of Students enrolled by grade:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade – 15; 10<sup>th</sup> grade – 34; 11<sup>th</sup> grade – 104; 12<sup>th</sup> grade – 165

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

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

Mountain View High School is an alternative high school in Fairfax County for those students whose life circumstances have interrupted their schooling. This includes students who may be pregnant or parenting, English language learners, older school-age students working toward a high school degree, students administratively placed because of disciplinary infractions at their base schools, and students who need a flexible program to accommodate work or family obligations.

Mountain View High School’s vision, mission, and core values and beliefs encapsulate its purpose and function with at-risk students who often come to the school feeling disenfranchised and discouraged about the future.

The vision of the school states:

Mountain View High School, an alternative high school, seeks to become an exemplar of what is best in educational practice. We want to continue creating a model community guided by our commitment to family, love, and respect, where teachers collaborate to meet the unique needs of each student. We envision our school as a challenging learning environment where all students discover their strengths and abilities and experience academic achievement and personal success.

Mountain View High School seeks the increasing support of individuals and organizations from the larger Fairfax County community to engage with students in activities and form relationships that both model collaboration and provide mutual benefit.

The school's mission is:

<p>Teachers will collaborate in their professional learning communities for the purposes of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing students with a challenging learning environment;</li> <li>• creating a safe, secure, and accepting environment;</li> <li>• giving students a solid academic foundation; and</li> <li>• preparing students for the challenges of college, career, and the changing demands of tomorrow's workplace.</li> </ul>
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The core beliefs are stated as:

<p>We believe that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the concepts of family, love, and respect are essential elements of a successful learning community;</li> <li>• the individuality of each member of our community should be recognized and valued;</li> <li>• creativity, critical thinking, and leadership are essential life skills;</li> <li>• clearly-stated goals establish the framework for academic achievement;</li> <li>• academic and personal success can be achieved when student progress is continually assessed and instruction is tailored to individual needs;</li> <li>• learning is a lifelong process and foundation for long-term success;</li> <li>• technology is an essential tool for instruction, learning, communication, and creativity; and</li> <li>• career and transition skills are needed to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.</li> </ul>
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Mountain View Alternative High School follows the Fairfax County school improvement planning process and creates an annual plan that targets student achievement goals.

**II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

Mountain View Alternative is classified as a special purpose high school in the Commonwealth of Virginia and was "Fully Accredited" in each of the last three years. Due to rolling enrollment, the student population at Mountain View Alternative High School averages approximately 300 students at a given time (small by Fairfax County standards) and is drawn from seventeen Fairfax County traditional high schools.

**MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL 2009-2010**

Number of Students*	Limited English Proficient LEP	Special Education SPED	General Ed Ages 21-22	Hearings Office Placement	Concurrent Students From Other FCPS Schools	Pregnant or Parenting	Moved Out of the Country
537	136	87	68	107	3	56	1
537	25%	16%	13%	20%	.05%	10%	2%

\*annual enrollment of students up to age 22, taking rolling enrollment into account

Hispanic	Black	White	Asian/Pacific	Other
41%	11%	33%	10%	5%

The student body at Mountain View Alternative High School is primarily composed of students who are at significant risk to drop out of school. Several sub-populations are significant:

- Nineteen percent (19%) are pregnant and/or parenting. Project Opportunity is a program that supports pregnant and parenting students, and students aged 16 and older complete a referral process.
- Nineteen percent (19%) are Hearings Office placements. Hearings Office students aged 16 and older who have been recommended for expulsion from their base schools are administratively placed at the school.
- Eighteen percent (18%) of the student population receives special education services. Special education students are assigned through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.
- Seventeen-year-old students may transfer from base schools after completing a referral process that includes a review of students' appropriateness of transfer by the Nontraditional School Programs Office. Parental permission is required for all students under the age of eighteen.
- Regular education students 18 years of age or older may enroll without completing a referral process if it is determined that their educational needs can be met by the school's program. Students 18 and older may enroll without parental involvement.

The circumstances that lead to interrupted schooling for the majority of Mountain View students continue to exist in the lives of the students. Socioeconomic pressures, parenting and/or family responsibilities, and other social and emotional factors that may be under control at the time of a student's enrollment might just as easily re-appear at some point while the student is enrolled. Students over the age of 18 can opt to withdraw from compulsory education for any of the aforementioned reasons. The number of students who leave Mountain View at some point during a given school year because of difficult life circumstances is significant. Currently, 71% of the student population is 18 or older. Forty-eight percent (48%) are classified as limited English proficient (LEP). Nineteen percent (19%) are the primary wage earners for their families, and seventy-five percent (75%) of the students work at least part-time.

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the current student body has a reduced course load, participating in four courses or fewer per semester while juggling family and/or financial obligations. Most students must provide their own transportation to school; only pregnant and parenting students and special education placement students are provided bus service to school.

Most of the students at Mountain View Alternative High School are already behind their cohort for graduation when they enroll. Some students transfer in after three years of high school without any earned credits or having passed any Standards of Learning (SOL) end of course (EOC) assessments. Ninety percent (90%) of the students need two or more verified credits to meet graduation requirements at the time of their enrollment. Despite the discrepancy, many Mountain View students are able to recover credits through the school's unique instructional program. The fact that more than 50% of the school's population graduates with their cohort is significant.

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

Mountain View practices open enrollment, which means that it enrolls new students approximately every two weeks throughout the school year. The school utilizes flexible schedules in which courses are offered between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The instructional design uses the semester (4x4) model, and students complete individual courses within a flexible framework based on a minimum of 140 hours of instructional time and mastery of all course content. This means that students start and complete courses in an individualized course of study. Essentially, students cannot fail courses as long as they remain enrolled. Instead, they are provided the time necessary to demonstrate mastery of material before they are completed in the course to earn the associated credit. The adult-oriented setting enables students to come and go in conjunction with the other responsibilities in their lives.

Students are taught both academic and social skills aimed at developing self-motivation and self-discipline as they work toward a Standard, Advanced, or Modified Diploma. The student/teacher ratio is capped at a maximum of 18:1 for all classes. Mountain View Alternative High School has an extremely professional staff. Most classroom teachers have a master's degree, and all are "highly qualified" in their respective subject areas.

In 2009-2010, SOL pass rates in ALL subject areas and with ALL subgroups exceeded 95%. Even with the small population, 97.53% of the current students passed in English, 100.00% passed in mathematics, 100% passed in history, and 95.52% passed in science. Significantly, the Latino and African-American pass rates were 100% in all subject areas.

A graduation planning session is conducted with each student at the time of his/her registration during which an approximate timeline for graduation is outlined. Students and/or parents receive a copy of the graduation plan. Updated planning meetings occur as students complete courses, and individual transition planning is completed with all students prior to graduation. Students meet with the career development coordinator, employment transition representative, and Northern Virginia Community College Career Coach to develop a written transition plan detailing, step-by-step, the tasks the student will complete prior to and upon graduating.

During the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) review process in April 2008, the Quality Assurance Review Team found Mountain View Alternative High School "Highly Functional" in six of the seven *Standards for Accreditation* and noted numerous commendations for strengths and accomplishments. They noted, "Adjusted passing rates in all subject areas and on SOL tests are impressive, especially considering the vastly needy student populations assigned, placed, or encouraged to be at Mountain View... The school effectively uses human, material, and fiscal resources to implement a curriculum that enables students to achieve beyond what has been expected of them in other educational settings."

#### **IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

Each of the academic departments at Mountain View has established procedures for assessing student readiness using common assessments when new students begin in classes during the year. Progress is monitored closely while a student is enrolled in a class. Interim reports are generated at the mid-point of every quarter, and report cards are mailed home quarterly. Course syllabi and pacing guides provide a road map for students to complete courses, and a common post-assessment is administered in all academic classes. Both formative and summative assessment tools are used in

all classes. In SOL courses, progress is monitored closely as students prepare for the EOC assessments, and immediate remediation is undertaken if a student fails an initial attempt on an EOC assessment. All curricula are aligned with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) standards and the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Programs of Study.

**V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, Mountain View Alternative High School meets Virginia's pre-accreditation eligibility requirements in terms of promotion/retention policies, coursework that promotes graduation, instructional programs to accommodate the student population, leadership and staffing requirements, and safety provisions.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia are not available.)**

8 VAC 20-1313-280.B.2 Expectations for School Accountability

Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; (in part) The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education.

- a) A benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation rating.
- b) A "Provisionally Accredited" rating may be achieved in years 2011 to 2015, with 80 to 84 points respectively.
- c) The graduation and completion index is based upon program completion four years after a student enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade .

Mountain View Alternative High School meets the needs of a unique group of students who are normally behind their cohort at the time of enrollment. The school's mission is to provide a second, and in many cases, final opportunity for students to graduate. Students may take longer than the four years or eight semesters it normally takes to graduate. Since the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) is based upon program completion in this time frame, Mountain View Alternative High School will need additional support in meeting the GCI benchmark of 85 points established for full accreditation.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

Mountain View Alternative High School proposes an alternative accreditation plan to meet the new graduation benchmark outlined in the GCI. Mountain View supports the assigned benchmark of 85 points for full accreditation. However, given the unique qualities of the student population served by Mountain View, an alternative point system is proposed.

1. As stated previously, a majority of students who enroll at Mountain View are already behind their cohort for graduation. Many students are over age 18 and, by law, can leave school. Those who do drop out do so in order to work to support themselves and their families or raise children. Yet many have made the commitment to continue working towards a diploma beyond the time limitations set by the state and in spite of their socioeconomic circumstances. Most would be unwilling or unable to re-enroll in a traditional high school setting, and Mountain View provides a true alternative to dropping out. Any student who continues in school beyond cohort graduation or who earns a GED is one less dropout in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The school's dropout rate was 31.86% in 2007-2008 and 22.69% in 2008-2009. Given that students over the age of 18 are not required to remain in school, a GCI bonus of 5 points will be added to the school's GCI for maintaining a dropout rate below 25% for these overage students.
2. A number of Mountain View students reach the maximum age to receive qualified educational services before they earn a diploma. Mountain View continues to work with these students beyond the state's limit to ensure they will eventually obtain a diploma. If 50% or more of this population continues to work toward a diploma beyond their final year of eligibility, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI. Also, for the purposes of GCI calculations, these students will not be counted as dropouts.
3. A large percentage of the school's at-risk population earn high school diplomas, and a significant percentage of students opt to enroll in college after leaving Mountain View. Students for whom completing high school had once seemed impossible develop the skills and self-confidence to succeed in the world. Therefore, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI if 75% or more of its graduates enroll in a two- or four-year college, join the military, or obtain a full-time job, as reported in the Senior Survey and the National Student Clearinghouse's Student Tracker for High Schools.
4. Though the majority of students, by regulation, are behind their cohort when they enter Mountain View, they have chosen to remain in school and pursue a high school education. Many of these students are juggling employment and/or family obligations. For these students, a reduced course load and extended time for completing course requirements are two alternative strategies that often lead to success. However, these strategies result in students falling further behind their cohort despite the fact that they are making steady progress toward meeting their academic goals. Students who are progressing at a slow but steady pace represent success at Mountain View. Students will be identified who are enrolled in fewer than four courses and who need extended time for completing course requirements while shouldering work and family responsibilities. If 75% of these students continue to meet the goals of their educational plans, a bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI.
5. In addition, if 80% of the students who were placed at Mountain View by the Hearings Office are either still enrolled at the end of the school year or have graduated, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI.

6. For the purposes of calculating the GCI, the following exceptions will also be made in determining which students to include in the cohort and GCI calculations:

- Students 18 years of age or older who move out of the country; and,
- Students who enter Fairfax County Public Schools as their first Virginia public school at age 18 years or older.

Under VDOE regulations, a benchmark of 85 points will be met for full accreditation using the following point values assigned to the Graduation and Completion Index:

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Graduate - Board Recognized Diploma	100
Students Still Enrolled	70
GED	75
Certificate of Completion	25
Dropouts	0
1. Maintaining a dropout rate below 25%	+5 GCI Bonus Points
2. When 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5 GCI Bonus Points
3. When 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	+5 GCI Bonus Points
4. When 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5 GCI Bonus Points
5. When 80% of the students placed by the Hearings Office are still enrolled or graduate	+5 GCI Bonus Points

Example of Alternative GCI Calculations

**Calculation:**

**Total Points/Total Number of Students + GCI Bonus Points = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b># of Students*</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Graduate - Board Recognized Diploma	100	150	15,000	
Students Still Enrolled	70	5	350	
GED	75	3	225	
Certificate of Completion	25	0	0	
Dropouts	0	40	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>		198	15,575	78.7
GCI bonus for maintaining a dropout rate below 25%	+5		5	

GCI bonus when 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5		0	
GCI bonus when 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	+5		5	
GCI bonus when 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5		5	
GCI bonus when 80% of the students placed by the Hearings Office are still enrolled or graduate	+5		5	
GCI BONUS POINT TOTAL			20	
<b>FINAL GCI TOTAL</b>				98.7

\*Includes General Education students to age 20 and LEP and Special Education students up to age 22.

**VIII. Identify those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

Eric Kinneman, Director of Student Services, Mountain View High School  
 Kathy Oliver, Director, Office of Student Testing, Department of Professional Learning and Accountability  
 Michelle Rahal, Manager, Office of Student Testing  
 Ellen McCarthy, Coordinator, Nontraditional School Programs  
 Janet Sorlin-Davis, Intervention and Prevention Services

**IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

Mountain View students are held to the same performance standards as their peers in traditional Virginia high schools and will be expected to achieve an adjusted pass rate of 70% in each of the core academic areas (English, mathematics, science, and history). Therefore, Mountain View’s primary goal is to ensure it can maintain accreditation given the new GCI regulations by recognizing and addressing the needs of its students. The primary method to evaluate the success of the plan will be determined by whether the GCI benchmark of 85 points was met. To do this, the dropout rate will be closely monitored through the use of withdrawal codes in the division’s student information system and college enrollment will be collected through the FCPS Senior Survey tool and the National Student Clearinghouse’s Student Tracker for High Schools. Enrollment and graduation status will also be tracked in the county’s student information system and documented as required for those students placed at Mountain View by the Hearings Office. In addition, Virginia on-time graduation data and achievement indicators from the annual school improvement plan will be used to evaluate the success of the alternative accreditation plan.

Signature Page

Request for Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan (Woodson Adult High School)

**Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
Woodson Adult High School  
Fairfax County Public Schools**

<b>School Name:</b>	Woodson Adult High School
<b>Division:</b>	Fairfax County Public Schools
<b>School Address:</b>	4105 Whitacre Road, Fairfax, VA 22032
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Mrs. Jane Cruz
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	703-503-6405
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Jane.Cruz@fcps.edu">Jane.Cruz@fcps.edu</a>
<b>Proposed Duration:</b>	Three Years
<b>Grade Levels Served:</b>	Grades 9-12
<b>Number of Students enrolled by grade:</b>	(January 2011 enrollment) Ninth grade – 69 students; Tenth grade – 55 students; Eleventh grade – 103 students; Twelfth grade – 273 students

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

**Mission Statement:** To communicate consistently, comprehend patiently, and collaborate tirelessly as a strong family to build a community.

The Woodson Adult High School (WAHS) mission is to provide an adult educational environment that is student-centered, academically challenging, innovative, individualized, equitable, and standards-based for those adults seeking a Standard or Advanced Studies High School Diploma and progressing on to post-secondary education. The purpose of WAHS is to ensure that no adults are left behind in their pursuit of career ambitions. Adults enter WAHS with a variety of experiences on which to build; the creative task of the administration and teachers is to weave those adult experiences into the competencies required to succeed in the content coursework.

Woodson Adult High School programs and staff are responsive to changes in the needs of our students, community, and technology-based society as they strive to inform students of learning opportunities that will lead to a high school credential. The day and evening programs at WAHS provide opportunities for adult learners to identify their needs and accomplish their educational goals in an environment that is safe, supportive, respectful, cooperative, equitable, and engaging. The mission of the teachers is to empower the students' personal, intellectual, and social growth; to model open communication, kindness, commitment, and integrity; to provide a supportive climate in which students can learn; to support students' full individual development; and to meet the diverse needs of all students. Woodson Adult High School makes available the options, tools, and resources to inspire lifelong learning.

**Core Values/Beliefs**

Woodson Adult High School believes in

- fostering a community of reflective, independent learners who can apply their knowledge in problem-solving situations so as to make connections among areas of study and between schoolwork and real world events;
- treating all students with respect and dignity in an environment that stresses trust, decency, and a climate of positive expectation;

- creating an educational environment that embraces the many cultures and perspectives that are the basis of a pluralistic society;
- providing equitable access to the materials and equipment necessary for meeting the needs of a diverse student body with an array of learning styles;
- equipping teachers to be highly qualified to ensure that instruction is cognitively and developmentally appropriate;
- providing students with access to a rich and challenging curriculum that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and successful performance capabilities; and
- using assessment strategies that are appropriate and authentic to the individual goals being pursued; evaluation measures that are culturally sensitive and permit students to demonstrate their capacities using diverse modes of expression and performance.

Woodson Adult High School provides traditional high school classes in a non-traditional environment, accredited correspondence coursework, supervised independent study, dual enrollment at Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), flexible scheduling, individualized support, and referral to Adult and Community Education career development programs. Woodson Adult High School follows the same scope and sequence outlined in the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) secondary Program of Studies (POS). The curriculum is designed to educate adults to improve their abilities as parents, employees, and citizens; to reinforce the value of lifelong learning; to provide counseling to adult students in defining their personal, academic, and career goals; and to provide the resources for adults to achieve their high school diploma. Woodson Adult High School follows the Fairfax County School Improvement Planning process and yearly creates a plan that involves and includes all students and staff. Student achievement goals target success in academics, life skills, and community responsibility.

Woodson Adult High School operates under the criteria established by the *Regulations Governing Adult High School Programs*, 8 VAC 20-30-20, Superintendent's Memo #98, dated May 6, 2005, which states that "only in exceptional circumstances should local school officials permit a school-aged individual to earn credits toward high school graduation in adult classes." All WAHS students are 18 years old or older and do not enter WAHS until after their assigned cohort graduating class has graduated.

Woodson Adult High School has achieved full state accreditation for the past five years by all measures. In 2009, WAHS received a Rising Star award from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for exceeding the minimum requirements for learning and achievement of the Commonwealth's Index of Performance for three consecutive years. The award recognized WAHS as a school that provided expanded opportunities for learning and achievement, as evidenced by the progress of its students on multiple indicators, including an increase in the percentage of students demonstrating advanced proficiency across the curriculum.

**II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

Woodson Adult High School students come from diverse backgrounds and with varied life experiences. At any given time, approximately 525 students (school age and adults) are enrolled in one to four classes while they work toward achieving their high school diploma. Because of the open enrollment, the number of students varies. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the students who

enrolled this school year live at the poverty level as defined by the federal government’s Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL). Fifty-three percent (53%) of the students are male; 47% are female.

Eighty-two percent (82%) of the 500 current students (January 2011 enrollment) are English language learners (ELL) from 57 different countries, including Latin America, Asia and South Asia, Africa, and Europe, who join students from all across the United States to enrich the WAHS community. In addition to representing 57 countries and speaking 38 languages, the WAHS students range in age from 18 to 68, with 35% of the student body considered “school-age” (175 students). Latinos comprise 53% of the student population; blacks, 14%, whites, 12%; Asians, 19%; and multiracial, Pacific Islander, and American Indian, 2%.

The 2009-2010 snapshot of WAHS’s student population, ages 18 to 22, mirrors the total enrollment of the adult high school:

**WOODSON ADULT HIGH SCHOOL 2009-2010**

<b>Number of Students*</b>	<b>Limited English Proficient LEP</b>	<b>Special Education SPED</b>	<b>General Ed Ages 21-22</b>	<b>Hearings Office Placement</b>	<b>Concurrent Students From Other FCPS Schools</b>	<b>Pregnant or Parenting</b>	<b>Moved Out of the Country</b>
274	204	0	70	10	0	NA	6
274	74%	0	26%	4%	0	NA	2%

\*Annual enrollment of students up to age 22, taking rolling enrollment into account.

<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Asian/Pacific</b>	<b>Other</b>
57%	15%	10%	17%	1%

Woodson Adult High School provides a safety net for those adult students who have special educational needs. Those needs may be cognitive or affective. The students may need smaller classes, differentiated instruction, differentiated scheduling, close monitoring by an administrative staff that tracks individual student progress, a different type of student body, or intensive English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services. Woodson Adult High School offers a full complement of courses in the morning and early afternoon and another full complement of courses in the late afternoon and evening, providing an opportunity for students who work or take care of their families to continue with their education. The evening program operates on an open-entry, year-round format, while the day program operates on a four-by-four semester schedule. The schedules are designed for students who require a flexible program in a non-traditional environment that can accommodate career and family obligations.

A majority of the adult students have experienced interruptions in their education because of life circumstances, such as a need to provide for their families, complete a pregnancy, or care for their parents. A number of students are at-risk due to serious life challenges or are refugees from countries where war has dictated their lives. Some students are older adults who postponed their high school education many years prior to enrolling at WAHS.

Because WAHS is an adult high school, students choose to attend; the administration and faculty work directly with students themselves rather than parents to define a program and select classes to meet individual needs.

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

In order to provide adults consistent and timely services, WAHS offers an open-entry, open-exit, eleven-month evening program. Evening classes meet in the late afternoon and evening four days a week. Day classes are offered in the morning and early afternoon five days a week. The alternative scheduling allows students to enroll in one to four classes at a time as they juggle school work and family responsibilities. Woodson Adult High School offers all courses necessary for a student to complete the requirements for a high school diploma, but the length of time it takes a student to complete the program is dependent upon the needs of each individual student.

Woodson Adult High School offers 71 sections of content and elective courses with an additional 29 sections offered through Credit by Objective (CBO). Credit by Objective is an alternative instructional delivery method that includes student-directed independent study, correspondence classes, community college enrollment, and other options. Woodson Adult High School complies with all requirements for graduation from secondary schools, with the exclusion of physical education (VAC 20-30-10). There are no extracurricular sports activities, but there are weekend history trips (e.g., History on Location) and school-wide functions such as the Harvest of Cultures. Graduates may earn a Standard or an Advanced Studies Diploma and be awarded a Governor's Seal. There are no AP or IB courses.

Woodson Adult High School, in collaboration with the NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program, has developed a seamless transition program for WAHS graduates to access the NVCC program of their choice. Components of the alliance include NVCC counseling for WAHS graduates, orientations, and COMPASS testing at WAHS. In addition, NVCC classes offered at WAHS include the skill development course and dual enrollment in English 111 and 112 for English 12 credit.

Because the basis of the WAHS instructional program is mastery of competencies, as long as a student progresses and remains enrolled, he does not fail. Oftentimes, because of the highly transient nature of our adult student population, achieving the competencies of a course could take several months or more than a year. Because it is an adult high school, students may leave to comply with seasonal work or needs of a family and return at a later date to complete their coursework. Unfortunately, this is the reality of a majority of WAHS students.

Expanding Literacies is an elective course offered to students needing reinforcement in reading and writing skills. It includes test preparation and test taking strategies. Other credit recovery services include a two-day-a-week writing lab, a two-day-a-week reading clinic, English 12 with a Standards of Learning (SOL) Focus, and SOL preparation classes taught right before the testing window each iteration.

Unique to WAHS is the Computers and Tutors Lab (CAT Lab). The lab is the result of a 15-year collaborative venture between WAHS and Woodson High School. Woodson Adult High School provides the hardware and software, and Woodson High School provides the space. With the state-imposed curricular demand for including technology in the high school classes, the CAT Lab has restructured access for WAHS students and teachers. Woodson Adult High School provides the comprehensive educational and career preparation services for adult students who have not been

successful in other school settings or have postponed their education for reasons listed elsewhere. Each year an average of 100 students graduate in two celebrations. Although students receive their diplomas as they complete their credits, oftentimes they also participate in one of the celebrations. A 74-year old graduate walking across the stage to shake the division superintendent's hand is a powerful motivator to all adult students who are still working toward that moment. More than 70% of WAHS graduates go on to college, including NVCC, state universities, and Ivy League colleges.

Woodson Adult High School receives support from the Volunteer Learning Program (VLP), a free tutorial program designed to meet the academic needs of the WAHS students. The volunteer tutors work one-on-one with students and with multiple learners in a classroom.

The average student-teacher ratio is 18:1, which allows for individualized instruction, as well as differentiated group instruction. In English and ESOL, there are often 30:1 student-teacher ratio because of the growing need for adult high school credentialing in Northern Virginia. Volunteer Learning Program tutors have become an integral part of the entire curriculum, supporting classes as well as individuals. Each year, 25 or more VLP tutors participate in classes and specialized writing and reading labs. Additional volunteer tutors from VLP work individually with students on the students' own time.

The profile of the WAHS teachers reflects a diverse and experienced instructional staff whose ages range from the 20's to the 70's. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the hourly instructors also teach the same subject during the day in another Fairfax County public school, and all are endorsed to teach in their subject area. Thus, they have comprehensive knowledge of the requirements for their particular disciplines. Three teachers are assistant principals in FCPS, and one is a summer school principal. Others include a former assistant director of education with the Future for NASA, a policy analyst for the U.S. Army, and a self-employed businessman. Three percent (3%) of the teachers have a Ph.D., 81% have a master's degree, and 16% have a bachelor's degree. The staff is racially and ethnically diverse, with 50% of the staff of Asian, African-American, African, or Latino origin. All teachers are highly qualified.

The WAHS administrator also administers the National External Diploma Program (a diploma-granting program), General Educational Development (GED) preparation and testing, outreach learning/adult basic education classes, and the Volunteer Learning Program. Support for the day program includes an assistant administrator, one school counselor, and a safety and security assistant, as well as four contracted instructional staff. Support for the evening program includes an administrative assistant, a finance assistant, a student information assistant, a half-time technology support specialist, a school-based technology specialist, two educational specialists, one school counselor, and a safety and security assistant. Since fiscal year 2006, there are three-and-a-half contracted teachers in the evening program with the remaining instructional staff paid hourly, teaching from one to three classes a week. There are no assistant principals, visiting teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, special education teachers, or reading specialists.

#### **IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

Assessment is both formative and summative. Pencil and paper assessments, informal teacher evaluations, self-assessments, projects, and other demonstrations of mastery of knowledge are used. Woodson Adult High School utilizes the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. End-of-course SOL tests are administered to students who entered

ninth grade after the year 2000. In addition, WAHS complies with the accountability standards set forth by the *Workforce Investment Act*, which are measured through the National Reporting System for Adult Education.

Each student has a portfolio that contains the standards-based curriculum outline for the course as well as the units of work to be completed with grades earned and dates of completion. Students must complete and pass each unit of work to receive course credit. Students are aware of their progress, as well as what they need to learn and do to successfully complete a course. Course completion is not based upon seat time or hours spent in the class. Portfolios are submitted for review by an educational specialist when students complete a course. Portfolios are kept on file for a period of one year.

Fairfax County Public Schools administers ESOL assessments to students who are ready to move from one level of language proficiency to another. Woodson Adult High School has students at state ESOL levels 2, 3, and 4 and complies with state regulations to administer the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA ACCESS for ELLs®) test to its limited English proficient (LEP) students. Students must achieve specific reading, writing, and oral scores to exit a given level of ESOL services.

Standards of Learning test-taking and course specific strategies are embedded throughout each course, often in the form of warm-ups at the start of class or in the use of released practice test items. Students are encouraged to attend preparation and review sessions, which are held before each testing window. Materials used are computer simulated games, various coaching books, and online resources provided on the VDOE Web site.

Although the regulations for adult secondary education require 108 seat hours of instruction (VAC 20-30-20), WAHS courses are competency-based and aligned with the SOL. Most often, students will remain in class longer than 108 hours in order to master the competencies. Woodson Adult High School is an 11-month program with open enrollment. Evening students attend one (five hours per week) to four (20 hours per week) courses at a time; day students attend up to five (5) hours per day. During their studies at WAHS, students may take from one (1) to 21 courses in order to fulfill their graduation requirements.

**V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F. of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, Woodson Adult High School meets Virginia's pre-accreditation eligibility requirements in terms of promotion/retention policies, coursework that promotes graduation, instructional programs to accommodate the student population, leadership and staffing requirements, and safety provisions.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia are not available.)**

8 VAC 20-131-280.B.2 Expectations for School Accountability

Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; (in part) The percentage of students graduating from or

completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education.

- a) A benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation rating.
- b) A “Provisionally Accredited” rating may be achieved in years 2011 to 2015, with 80 to 84 points respectively.
- c) The graduation and completion index is based upon program completion four years after a student enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade .

By virtue of the regulation that restricts enrollment in WAHS until age 18, students are already behind their cohort when they enroll. Typically, a regular high school student can take between five and seven courses a day to earn a diploma in four years. A WAHS student can take no more than four credits at a time during the evening program, and each credit takes approximately seven months to complete. Due to the realities of the adult students’ schedules and family obligations, many are not able to attempt four credits at a time and must move at a slower pace. In addition, over 82% of the students at WAHS are classified as ELL. Because many of these students have not previously earned secondary credits, they are registered as 9<sup>th</sup> graders when they enter WAHS. Given their educational background and current responsibilities, adult students at WAHS commonly take more than five, often six, years to graduate with a Standard Diploma.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school’s accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

Woodson Adult High School staff members are dedicated to the goal of providing opportunities for WAHS students to identify their needs and accomplish their educational goals. These goals include the receipt of a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma and access to post-secondary education. Woodson Adult High School students face unique challenges in meeting their goals and, frequently, alternative strategies are required in developing their educational plans. Therefore, WAHS requests approval of an approach to calculating the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) that recognizes the need for alternative strategies and rewards the successes of students who are making steady progress toward the achievement of their goals.

One-hundred percent (100%) of the student body at WAHS are students who have not been successful in school previously for a variety of reasons. The circumstances that prevented the WAHS students from succeeding in a traditional school setting still persist in their lives-- socioeconomic pressures, parenting issues, life circumstances, career expectations, English language learner status, and family mobility. Students who are 18 years old and older may cease to attend school at any time due to difficult life circumstances, and they remain at high risk to drop out again if re-enrolled.

Woodson Adult High School proposes an alternative accreditation plan to meet the new graduation requirement for accreditation:

Although WAHS supports the assigned benchmark of 85, in order to accommodate the unique qualities and realities of the WAHS student population, an alternative point system is requested.

1. A majority of students who enroll at WAHS are already behind their cohort for graduation. Many students are over age 18 and, by law, can leave school. Those who do drop out do so

in order to work to support themselves and their families or raise children. Yet many have made the commitment to continue working towards a diploma beyond the time limitations set by the state and in spite of their socioeconomic circumstances. Given that students over the age of 18 are not required to remain in school, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI for maintaining a dropout rate below 25% for these overage students.

2. A number of WAHS students reach the maximum age to receive qualified educational services before they earn a diploma. Woodson Adult High School works with these students beyond the state's limit to ensure they will eventually obtain a diploma. If 50% or more of this population continues to work toward a diploma beyond their final year of eligibility, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI. Also, for the purposes of GCI calculations, these students will not be counted as dropouts.
3. A great majority of WAHS graduates immediately enter college, join the military, or become employed. A bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI when 75% or more of a graduation class enrolls in post-secondary education, joins the military, or obtains a full-time job. The Senior Survey and the National Student Clearinghouse's Student Tracker for High Schools will serve as the tools to collect this data.
4. Though the majority of students are behind their cohort when they enter WAHS, they have chosen to remain in school and pursue a high school education. Many of these students are juggling employment and/or family obligations. For these students, a reduced course load and extended time for completing course requirements are two alternative strategies that often lead to success. However, these strategies result in students falling further behind their cohort despite the fact that they are making steady progress toward meeting their academic goals. Students who are progressing at a slow but steady pace represent success at WAHS. Students will be identified who are enrolled in fewer than four (4) courses and who need extended time for completing course requirements while shouldering work and family responsibilities will be identified. If 75% of these students continue to meet the goals of their educational plans, a bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI.
5. Woodson Adult High School offers career development certificate courses funded by the federal Carl D. Perkins grant. Several students take advantage of these courses and complete their education with certificates in a variety of fields, such as medical assistant, veterinary assistant, desktop publishing technician, and accounting assistant. To recognize enrollment and success in those programs, a bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI when 25% or more of a graduation class participates in and completes the career development program.
6. Woodson Adult High School and NVCC have collaborated to make the Adult Career Pathway Program available to students in the area. The program was designed to help students navigate the transition from high school to college. College classes are held at WAHS with student visits to NVCC. Upon high school graduation, students continue their education at NVCC with further emphasis on the next transition—getting students to enroll in a four-year college or university. A bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI when 25% or more of a graduation class participated in the WAHS-NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program.

7. In addition, for the purposes of calculating the GCI, the following exceptions will be made in determining inclusion in the cohort and GCI calculations:

- Students 18 years of age or older who move out of the country; and,
- Students who enter Fairfax County Public Schools as their first Virginia public school at age 18 years or older.

Under VDOE regulations, a benchmark of 85 points will be met for full accreditation using the following point values assigned to the Graduation and Completion Index:

Criteria	Point Value	Students Included
Diploma graduates	100	General education students to age 20; ESOL students to age 22
Still enrolled students	70	General education students to age 20; ESOL students in final year only
GED recipients	75	General education students to age 20; ESOL students to age 22
Dropouts	0	General education students to age 20; ESOL students to age 22
1. Maintaining a student dropout rate below 25%	+5	GCI Bonus
2. When 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5	GCI Bonus
3. When 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	+5	GCI Bonus
4. When 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5	GCI Bonus
5. When 25% or more graduates participate in a school-based career development program	+5	GCI Bonus
6. When 25% or more graduates participate in the NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program	+5	GCI Bonus

#### Example of Alternative GCI Calculations

#### **Calculation:**

**Total Points/Total Number of Students + GCI Bonus points = Accreditation Rating**

Student Status	Point Value	# Students*	# Points	Accreditation Rating
Diploma graduate	100	25	2,500	
Still enrolled students	70	30	2,100	
GED recipients	75	6	450	
Dropouts	0	15	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>5,050</b>	<b>66.4</b>

Maintaining a student dropout rate below 25%	+5		5	
When 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5		5	
When 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	+5		5	
When 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5		5	
When 25% or more graduates participate in school-based career development program	+5		0	
When 25% or more graduates participate in the NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program	+5		5	
<b>GCI BONUS POINT TOTAL</b>			25	
<b>FINAL GCI TOTAL</b>				<b>91.4</b>

\*Includes only General Education students to age 20 and ELL students to age 22 where applicable.

**VIII. Identify those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

Jane Cruz, Administrator, Woodson Adult High School and Adult High School Completion  
 Kathy Oliver, Director, Office of Student Testing, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability  
 Michelle Rahal, Manager, Office of Student Testing  
 Ellen McCarthy, Coordinator, Nontraditional School Programs  
 Janet Sorlin-Davis, Department of Special Services, Intervention and Prevention Services

**IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

To ensure that WAHS can achieve the new graduation benchmark of 85, staff will incorporate the following practices:

- Monthly audits on the application of dropout codes
- Monthly audits on coding students who have not been enrolled for at least two semesters
- Tracking general education students
- Tracking student enrollment in a college or university, the military, or a technical program via the Student Survey tool and the National Student Clearinghouse’s Student Tracker for High Schools
- Tracking employment practices via the Student Survey tool
- Tracking career development certificates awarded through the Carl D. Perkins grant
- Tracking courses completed through the WAHS- NVCC Adult Career Pathway Program
- Virginia On-time Graduation data collected via FCPS’s student information system
- Achievement Indicators from Woodson Adult’s Student Improvement Plan

Signature Page

Request for Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan (Bryant Alternative High School)

**Proposed Alternative Accreditation Plan  
Bryant Alternative High School  
Fairfax County Public Schools**

**School Name:** Bryant Alternative High School  
**Division:** Fairfax County Public Schools  
**School Address:** 2709 Popkins Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306  
**Contact Person:** Mr. Larry Jones  
**Telephone Number:** 703-660-2091  
**Email:** [Larry.Jones@fcps.edu](mailto:Larry.Jones@fcps.edu)  
**Proposed Duration:** Three Years  
**Grade Levels Served:** Grades 9-12  
**Number of Students enrolled by grade:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade – 35; 10<sup>th</sup> grade – 54; 11<sup>th</sup> grade – 94; 12<sup>th</sup> grade – 119

**I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.**

**Mission**

Bryant Alternative High School inspires and empowers a diverse student population to earn a high school diploma in a non-traditional setting.

**Vision**

Commitment to Excellence – Bryant, a fully accredited special purpose high school, seeks to improve and provide the necessary support for students and staff to grow personally and professionally.

Commitment to Educational Achievement – Bryant students develop the academic and workforce skills necessary to be successful in their lives. A flexible environment accommodates diverse learning and life situations in which students are encouraged to expand their horizons through the pursuit of further academic, vocational, technical, and career training.

Commitment to Family and Community Involvement – Bryant students are encouraged to develop attitudes and skills that will allow them to be effective, productive, and contributing members of their families and communities. Additionally, the cultural diversity of Bryant affords faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to understand and appreciate a myriad of peoples and cultures.

**Core Beliefs**

The staff at Bryant Alternative High School believes that common goals and shared values are necessary for student success:

- Faculty and staff, students, parents, and the community all share in the responsibility for success of the school's mission.
- Mutual respect and caring interpersonal relationships lead to increased student self-esteem and positive staff morale.
- Students may need the support of specialists such as social workers, career specialists, school psychologists, and health care professionals to succeed.
- Flexible scheduling and specialized programs accommodate home, academic, and work requirements of our students.

- A safe and comfortable physical environment facilitates learning.
- Small, supportive classes allow for individualized instruction.
- A variety of teaching strategies and assessment techniques promotes high academic achievement while providing for different learning styles.
- Vocational, technical, and career training prepares students to pursue further education and career paths.
- Ongoing use of technology tools and training enhances teaching and learning.
- The cultural diversity at Bryant contributes to the understanding and appreciation of different people and cultures.

### **Goals and Expectations**

Bryant Alternative High School follows the Fairfax County school improvement planning process and annually creates a plan that involves and includes all students and staff. The primary Student Achievement Goals at the division and school levels are as follows:

Academics – All students will obtain, understand, analyze, communicate, and apply knowledge and skills to achieve success in school and life.

*School Objective:* Faculty and staff will improve student academic literacy through reading, writing, and math skills utilized throughout the curriculum.

Essential Life Skills – All students will demonstrate the aptitude, attitudes, and skills to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives.

*School Objective:* Faculty and staff will develop and offer a variety of classes and programs to improve the awareness of employment skills and employment opportunities in our community. Increasing job readiness skills will encourage students to become responsible, respectful, and self-reliant adults.

Responsibility to the Community – All students will understand and model the important attributes that people must have to contribute to an effective and productive community and the common good of all.

*School Objective:* Faculty and staff will inform students of and encourage participation in opportunities that foster civic responsibilities that build strong and healthy communities.

## **II. Describe the characteristics of the student population served by the school. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.**

Bryant Alternative High School, along with its satellite school (Landmark Career Academy), offers an educational option for Fairfax County students whose life circumstances have interrupted their schooling. The school serves English language learners, older school-age students working toward a high school degree, students who have been administratively placed, and students who need a flexible program to accommodate work or family obligations.

Bryant students come from diverse backgrounds and are provided with additional counseling and mentoring support that will enable them to succeed and earn their high school diploma. Some are referrals from other schools because of attendance issues, discipline problems, or lack of academic progress. Others are pregnant or returning to school after dropping out. Bryant serves as the base school for a number of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who have been recommended for expulsion by the Fairfax County School Board. These Hearings Office placed students, due to their disciplinary

infractions, are not permitted to attend any other Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) traditional high school. Bryant’s mission is to provide these students with a second, and in many cases, a final opportunity to graduate.

Based on the 2009-2010 data, the student population at Bryant averages approximately 300 and is drawn from 15 Fairfax County traditional high schools and over 10 other alternative programs. The ethnic composition of Bryant’s students is predominantly Hispanic (54%) and black (not of Hispanic origin) (27%). White students are a minority, making up approximately 8% of the student body. Compared to national, Virginia, and Fairfax County demographics, many Bryant students live at or below the poverty line and are more likely to be members of one-parent families and/or have parents with little or no formal education. The National School Lunch Program Free and Reduced Price Eligibility report shows that 49% of Bryant students are eligible. Current data indicates that 62% of Bryant students are not native English speakers. They and their families face challenges of adjustment to their new country and learning a new language, while at the same time providing for themselves and their families in a new culture. Student data indicates the majority of students work long hours to support themselves and their families, and more than half do not have health insurance and, as a result, miss school frequently because of their own or family members’ health issues.

**Bryant Alternative High School 2009-2010**

Number of Students	Limited English Proficient LEP	Special Education SPED	General Ed Ages 21-22	Hearings Office Placement	Concurrent Students From Other FCPS Schools	Pregnant or Parenting	Moved Out of the Country
278	141	39	22	50	28	60	6
278	51%	14%	8%	16%	10%	22%	2%

Hispanic	Black	White	Asian/Pacific	Other
54%	27%	8%	8%	3%

Most of the students at Bryant Alternative High School are already behind their cohort for graduation when they enroll at the school. Some students transfer in after three years of high school with few earned credits. The average score on the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) for a student entering Bryant Alternative High School is a 62 DRP unit, which equates to a high school textbook readability level of a high 8<sup>th</sup>/low 9<sup>th</sup> grader. On a basic mathematics test patterned on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Virginia standards, the average score for Bryant students is 64%. Based on these test results, approximately two-thirds of entering students exhibit deficiencies in mathematics. An entering student has a grade point average (GPA) of 1.93. Despite the low academic achievements, many are able to recover credits through the school’s focused instructional program that incorporates teach/re-teach strategies.

**III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.**

Bryant Alternative High School practices open enrollment, which means that it enrolls new students approximately every two weeks throughout the school year. The school utilizes flexible schedules

where courses are offered between 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The instructional design uses the semester (4x4) model, and students complete individual courses within a flexible framework based on mastery of all course content. Essentially, students are provided all the time necessary to demonstrate mastery of material before they are completed in the course. Remediation classes such as Success Prep, Expanding Literacies, English 12 with SOL Focus, Reinforcing Foundations (for Special Education students), and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) writing class provide additional support for those students who need more assistance with their academic skills. Additionally, Focused Instructional Time (FIT) allows students the opportunity to meet in small groups or individually with their teachers to receive assistance. Focused Instructional Time meets twice a week during the school day. Bryant has also developed a credit recovery/new course option program for students attending traditional high schools in the surrounding areas. Students are enrolled concurrently in both schools and attend afternoon classes at Bryant from 3:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, September through August. Grades are transferred back to the students' base schools, thus enabling them to graduate on time with their cohort class.

### **Real-World Programs**

Bryant offers a unique parenting education program for pregnant and parenting youth called Project Opportunity. Students in this program take focused parenting education, child development, and relationship classes. Project Opportunity is completing its 23<sup>rd</sup> successful year.

Within Project Opportunity exists the Jobs for Virginia Graduates (JVG) grant program that assists economically disadvantaged pregnant or parenting teens with supports for graduation, employment, and job retention. The JVG employment preparation curriculum focuses on career awareness, resume writing, and interviewing skills. It also assists students in gaining employment while attending high school and retaining quality jobs after graduation through post-secondary education opportunities (e.g., community college, four-year college, business, trade, or technical programs) and training opportunities (e.g., apprenticeship, military, or correspondence). During the 2009-2010 school year, 37 students were enrolled in the "senior" program and 8 students were enrolled in the "multi-year" program. The roster class of 2010 included 15 students who graduated as senior JVG completers. The roster class of 2009 achieved a 90% graduation rate and 80% found full-time employment. The JVG grant program has been a component of Project Opportunity at Bryant Alternative High School since 1997.

Specialized programs have been created by staff to assist students who have been placed at Bryant by the Hearings Office, but they are also available to other students who can benefit from these programs. Success Prep and Reinforcing Foundations offer focused support in the four core subjects to students who have passed an academic class but not the correlated SOL test. An English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) writing class offers second language learners extra support when necessary. Students are identified for these specialized programs by the Student Entry Assessment Team (SEAT) based on orientation test scores, Standards of Learning (SOL) scores, Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, and transcript information.

In addition to specialized programs, Focused Instructional Time (FIT) is offered twice a week to allow students the opportunity to meet in small groups with their teachers to receive assistance where needed. The Student Leadership Committee also provides students with opportunities to develop positive leadership traits through school projects and community service projects. The counselors and the career specialist encourage students to participate in workshops dealing with essential life skills.

Landmark Career Academy (LCA), located at Landmark Mall, is a satellite of Bryant Alternative High School. The program focuses on incorporating high school coursework with job-embedded practices. Students in grades 11 and 12 utilize computer-based instruction to complete courses as well as internships, resume writing, job-skill building workshops, and on-the-job supervision. All LCA data is reported with Bryant SOL/graduation statistics.

The adult-oriented setting at Bryant enables students to come and go in conjunction with the other responsibilities in their lives. Students are taught both academic and social skills aimed at developing self-motivation and self-discipline as they work toward a Standard, Advanced, or Modified Diploma.

### **Teaching Staff**

Bryant Alternative High School has an extremely professional staff. Most classroom teachers have a master's degree, and all are "highly-qualified" in their respective subject areas. The student/teacher ratio is capped at a maximum of 19:1 for all classes.

### **Special Purpose School**

Bryant Alternative High School is small by Fairfax County standards. It is classified as a special purpose high school in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Bryant Alternative High School was Fully Accredited in each of the last five years. The 2009-2010 SOL pass rates were 97% for English, 84% for mathematics, 98% for history, and 85% for science.

During the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS CASI) review process in December 2007, the Quality Assurance Review Team found Bryant Alternative High School "Highly Functional" in all seven Standards for Accreditation and noted numerous commendations for strengths and accomplishments. They noted, "Student test scores have steadily improved and the school has passed all end of course tests for two years in a row...The teachers are encouraged and supported by administration to try new techniques and new programs if they help with the vision and purpose of the school...The school is a dynamic organization which over the years has adapted and adjusted its curriculum and practices to meet the needs of a changing and diverse student body." Through the SACS process, Bryant is accredited as a special purpose school.

## **IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.**

When students enter Bryant Alternative High School, they are required to attend a one-day orientation session to introduce them to the expectations of the school. They are also given a reading, mathematics, and writing assessment. Students write a reflection paper on why they came, what their goals are, and what they expect to accomplish at Bryant. They are asked to give any information they feel is important for their future success. Before students are enrolled in classes, the Student Entry Assessment Team (SEAT) meets to discuss the best placement for each student. The committee consists of counselors from student services, the department chairs of the core subjects, the Special Education Department Chair, and the Director of Student Services. Test scores from orientation and the writing sample are assessed and discussed. Students' transcripts, SOL history, and pertinent information from the administrative entry conference are discussed. Students are given schedules of classes that meet their needs and graduation requirements. Each of the academic departments at Bryant has established procedures for assessing student readiness using

common assessments when new students begin classes during the year. Course syllabi and pacing guides are given to students when they begin a course.

Bryant Alternative High School is a standards-based school that follows the FCPS Program of Studies for all courses. Students are required to meet the standards of the course and FCPS guidelines on grading and reporting. Students receive a weekly progress report in each course using the division's InteGrade Pro (IGPro) grading system. Students receive quarterly FCPS progress reports (report cards) on completion of objectives. The open enrollment policy allows students to complete a course within 18 weeks with mastery of the course objectives. However, students may take additional time, if necessary, to meet the course objectives before participating in the end-of-course (EOC) SOL tests offered in January, May, or August.

**V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)**

Yes, Bryant Alternative High School meets Virginia's pre-accreditation eligibility requirements in terms of promotion/retention policies, coursework that promotes graduation, instructional programs to accommodate the student population, leadership and staffing requirements, and safety provisions.

**VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia are not available.)**

**8 VAC 20-1313-280.B.2 Expectations for School Accountability** – Each school shall be accredited based, primarily, on the achievement criteria established in 8 VAC 20-131-30 and in 8 VAC 20-131-50; (in part) The percentage of students graduating from or completing high school based on a graduation and completion index prescribed by the Board of Education.

- a) A benchmark of 85 points must be met for full accreditation rating.
- b) A "Provisionally Accredited" rating may be achieved in years 2011 to 2015, with 80 to 84 points respectively.
- c) The graduation and completion index is based upon program completion four years after a student enters the 9<sup>th</sup> grade .

Bryant Alternative High School offers a second chance to students who have not been successful in a traditional high school. Many students come to Bryant already behind their cohort for graduation. Some students transfer in with fewer credits than customary for their grade level and age. They may need to audit courses or take remediation classes to improve or recover the skills necessary to pass the EOC SOL tests. Students may take longer than the four years or eight semesters it normally takes to graduate. Since the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) is based upon program completion in this time frame, Bryant Alternative High School will need additional support in meeting the GCI benchmarks established for full accreditation.

**VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.**

Bryant Alternative High School proposes an alternative accreditation plan to meet the new graduation requirement outlined in the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI). Bryant supports the assigned benchmark of 85 points for full accreditation. However, given the unique qualities of the student population served by Bryant, an alternative point system is proposed.

1. A majority of the students who enroll at Bryant Alternative High School are already behind their cohort for graduation. Many students are over age 18 and, by law, can leave school. Those who drop out do so in order to work to support themselves and their families or raise children. Yet many have made the commitment to continue working towards a diploma beyond the time limitations set by the state and in spite of their socioeconomic circumstances. Given that students over the age of 18 are not required to remain in school, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI for maintaining a dropout rate below 25% for these overage students.
2. A number of Bryant students reach the maximum age to receive qualified educational services before they earn a diploma, yet Bryant continues to work with these students beyond the state's limit to ensure they will eventually succeed. If 50% or more of this population continues to work toward a diploma beyond their final year of eligibility, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to Bryant's GCI. Also, for the purposes of GCI calculations, these students will not be counted as dropouts.
3. A large percentage of the school's at-risk population earn high school diplomas, and a significant percentage of students opt to enroll in college after leaving Bryant, join the military, or gain full-time employment. Students for whom completing high school had once seemed impossible develop the skills and self-confidence needed to succeed in the world. Therefore, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI if 75% or more of its graduates enroll in a two- or four-year college, join the military, or obtain a full-time job, as reported in the Senior Survey and the National Student Clearinghouse's Student Tracker for High Schools.
4. A majority of students choose to remain in school and pursue a high school education beyond their cohort's graduation date. Many of these students are juggling employment and/or family obligations. For these students, a reduced course load and extended time for completing course requirements are two alternative strategies that often lead to success. However, these strategies result in students falling further behind their cohort despite the fact that they are making steady progress toward meeting their academic goals. Students will be identified who are enrolled in fewer than four courses and who need extended time for completing course requirements while shouldering work and family responsibilities. If 75% of these students continue to meet the goals of their educational plans, a bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI.
5. A number of Bryant students who obtain their high school diploma are enrolled in the Jobs for Virginia Graduates (JVG) grant program, which assists economically disadvantaged pregnant and parenting teens with graduation and employment. Despite the strains of family life, a significant number of JVG participants go on to college or obtain a full-time job. Therefore, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI if 80% or more of JVG graduates enroll in a two- or four-year college or obtain full-time employment. This

will be documented through the FCPS Senior Survey, the National Student Clearinghouse's Student Tracker for High Schools, and through JVG documentation.

6. If 80% of the students who were placed at Bryant Alternative High School by the Hearings Office are either still enrolled at the end of the school year or have graduated, a GCI bonus of five (5) points will be added to the school's GCI. Annual documentation on student status is required by the Hearings Office.
7. Bryant Alternative High School's mission is to provide an opportunity for all students to earn a high school diploma. Bryant is not the base school for a community, but an alternative for students who need additional support to graduate. For the purpose of calculating the GCI, Bryant would apply the following exceptions in determining which students to include in the cohort:
  - Students 18 years of age or older who move out of the country; and,
  - Students who enter Fairfax County Public Schools as their first Virginia public school at age 18 years or older.

Under Virginia Department of Education regulations, a benchmark of 85 points will be met for full accreditation using the following point values assigned to the Graduation and Completion Index:

Student Status	Point Value
Graduate - Board Recognized Diploma	100
Students Still Enrolled	70
GED	75
Certificate of Completion	25
Dropouts	0
1. Maintaining a student dropout rate below 25%	+5 GCI Bonus Points
2. When 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5 GCI Bonus Points
3. When 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job	+5 GCI Bonus Points
4. When 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5 GCI Bonus Points
5. When 80% or more of JVG participants enroll in post-secondary education or obtain a full-time job upon graduation	+5 GCI Bonus Points
6. When 80% or more of the students placed by the Hearings Office are still enrolled or graduate	+5 GCI Bonus Points

Example of Alternative GCI Calculations

**Calculation:**

**Total Points/Total Number of Students + GCI Bonus Points = Accreditation Rating**

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b># of Students*</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b>Accreditation Rating</b>
Graduate - Board Recognized Diploma	100	85	8,500	
Students Still Enrolled	70	26	1,820	
GED	75	5	375	
Dropouts	0	44	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>		160	10,695	66.8
GCI bonus: maintaining a dropout rate below 25%	+5		5	
GCI bonus: 50% of the students who reach the maximum age for educational services continue in school	+5		5	
GCI bonus: 75% or more of graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military or obtain a full-time job	+5		5	
GCI bonus: 75% or more students with a reduced course load and extended time meet the goals of their educational plan	+5		5	
GCI bonus: 80% or more of JVG participants enroll in post-secondary education or obtain a full-time job upon graduation	+5		0	
GCI bonus: 80% or more of students placed by the Hearings Office are still enrolled or graduate	+5		5	
GCI BONUS POINT TOTAL			25	
<b>FINAL GCI TOTAL</b>				91.8

\*Includes General Education students to age 20 and LEP and Special Education students up to age 22 from the 2009-2010 cohort.

**VIII. Identify those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

Larry Jones, Principal, Bryant Alternative High School

Gloria Spriggs, Director of Student Services, Bryant Alternative High School

Deborah Graham, English Department Chair, Bryant Alternative High School

Kathy Oliver, Director, Office of Student Testing, FCPS Department of Professional Learning and Accountability

Michelle Rahal, Manager, Office of Student Testing

Ellen McCarthy, Coordinator, Nontraditional School Programs

Janet Sorlin-Davis, Intervention and Prevention Services

**IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.**

Bryant Alternative High School's primary goals are to maintain accreditation and continue the mission of ensuring a high school diploma for all students. To evaluate the success of the plan, the dropout rate will be closely monitored through the use of withdrawal codes in the division's student information system; and data on student plans after graduation will be captured with the FCPS Senior Survey and the National Student Clearinghouse's Student Tracker for High Schools. In addition, enrollment and graduation status will be documented as required for students participating in the JVG grant program and for students placed by the Hearings Office. Use of the Virginia on-time graduation data and annual achievement indicators from the Bryant Alternative High School Improvement Plan will also be used to evaluate the success of the alternative accreditation plan.

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Alternative Education Plan  
Mountain View High School**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
<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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
8. 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		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Alternative Education Plan  
Woodson Adult High School**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
<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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
8. 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		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		

**Virginia Department of Education  
Evaluation Criteria  
Alternative Education Plan  
Bryant Alternative High School**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
<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.	X		
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they 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>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Limited</b>
8. 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		
9. 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		
10. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	X		
11. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	X		
12. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	X		
13. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	X		
14. 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		

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: J.

Date: May 19, 2011

Topic: First Review of Proposed State Approved Textbooks for K-12 Mathematics

Presenter: Dr. Linda Wallinger, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Telephone Number: (804) 225-2034

E-Mail Address: linda.wallinger@doe.virginia.gov

## 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: July 28, 2011

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action

date March 18, 2010

action Granted approval for the Department of Education to proceed with the review of K-12 mathematics textbooks

## Background Information:

The Board of Education's authority for approving textbooks and other instructional materials is prescribed in the Virginia Constitution and in the *Code of Virginia*.

*Virginia Constitution, Article VIII, § 5 (d)*

It [the Board of Education] shall have authority to approve textbooks and instructional aids and materials for use in courses in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

*Code of Virginia, § 22.1-238*

- A. The Board of Education shall have the authority to approve textbooks suitable for use in the public schools and shall have authority to approve instructional aids and materials for use in the public schools. The Board shall publish a list of all approved textbooks on its website and shall list the publisher and the current lowest wholesale price of such textbooks.
- B. Any school board may use textbooks not approved by the Board provided the school board selects such books in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Board.
- C. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "textbooks" means print or electronic media for student use that serve as the primary curriculum basis for a grade-level subject or course.

The Board of Education’s current textbook regulations specify the types of materials that may be adopted.

*Regulations Governing Textbook Adoption, 8 VAC 20-220-30*

Only those materials which are designed to provide basic support for the instructional program of a particular content area at an appropriate level will be adopted.

The Board of Education approved the list of current state-approved K-12 mathematics textbooks on January 12, 2005, following revisions to the *Mathematics Standards of Learning* in 2001 and to the *Mathematics Curriculum Framework* in 2002. The Board’s 2007-2012 Comprehensive Plan indicated as priorities, revisions to the standards and curriculum frameworks, as well as review of textbooks. On January 10, 2008, the Board approved a schedule to continue this work through 2015. As such, the *Mathematics Standards of Learning* were revised in 2009, followed by revisions to the *Mathematics Curriculum Framework* the same year. The revised standards and curriculum framework then prompted the need to review textbooks for correlation to the revised content.

On March 18, 2010, the Board of Education authorized the Department to begin the process of the K-12 mathematics textbooks review using a timeline approved by the Board. The Department of Education used the approved process and criteria to conduct the textbook review. In June 2010, committees of Virginia educators received the mathematics textbook samples along with K-12 *Mathematics Standards of Learning* textbook correlations from publishers. Members of these committees conducted individual analyses of the materials prior to meeting with the full committee. In July 2010, the committees convened in Richmond to reach consensus on their reviews of the submitted materials. The consensus evaluations were shared with publishers, and publishers were given an opportunity to respond to the committees’ reviews and recommendations. Requests by publishers for reconsideration were examined carefully by Department of Education staff, and staff members began preparing the list of proposed approved mathematics textbooks for presentation to the Board.

As a result of errors subsequently identified in two approved history and social science textbooks, in January 2011, the Virginia Board of Education directed Department staff to prepare a proposal to revise the Board’s process for approving textbooks to ensure that all textbooks approved are factually accurate. On March 24, 2011, the Virginia Board of Education approved a revised textbook review process that became effective for future textbooks brought to the Board for approval, including the mathematics textbooks that had not yet been presented to the Board. The new process places primary responsibility on publishers to ensure the accuracy of their textbooks. Publishers must certify that textbooks they have submitted for review have been thoroughly examined for content accuracy and agree that if factual or editing errors are identified, the publisher will submit a corrective action plan to the Department of Education for review and approval by the Board of Education or the superintendent of public instruction if so delegated by the Board.

### **Summary of Major Elements**

The Department of Education began the process to review mathematics textbooks as described earlier following the Board of Education’s approval to do so on March 18, 2010. In late fall 2010, further action was deferred as questions about the review process arose, and the Board indicated interest in revising the textbook review and approval process in January 2011. In order to conform

with the revised process approved on March 24, 2011, that required additional information from publishers, publishers of the reviewed mathematics textbooks were asked to complete Publisher's Certification and Agreement forms for each textbook being considered for approval by the Board. Attachment A contains a sample Publisher's Certification and Agreement form. Department of Education staff members have reviewed all textbook publishers' certifications and agreements to ensure they have been completed correctly, sufficient information has been provided, and they are signed by an appropriate representative of the publishing company.

The list of 61 proposed recommended mathematics textbooks, including the status of the Publisher's Certification and Agreement forms for each, is included as Attachment B. There were 34 textbooks that did not have sufficient correlations to the *Mathematics Standards of Learning*, and they were withdrawn from consideration by the publishers. An additional 8 textbooks were withdrawn by publishers for other reasons.

Following first review of the proposed textbooks, the Department of Education will conduct a 30-day public comment period, with the intent to bring to the Board a final list of proposed approved textbooks for K-12 mathematics in July 2011.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept for first review the attached list of proposed recommended textbooks for K-12 mathematics.

**Impact on Resources:**

This responsibility can be absorbed by the agency's existing resources at this time. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this process, other services will be impacted.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon acceptance of the list of proposed K-12 mathematics textbooks for first review by the Board of Education, a 30-day public comment period will be announced. The mathematics textbooks submitted for review may be reviewed at any of the following eight sites around the state: The College of William and Mary, George Mason University, James Madison University, Radford University, The University of Virginia's College at Wise, Longwood University, Old Dominion University, and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College. The list of recommended K-12 mathematics textbooks will be presented to the Board of Education for final review on July 28, 2011.

**Publishers' Submission Forms for Virginia's  
Textbook Approval Process**

Virginia Department of Education

Approved by the Virginia Board of Education  
March 24, 2011

## Introduction

The Virginia Board of Education's authority for approving textbooks and other instructional materials is prescribed in the *Virginia Constitution* and in the *Code of Virginia*.

- *Virginia Constitution, Article VIII, § 5 (d)*

It [the Board of Education] shall have authority to approve textbooks and instructional aids and materials for use in courses in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

- *Code of Virginia, § 22.1-238*

- A. The Board of Education shall have the authority to approve textbooks suitable for use in the public schools and shall have authority to approve instructional aids and materials for use in the public schools. The Board shall publish a list of all approved textbooks on its website and shall list the publisher and the current lowest wholesale price of such textbooks.
- B. Any school board may use textbooks not approved by the Board provided the school board selects such books in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Board.
- C. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "textbooks" means print or electronic media for student use that serve as the primary curriculum basis for a grade-level subject or course.

This document, including all attachments, provides textbook publishers with the required information and forms for submitting textbooks for review by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and approval by the Virginia Board of Education. By submitting textbooks for evaluation, publishers agree to follow the procedures set forth in this document. Failure to comply with all procedures may result in disqualification of the textbook as a part of the review and approval process.

### Primary Material Submitted for Review

As noted in Section 22.1-238.C of the *Code of Virginia* above, the term textbook refers to print or electronic media for student use that serves as the primary curriculum basis for a grade-level subject or course.

For the remainder of this document, such instructional media will be referred to as "primary material." Primary material contains the core curriculum that is the basis for the grade-level subject or course. VDOE review committees will review the material selected by the publisher as the "primary material." This is typically the student edition of the textbook or the primary material that students will use to gain access to the content, although there may be exceptions according to the content area and grade level of the textbooks (e.g., teacher's editions may

need to be included in the review at elementary grades for English/reading). Ancillary and supplemental materials will not be considered for review.

Submitting primary material in digital format is encouraged. However, publishers may submit primary material in either digital or print format, or in a format combining both media. VDOE review committees will review only the material selected as the primary material by the publisher. If a print program is submitted as the primary material to be reviewed, a digital version of this material must also be available to students. Any duplicate or similar version of the primary material submitted will not be reviewed by the VDOE review committees as a part of the textbook approval process. If a publisher submits digital primary material and this material is also available in print, the review committee will review only the digital version of the primary material. In submitting their materials for review, publishers must provide an explanation of if and how the content in the primary material medium (digital or print) is different from or comparable to that offered in the other medium. Digital primary material may contain items such as embedded video clips or content that is delivered through an interactive format.

### **Submission Forms**

Publishers must complete the Textbook Publisher's Certification and Agreement listing all primary materials submitted for review consideration at the time it signals intent to submit textbooks for review as part of Virginia's textbook approval process.

# Textbook Publisher's Certification

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Publishing Company)

Name of Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number, including area code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The publishing company indicated above submits the following primary materials to the Virginia Department of Education for consideration in Virginia's textbook approval process.

Title	ISBN	Copyright	Grade Level or Course	Is this primary material submitted as digital, print, or combination?*

\*Only one version of the primary material will be reviewed by VDOE committees. If the primary material is available in more than one format, provide an explanation of how they differ or are comparable.

The publisher certifies the following:

1. Each textbook has been thoroughly examined and reviewed by at least three qualified content experts for factual accuracy in the subject matter and the textbooks are free from any factual or editing errors. The credentials of the author(s) and/or editor(s) and content review experts are provided on the attached forms.
2. Each textbook has been thoroughly examined and reviewed by qualified editors to identify any typographical errors.
3. Any duplicate version (i.e., print or digital) of the primary material that is available to Virginia school divisions contains at least the same content included in the primary material selected by the publisher for review. Any additional content, above that

contained in the primary material reviewed is accurate and free of errors. If the content of the print and digital versions of the same primary material varies, those variations are outlined in an attachment to the certification.

4. The Quality Assurance and Editing Process described below was followed for all primary materials submitted by the publisher for review.

**Quality Assurance and Editing Process:** Please describe, *in three pages or less*, the internal process used to ensure accuracy and lack of bias including:

- the quality assurance and workflow steps used to ensure accuracy of content;
- the quality assurance and workflow steps used to eliminate editing and typographical errors, including errors in grammar, written expression, spelling, formatting, and other substantive elements that may affect student learning;
- the fact-back-up guidelines (i.e., what is an acceptable source for a fact and what is not) used by the authors, editors, and outside content experts;
- the review by outside content experts, other than the authors, to verify accuracy and ensure freedom from bias; and
- the process used to reach consensus on information with divergent interpretations.

Enter the description here. (Additional information will not be considered or reviewed.)

## ***Textbook Publisher's Agreement***

The PUBLISHER agrees to the following:

1. After submission of a textbook to the Department of Education for consideration in the textbook approval process, the PUBLISHER will promptly inform the Department in writing of any changes made in the textbook prior to its approval by the Board of Education.
2. If any factual or editing errors are identified in a PUBLISHER's textbook following its approval by the Board of Education, the PUBLISHER will submit a corrective action plan to the Department of Education within 30 days of being notified by the Department of the errors. All corrective action plans must be approved by the Board of Education, but the Board hereby delegates the approval of corrective action plans not involving significant errors to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each corrective action plan must be tailored to the materiality of the errors identified and must be implemented in the manner most conducive to and least disruptive of student learning. Corrective action plans may include, but are not limited to: a) corrections upon reprinting of the textbook; b) corrective edits to an online textbook; c) electronic errata sheets posted on the PUBLISHER's and the Department of Education's Web sites; d) print errata sheets provided to schools for insertion into textbooks; e) replacement books; and f) return of the textbook and refund of any payment made for the textbook. Upon approval of the corrective action plan, the PUBLISHER will implement the plan at the PUBLISHER's expense.
3. If, upon being notified by the Department of factual or editing errors in an approved textbook, the PUBLISHER disputes that the textbook contains such errors, the PUBLISHER must submit a written explanation of its position to the Department within 30 days of receiving notice from the Department of the error. Upon request, the PUBLISHER may meet with the Department. The Board of Education reserves to itself the right to make a final determination of whether the textbook contains a factual or editing error. If the Board determines that the textbook contains such an error, the PUBLISHER will submit a corrective action plan to the Department within 15 days after receiving notice of the Board's determination.
4. If numerous and/or significant errors are identified in a textbook on the Board of Education's approved list, the Board of Education may, in its sole discretion, withdraw the textbook from the approved list. The Board of Education must notify the PUBLISHER in writing before it removes its textbook from the approved list. The PUBLISHER will have 30 days to respond in writing and the right to meet with the Department of Education before removal. A "significant error" is a factual or editing error that the Board of Education or Department of Education determines within the context of the intended use of the textbook will substantially interfere with student learning. A change in knowledge that occurs subsequent to publication shall not constitute a significant error.
5. If the PUBLISHER makes updates/revisions to textbooks after they have been approved by the Board of Education, the PUBLISHER will ensure that the updated/revised material has been vetted through the same quality assurance process for accuracy and editing outlined in the signed certification. The PUBLISHER will notify the Department and any school division that has purchased this material of the updates/revisions that have been made.

Please check here if this submission includes an attachment that outlines if and how duplicate versions (print or digital) of primary materials vary. (Item #3 in the certification)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of President of the Company or Designee)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Title of Person Signing)

### ***Author(s)/Editor(s) and Content Review Expert Information***

This attachment must be completed for each primary material submitted for review. Please insert additional copies for each primary material.

#### **Primary Material (printed book or digital submission)**

Please list name and edition of the textbook, or series submitted as a primary material.

**Publisher:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Product Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Author(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Edition:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ISBN:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Author/Editor Information**

Please complete the table below. Include each author and/or editor associated with the development of the primary material. Please insert copies of the table for additional authors/editors.

<b>Author/Editor:</b>	<b>Role of the author/editor in writing the textbook (include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)</b>
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	
Did the author/editor review the final copy of his/her work before publication? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

<b>Author/Editor:</b>	<b>Role of the author/editor in writing the textbook (include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)</b>
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	
Did the author/editor review the final copy of his/her work before publication? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

<b>Author/Editor:</b>	<b>Role of the author/editor in writing the textbook (include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)</b>
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	
Did the author/editor review the final copy of his/her work before publication? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

## Content Review Expert Information

Please include each content review expert associated with the quality assurance process for accuracy and editing for the primary material listed. At least three content review experts must be included with at least 1) two experts with a graduate degree in the content area being reviewed; and 2) at least one teacher with recent experience teaching the content in the appropriate grade level or course. Please insert copies of the table for additional content review experts.

Reviewer:	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	

Reviewer:	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	

Reviewer:	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background:	
Related published works:	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:	

**Proposed Mathematics Textbooks Recommended for Approval**  
**May 19, 2011**

Course	Publisher	Title	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
			Yes	No
<b>Kindergarten</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Kindergarten	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Kindergarten	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Kindergarten	✓	
<b>Grade 1</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Grade 1	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 1	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Everyday Mathematics, Grade 1	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Grade 1	✓	
<b>Grade 2</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Grade 2	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 2	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Everyday Mathematics, Grade 2	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Grade 2	✓	

Course	Publisher	Title	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
			Yes	No
<b>Grade 3</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Grade 3	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 3	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Everyday Mathematics, Grade 3	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Grade 3	✓	
<b>Grade 4</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Grade 4	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 4	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Grade 4	✓	
<b>Grade 5</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Math Expressions, Grade 5	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 5	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Everyday Mathematics, Grade 5	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects, Grade 5	✓	

Course	Publisher	Title	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
			Yes	No
<b>Grade 6</b>				
	Big Ideas Learning, LLC	Big Ideas Math 6 Virginia Edition	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Mathematics Course 1 Virginia Edition	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Scott Foresman	enVisionMATH, Grade 6	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Mathematics, Course 1 Virginia Edition	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Everyday Mathematics, Grade 6	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects Course 1	✓	
<b>Grade 7</b>				
	Big Ideas Learning	Big Ideas Math 7, Virginia Edition	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Mathematics Course 2 Virginia Edition	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	McDougal Littell Pre-Algebra	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Mathematics, Course 2 Virginia Edition	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects Course 2	✓	

Course	Publisher	Title	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
			Yes	No
<b>Grade 8</b>				
	Big Ideas Learning	Big Ideas Math 8, Virginia Edition	✓	
	Carnegie Learning, Inc.	Bridge to Algebra, Virginia Edition	✓	
	CORD Communications, Inc.	Bridges to Algebra and Geometry	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Mathematics Course 3 Virginia Edition	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	McDougal Littell Pre-Algebra	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Mathematics, Course 3 Virginia Edition	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Math Connects Course 3	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Pre-Algebra	✓	
<b>Algebra I</b>				
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Algebra 1 (Burger et al)	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Algebra 1 Concepts and Skills	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Algebra 1 (Larson et al)	✓	
	Key Curriculum Press	Discovering Algebra 1	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Algebra 1	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Algebra 1 Virginia Edition	✓	

Course	Publisher	Title	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
			Yes	No
<b>Geometry</b>				
	Carnegie Learning, Inc.	Geometry, Virginia Edition	✓	
	CORD Communications, Inc.	Geometry	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Geometry (Burger et al)	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Geometry Concepts and Skills	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Geometry (Larson et al)	✓	
	Key Curriculum Press	Discovering Geometry	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Geometry Virginia Edition	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Geometry	✓	
<b>Algebra II</b>				
	Carnegie Learning, Inc.	Algebra II, Virginia Edition	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Algebra 2 (Burger et al)	✓	
	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Holt McDougal Algebra 2 (Larson et al)	✓	
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Algebra 2 Virginia Edition	✓	
	The McGraw-Hill Companies School Education Group	Virginia Algebra 2	✓	
<b>Algebra, Functions, and Data Analysis</b>				
	Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Prentice Hall	Algebra, Functions, and Data Analysis: A Virginia Course	✓	



history, Virginia Studies, U.S. History to 1865, U.S. History: 1865 to the Present, and Civics & Economics.

Because the VGLA is an alternative assessment for the SOL tests, the standard setting committee members first reviewed the SOL test for the particular content area, focusing on the cut scores that had been adopted by the Board to represent pass/proficient and pass/advanced. Committee members were asked to recommend cut scores on the VGLA that would represent the same level of achievement as required by the cut scores representing pass/proficient and pass/advanced on the SOL test.

**Summary of Major Elements:**

A range of recommended cut scores for the achievement levels of pass/proficient and pass/advanced for the VGLA for grade 3 history, Virginia Studies, U.S. History to 1865, U.S. History: 1865 to the Present and Civics & Economics will be presented to the Board. Background and summary information may be found in Attachment A.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board waive first review and adopt cut scores for the achievement levels of pass/proficient and pass/advanced for the VGLA in grade 3 history, Virginia Studies, U.S. History to 1865, U.S. History: 1865 to the Present and Civics & Economics as follows.

- Grade 3: 58% for pass/proficient and 88% for pass/advanced as recommended by the Articulation Committee
- Virginia Studies: 53% for pass/proficient and 80% for pass/advanced to ensure consistency between the requirements of the VGLA and the SOL test
- U.S. History to 1865: 55% for pass/proficient as recommended by the Articulation Committee and 85% for pass/advanced advanced to ensure consistency between the requirements of the VGLA and the SOL test
- U.S. History: 1865 to the Present: 55% for pass/proficient as recommended by the Articulation Committee and 85% for pass/advanced to ensure consistency between the requirements of the VGLA and the SOL test
- Civics and Economics: 53% for pass/proficient as recommended by the Articulation Committee and 85% for pass/advanced to ensure consistency between the requirements of the VGLA and the SOL test

**Impact on Resources:**

N/A

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Upon approval by the Board of Education, this information will be disseminated to the school divisions via a Superintendent's Memorandum.

## Attachment A

	Pass/Proficient			Pass/Advanced		
	Background Information	Standard Setting Summary		Background Information	Standard Setting Summary	
VGLA Subject Area	Pass/Proficient Cut Score (Percent Correct) for the SOL test	Round 3 Median Percent Correct for Proficient	Articulation Committee Recommendation	Pass/Advanced Cut Score (Percent Correct) for the SOL test	Round 3 Median Percent Correct for Advanced	Articulation Committee Recommendation
Grade 3 History	58%	64%	58%	88%	89%	88%
Virginia Studies	53%	43%	50%	80%	74%	78%
US History I	55%	58%	55%	85%	83%	83%
US History II	55%	55%	55%	85%	81%	82%
Civics & Economics	53%	55%	53%	85%	82%	84%