Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item

Agenda Item: **Date:** June 23, 2016

Title	Progress Report on the Development of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*		
Presenter	Dr. Cynthia A. Cave, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications		
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Purpose of Presentation:
Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Previous Review or Action:
Previous review and discussion of *Profile of a Virginia Graduate.*

Action Requested:
No action requested at this time.

Alignment with Board of Education Goals: Please indicate (X) all that apply:

X	Goal 1: Accountability for Student Learning
X	Goal 2: Rigorous Standards to Promote College and Career Readiness
X	Goal 3: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
	Goal 4: Nurturing Young Learners
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Educators
X	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

Background Information and Statutory Authority:
Goal 1: The Board of Education is working in consultation with stakeholders to establish the policies and guidance necessary to develop and implement a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* that describe the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences students should attain during their K-12 education to make them "life-ready". Included in the Profile is consideration of the "5 Cs"-- critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

Goal 2: Through its work, the Board is providing flexibility for multiple pathways toward college and career readiness.

Goal 3: The Board is establishing a framework to describe the preparation and competencies of the Virginia graduate which encompasses the areas of content knowledge, workplace skills, community engagement and civic responsibility, and career exploration.

Section 22.1-253.13:1.A of the *Code of Virginia* (*Code*) provides, in part:

> "The General Assembly and the Board of Education believe that the fundamental goal of the public schools of the Commonwealth must be to enable each student to develop the skills that are necessary for success in school, preparation for life, and reaching their full potential."

Section 22.1-253.13:3.A of the *Code* provides, in part:

> "The Board of Education shall promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), which shall include, but not be limited to, student outcome measures, requirements and guidelines for instructional programs and for the integration of educational technology into such instructional programs, administrative and instructional staffing levels and positions, including staff positions for supporting educational technology, student services, auxiliary education programs such as library and media services, course and credit requirements for graduation from high school, community relations, and the philosophy, goals, and objectives of public education in Virginia."

Effective July 1, 2016, § 22.1-253.13:4.D of the *Code* will provide, in part:

> D. "In establishing graduation requirements, the Board [of Education] shall:
>
> 1. Develop and implement, in consultation with stakeholders representing elementary and secondary education, higher education, and business and industry in the Commonwealth and including parents, policymakers, and community leaders in the Commonwealth, a Profile of a Virginia Graduate that identifies the knowledge and skills that students should attain during high school in order to be successful contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth, giving due consideration to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.
>
> 2. Emphasize the development of core skill sets in the early years of high school.
>
> 3. Establish multiple paths toward college and career readiness for students to follow in the later years of high school. Each such pathway shall include opportunities for internships, externships, and credentialing…
>
> That the graduation requirements established by the Board of Education… shall apply to each student who enrolls in high school as (i) a freshman after July 1, 2018; (ii) a sophomore after July 1, 2019; (iii) a junior after July 1, 2020; or (iv) a senior after July 1, 2021."

Summary of Important Issues:

The *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* is being developed to describe the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences students should attain during their K-12 education to make them "life-ready." The "Profile" is the framework for the Board's revision of graduation requirements that will go into effect for freshmen entering high schools in the fall of the 2018-2019 school year, or the graduating class of 2022, and that will be reflected in amendments to the *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation or SOA). The Profile and subsequent changes in the regulations for requirements for graduation will become driving factors in further reforms to the state's assessment and accountability systems. Revisions to the state's accountability system will

parallel reforms to the federal accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).The attached report provides a summary of the Board's actions and progress as it has established goals for the graduation outcomes and the means to achieve them. The report provides a brief history and then describes the decisions and recommendations made by the Board at its May 2016 work session in preparation for public discussion at the June business meeting and subsequent public review and comment.

In 2014, the Board committed to conducting a comprehensive review and revision of the Standards of Accreditation, including student achievement and graduation requirements. Through the work of its Committee on School and Division Accountability, the Board has discussed and considered information from multiple sources to shape and expand student achievement expectations for graduation. In September 2015, the draft framework and definition for the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* was introduced. The draft Profile presents descriptions of the overlapping areas of competencies a student should have attained when completing high school: content knowledge; workplace skills; community engagement and civic responsibility; and career exploration.

In subsequent meetings of the committee, presentations from staff, school division personnel, the Standards of Learning Innovations committee, and stakeholders from multiple sectors have informed the Profile's further development. In February 2016, a "strawman" proposal outlining revised graduation requirements and the "Virginia Diploma" was introduced to stimulate thought and discussion. Through roundtables and presentations, the Board has elicited information and recommendations from teachers, counselors, superintendents, principals, parents, students, coordinators for English Language Learners, school boards, businesses, the military, higher education deans, faculty, and admission directors, career and technical (CTE) centers and the department's advisory CTE council, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academies, and recipients of high school innovation grants.

During the 2016 Session, the Governor and the General Assembly supported the development of a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* through the introduction and adoption of legislation. SB 336 and HB 895, signed into law this spring, direct the Board to redefine the expectations of high school graduates in the Commonwealth. These bills amend § 22.1-253.13:4.D of the *Code* to require the Board to develop the Profile of a Graduate, with consideration for the 5 Cs; the development of core skills sets in the early years of high school; and provision for multiple paths toward college and career readiness, with opportunities for internships, externships, and credentialing. The redefined high school graduation expectations are to be in place for the freshman class of 2018-2019.

At its May 25, 2016 work session, the Board reviewed, amended, and confirmed a draft *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and discussed proposals for requirements and credits that would be necessary for graduation. Board members emphasized the need to express the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* in straightforward and easy-to-understand language and provided suggestions for further clarity and revisions. The members then reviewed proposals for further development and implementation of the Profile, described in detail in the attached report and summarized below, and considered them for implementation.

Proposals Endorsed by the Board:

1. Expand career exposure, exploration, and planning. The Board endorsed expanding opportunities for career exposure, exploration, and planning for students. An approach to expansion may include a sequential compilation of expectations to include elementary exposure; middle grades exploration (including the Career Investigation Course), and high school focus. Student career

exploration, exposure, and planning activities would be documented and reviewed in the Academic Career Plan, which will serve as a guiding document through middle school and high school.

2. Encourage internships and work-based learning for all students. The Board endorsed the use of internships and work-based learning as viable means to meet graduation requirements and to earn standard credits. School divisions would be supported in the use of the existing models and guidelines for implementation.

3. Create a category of "requirements" for diploma expectations. The Board endorsed using "requirements" to name expectations for graduation, which may be established by the Board of Education or the General Assembly, but which do not fall under the current categories of standard or verified credits. "Requirements" are certified as completed by the local school/school division by criteria established by the local school board. These expectations currently include legislative directives as follows:
    - Completion of a virtual course (Standard and Advanced diploma)
    - Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators (Standard and Advanced diploma)
    - Earning a Board-approved career and technical education credential (Standard diploma)
    - Completion of two sequential electives chosen from a concentration of courses (Standard diploma)

4. Expand the use of locally-developed performance assessments and reduce the number of verified credits. The Board endorsed expanding the use of locally-developed performance assessments and reducing the number of verified credits needed for both the Advanced Studies and Standard Diploma to four. Students would be required to verify four credits (one in each of the core content area of mathematics, English, Science, and History/Social Science) prior to graduation. Locally developed performance assessments applied according to Board guidelines may be used by school divisions to verify the credit in history and social science.

Proposals for Further Consideration and Feedback

5. Establish one Virginia diploma (versus the current two). The Board indicated interest in exploring merging the Advanced Studies and Standard Diploma into a single Virginia Diploma but did not endorse moving ahead with this action yet.

6. Establish a requirement for Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning. The Board expressed interest and support in student participation in experiential learning with opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in the 5 Cs as a requirement for graduation, which would be documented by the school division. The Board recommended the use of a Capstone Project to certify this requirement but would allow local school boards the option to substitute other means. Department staff will further develop the concept of an Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning requirement.

    The Board supported the idea that students complete a capstone project during their high school careers. Capstone projects provide opportunities for a student or group of students to pursue knowledge and experiences in topics of choice, engage in research to answer questions, apply analytical skills, and develop a final project that reflects understanding of academic concepts.

The Board viewed completion of a Capstone Project as one opportunity for a student to demonstrate and experience the 5 Cs, and decided that the project should be included as a primary option under the Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning proposal.

7. Increase mathematics requirements. The Board expressed interest in increasing the expectations in mathematics for all students. Department staff will explore options for future Board consideration.

8. Establish alternative options for Science. The Board expressed an interest in further exploration of alternative approaches to achieve science standard credits. Department staff will explore multiple options for future Board consideration.

9. The Board took no action on a proposal to develop career specific courses/competencies for delivery within traditional core content areas for standard credits. Department staff will present this for future Board consideration.

Public comments on the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, these proposals and pending ones will be elicited through various methods, including public hearings held in the summer of 2016, postings to the Department of Education's Web site, and written correspondence.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources: The department will provide the staff resources to assist the Board in further research in the development of regulations and guidance necessary to implement changes in the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation or SOA).

Timetable for Further Review/Action: Based on information provided from further stakeholder participation, public comment, and staff research as directed by the Board, the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* will be reflected in proposed amendments to the Standards of Accreditation this fall.

Superintendent's Recommendation:
The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive this report.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BRIEFING

Progress Report on the Board of Education's Development of a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*

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JUNE 2016

OFFICE OF POLICY
DIVISION OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

The *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* is being developed to describe the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences students should attain during their K-12 education to make them "life-ready" – prepared for college and/or work and to be successful in life. The Profile is the framework for the Board of Education's revision of graduation requirements that will go into effect for freshmen entering high schools in the fall of the 2018-2019 school year, or the graduating class of 2022, and that will be reflected in amendments to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation or SOA). The Profile and subsequent changes in the regulations for requirements for graduation will become driving factors in further reforms to the state's assessment and accountability systems. Revisions to the state's accountability system will parallel reforms to the federal accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The purpose of this report is to document the Board's progress in developing the Profile.

Based on current estimates, by 2201 about 500,000 new jobs will be created in Virginia – many in scientific, technical, or healthcare areas. To be eligible and competitive for job opportunities in tomorrow's economy, Virginia's public school students will need opportunities to learn about multiple subject areas and to use personal skills during their educational years. The need to reconsider how Virginia children are educated stems from the evolution to a complex economy, with diverse and rapid change as underlying forces, rather than stability and standard workforce practices. Current data reveals several troubling outcomes of the existing system of diploma requirements (refer to Rapid Data Review) concerning the remediation levels of Standard Diploma graduates as well as the percentage of Advanced Studies graduates who graduate with a bachelor's degree in four years. Moreover, discussions with businesses and the military about necessary work-ready skills and knowledge generate lists that include communication, interpersonal skills, responsibility, problem-solving and innovation.

As determined by the Board through its committee discussions and through communications with stakeholders, a Virginia high school graduate should be able to:

- achieve and apply appropriate academic knowledge;
- align knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career opportunities;
- attain and demonstrate productive workplace skills, qualities, and behaviors;
- value and build connections with diverse communities; and
- understand personal and civic responsibility

Background

In 2014, the Board committed to conducting a comprehensive review and revision of the Standards of Accreditation, including student achievement and graduation requirements. Through the work of its Committee on School and Division Accountability, the Board has

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discussed and considered information from other states and education stakeholders to shape and expand student achievement expectations for graduation. In September 2015, the draft framework for the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* was introduced. The draft Profile presents descriptions of the overlapping areas of competencies a student should have attained when completing high school: content knowledge; workplace skills; community engagement and civic responsibility; and career exploration.

In addition, the Standards of Learning (SOL) Innovation Committee has provided support and recommendations for the development of the Profile. In its November 2015 report, the committee included a recommendation that:

> The BOE, in collaboration with stakeholders representing K-12 education, institutions of higher education, business and industry, policymakers and community leaders should develop a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*. In the development of such a Profile, the BOE should consider the "5 Cs" – critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship – needed for success in the Virginia economy.

During the 2016 Session, the Governor and the General Assembly supported the development of a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* through the introduction and adoption of legislation. SB 336 and HB 895, signed into law this spring, direct the Board to redefine the expectations of high school graduates in the Commonwealth. These bills amend § 22.1-253.13:4.D of the *Code of Virginia* (Va. Code) to require the Board to develop the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, with consideration for the 5 Cs; the development of core skills sets in the early years of high school; and provision for multiple paths toward college and career readiness, with opportunities for internships, externships, and credentialing. The redefined high school graduation expectations are to be in place for the freshman class of 2018.

Current Status and Actions Taken

In February 2016 a "strawman" proposal for the Profile, outlining revised graduation requirements and the "Virginia Diploma," was introduced to stimulate thought and discussion.

The Board has been thorough, informed, and inclusive in this work, and, over the past several months, it has structured roundtables and presentations to elicit comment from the following stakeholders:

- Local school superintendents
- The SOL Innovation Committee
- School division recipients of high school innovation grants
- Higher education deans, professors, and admission representatives
- Governor's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academies
- Career and Technical Education Centers

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- Seniors who have completed capstone and applied learning projects as a local requirement for graduation
- School division English Language Learner coordinators
- Military recruiters from the Navy, Army, Coast Guard, and Air Force
- The Board's Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education
- Secondary and elementary school principals
- Secondary and elementary school counselors
- Secondary and elementary school teachers (including gifted, special education, and general education)
- Business representatives from multiple career clusters
- Parents
- Representatives of local school boards

Actions Taken at the May 25, 2016 Work Session

At its May 25, 2016 work session, the Board of Education reviewed, amended, and confirmed a draft *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and discussed proposals for requirements and credits that would be necessary for graduation. Board members emphasized the need to express the Profile in straightforward and easy-to-understand language and provided suggestions for further clarity and revisions. The members then reviewed proposals to operationalize the Profile. The proposals and Board decisions are summarized below.

Proposals Endorsed by the Board:

1. Expand career exposure, exploration, and planning. The Board endorsed expanding opportunities for career exposure, exploration, and planning for all students.

2. Encourage internships and work-based learning for all students. The Board endorsed the use of internships and other work-based learning opportunities as a viable means to meet graduation requirements and to earn standard credits.

3. Create a category of "requirements" for diploma expectations. The Board supported using "requirements" to name expectations for graduation, which may be established by the Board of Education or the General Assembly but do not fall under the current categories of standard or verified credits.

4. Expand the use of locally-developed performance assessments and reduce the number of verified credits. The Board supported expanding the use of locally-developed performance assessments for history and social science, and reducing the number of verified credits needed for both the Advanced Studies and Standard Diplomas to four.

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Proposals for Further Consideration and Feedback

1. Establish one Virginia diploma (versus the current two). The Board indicated interest in exploring merging the Advanced Studies and Standard Diplomas into a single Virginia Diploma but did not endorse moving ahead with this action yet.

2. Establish a requirement for Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning. The Board expressed support for exposing students to and giving them opportunities to demonstrate the 5 Cs of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking, and citizenship as a requirement for graduation, which would be documented by the school division. The Board recommended the use of a Capstone Project to certify this requirement but would allow local school boards the option to substitute other means. Department staff will further develop the concept of an Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning requirement.

3. Increase mathematics requirements. The Board expressed interest in increasing the expectations in mathematics for all students. Department staff will explore options for future Board consideration.

4. Establish alternative options for Science. The Board expressed an interest in further exploration of alternative approaches to achieve science standard credits. Department staff will explore multiple options for future Board consideration.

5. The Board took no action on a proposal to develop career specific courses/competencies for delivery within traditional core content areas for standard credits. Department staff will present this for future Board consideration.

Public comments on the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, these proposals and pending ones will be elicited through various methods, including public hearings held in the summer of 2016, postings to the Department of Education's Web site, and written correspondence.

***Profile of a Virginia Graduate* Framework**

The Board of Education developed and continues to refine the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*. The Profile displays the four domains that a student will experience in his or her K-12 educational experience to prepare him or her for life after high school – content knowledge, workplace skills, community engagement and civic responsibility, and career exploration. The domains are shown as overlapping circles to reflect the inter-connectedness of these areas to preparing students for life.

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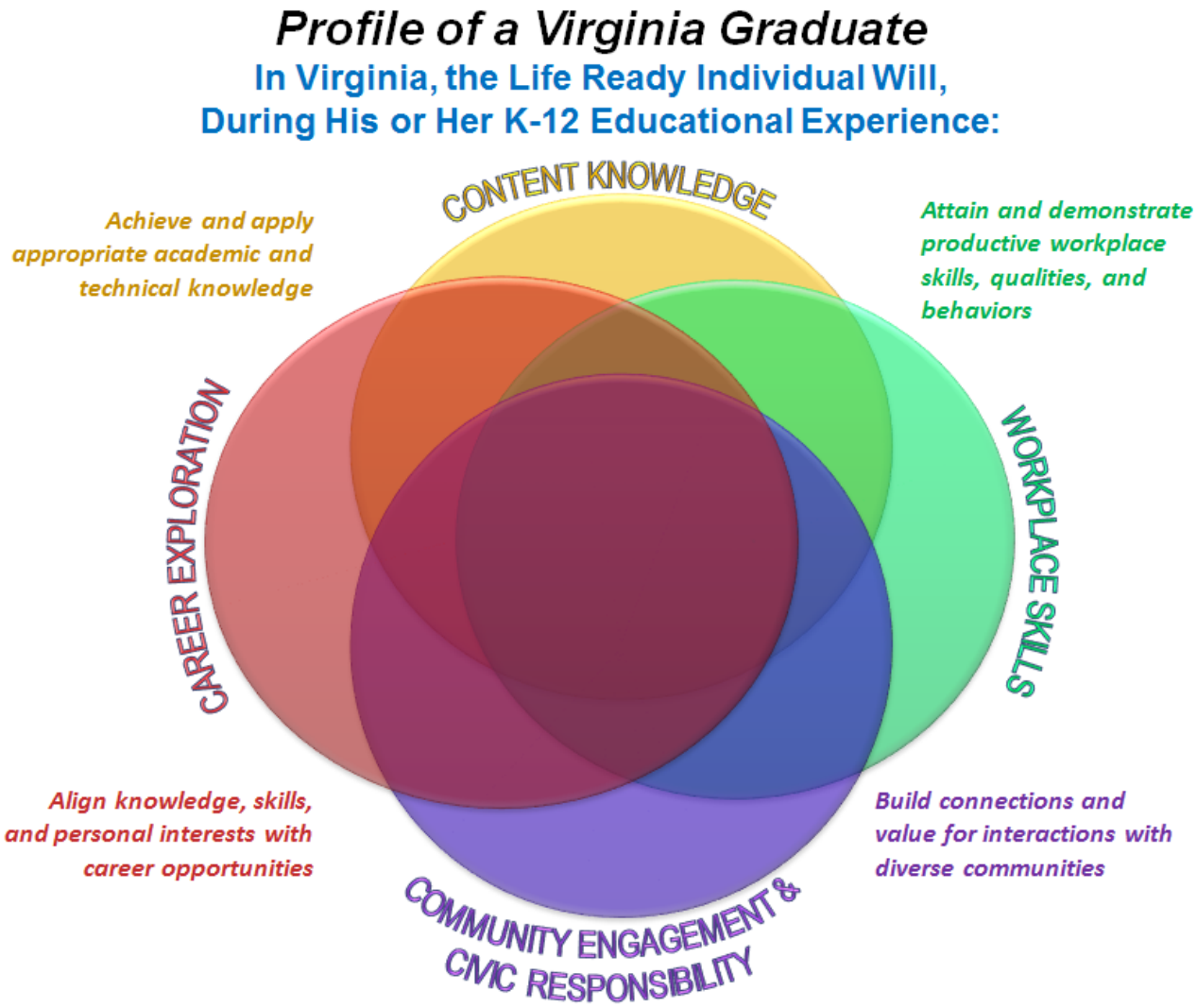
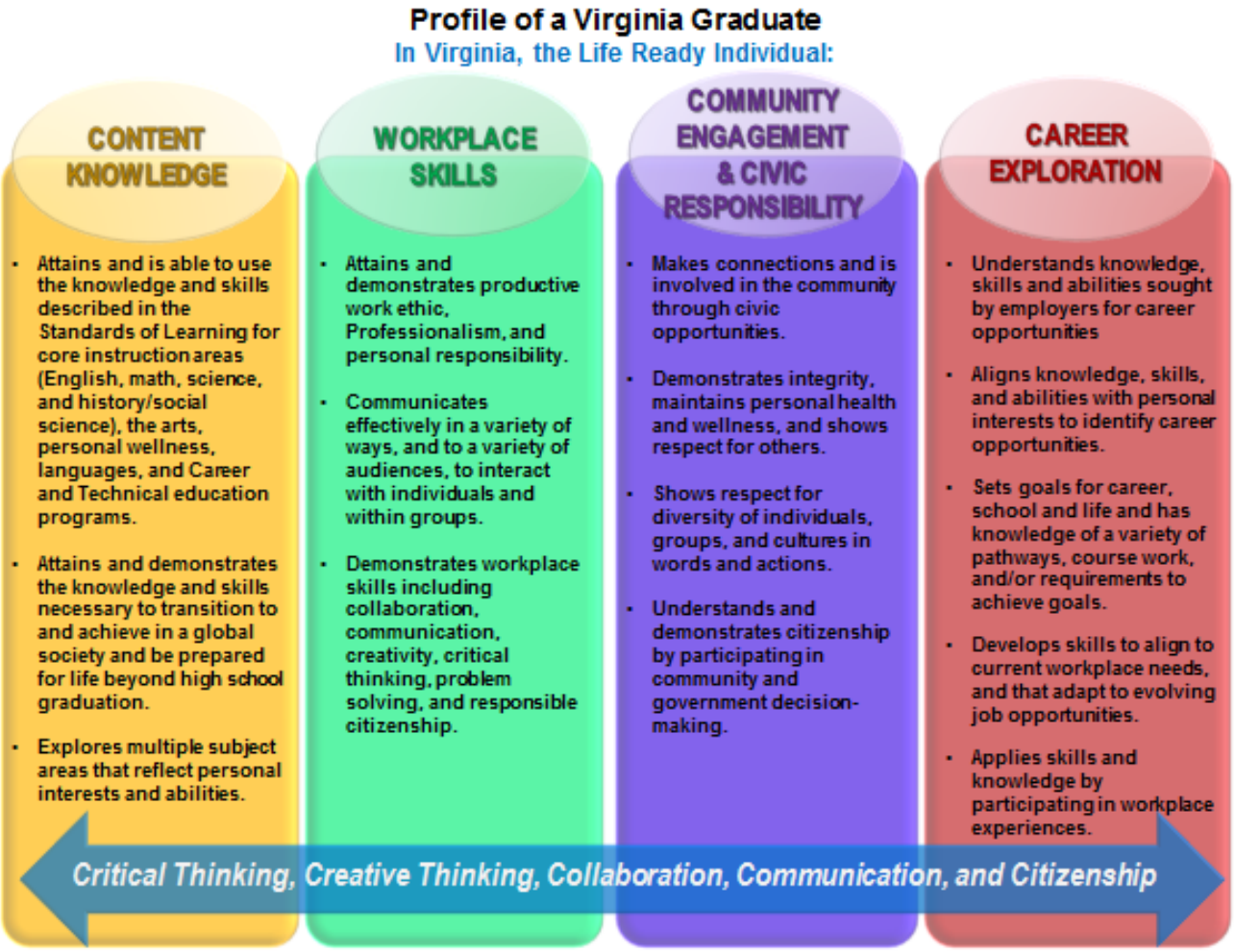


The Profile further articulates the dispositions and qualities that make up the four domains. The Profile has been revised to reflect feedback from education stakeholders and Board members, and to ensure the language is easy to understand.



Proposals Endorsed by the Board

I. Expand Career Exposure, Exploration, and Planning

As the Board further develops the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, it is considering enhancing the language of the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) requirement in the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) to include more specific language related to career exposure, exploration, and planning. As a component of the enhanced policy, the Board is considering including content deliverables to students at critical decision-making stages in the K-12 school experience, and requiring that all students take a career investigation course in middle school. Currently, 8VAC20-131-140 of the Standards of Accreditation states:

"Beginning with the 2013-2014 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 2014-2015 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 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."

To ensure students are receiving the best information to make informed decisions about their future, it is proposed that a policy change be made to add new language to the ACP requirement to include critical decision-making points in elementary school, middle school, and high school. The final language will reflect stakeholder feedback but could include requiring students to select potential career cluster area(s) in elementary school, potential career pathway designation(s) in middle school (according to the results of a locally selected career interest inventory), and choosing a career-related experience for high school. The language will require that the ACP be reviewed annually, and also specify the importance of it being student-led, family-engaged, and developed with the opportunity for revisions and edits as the student progresses through each level. Lastly, a career investigations course would be required of all middle school students.

Professional development for school counselors would target the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* work regarding students being "life-ready," the 5 Cs, comprehensive and developmental academic and career planning, career clusters and pathways, rigorous course planning advisement, work-based learning methods, postsecondary pathways, and labor market and industry needs. Professional development for educators would focus on integrating career exposure, exploration, and planning into instruction and other school opportunities.

The overall goal will be for students to begin an Academic and Career Plan Portfolio (ACPP) in elementary school to include information on interests, values, and skills necessary to make informed decisions regarding their future. The critical decision-making elements and demonstration of competence or mastery would become a part of the portfolio and follow the students through K-12. Demonstration items and information in the portfolio could include counselor notes related to academic and career goals, class projects, interest inventory results, awards and recognitions, and, potentially, digital badges. The information contained in the ACPP, K-6, would serve as the foundation for creating the ACP in grade 7. The ACP document will be created in the career investigation course. The course will also serve as the platform for rigorous course planning, work-based learning opportunities, industry

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certifications, a potential capstone project, and postsecondary education. The ACPP will be a living document that is student-led and revised as often as the students makes informed decisions about the future.

The Standards for School Counseling Programs in Virginia Public Schools provide that students receive information about the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue higher education, compete in a technologically oriented workforce, and be informed citizens. The standards will be reviewed and revised during the 2016-2017 academic year and will reflect the current and future work on the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, including the critical decision making elements that support the 5 Cs.

The career investigations course that will be required for students in middle school can be completed in at least three ways, two of which will earn the student a high school credit.

- Career Investigation Phase I (9068/9 weeks) - Exploratory Option
- Career Investigation Phase I (9069/18 weeks) - High School Credit
- Career Investigation Phase I (9070/36 weeks) - High School Credit

All three courses have essential competency-based tasks that require students to assess their roles in society, identify their roles as workers, analyze their personal assets, complete an exploration of career clusters and pathways, select career fields or occupations for further study, demonstrate Workplace Readiness Skills (Personal, Professional, and Technical), and create an Academic and Career Plan based on the their interests, values, and skills.

It is important to note that the creation and maintenance of the ACPP is not a school-counselor-specific duty. Although school counselors may take the lead in this effort, support and collaboration must also include administrators, teachers, and the community.

II. Encourage Internships and Work-Based Learning Experiences for All Students

This proposal discussed and endorsed by the Board at its work session is to encourage, but not require, work-based learning experiences for all students Work-based learning (WBL) is a coordinated, coherent sequence of on-the-job experiences that are related to students' career goals and interests, based on instructional preparation, and performed in partnership with local businesses, industries or other organizations in the community. Work-based learning enables students to apply classroom instruction in a real—world business or service-oriented work environment.

Expectations for Virginia's schools are found in the *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation). 8VAC20-131-70, Program of instruction and learning objectives, requires each school to "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 education needs of students." 8VAC20-131-100, Instructional program in secondary schools, specifically states that in addition to the academic areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science, the secondary school shall offer opportunities for students to pursue a program of studies in foreign languages, fine arts, and career and technical areas including: "career and technical education choices that prepare the student as a career and technical education program completer in one of the three or more occupational areas and that prepare the student for technical or pre-professional postsecondary programs." The Board of Education's encouragement of work-based learning experiences for all students supports the above objectives and would benefit Virginia's students by the following:

- Interest in classroom work is stimulated by the application of academic and job-related learning to career clusters and pathways.
- The student has the opportunity to learn useful employment skills under actual workplace conditions.
- The ability of the student to develop a post-high-school plan for employment and/or continuing education is enhanced.

The Virginia Department of Education's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Office has created procedures and guidelines for WBL in Virginia. A task force that included business and industry training supervisors, special education teachers, parents, school counselors, instructional specialists and superintendents was convened to conduct a review through research, review, and analysis of national trends, a study of literature relevant to WBL, and the current status of WBL in Virginia's schools.

As part of the review, CTE administrators replied to a survey and provided three major findings:

- Job shadowing and cooperative education are the most commonly used methods of WBL but there is interest in offering other methods.
- The main value for WBL experiences is the assistance provided in helping students obtain jobs after high school or complete postsecondary programs, including college.
- The major reason for unsuccessful WBL experiences is ill-fitting student placements that do not match students' career goals or plans of study.

After conducting this review, the current guidelines were developed and can be found in the *Career and Technical Education Work-Based Learning Guide.* The guide includes Virginia regulations and guidelines for the administration of WBL and provides training materials for administrators, teacher-coordinators, school counselors, students, parents, and business and industry representatives. It can be found at:
(http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/work-based_learning/wbl_learning_guide.pdf)

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The implementation guide focuses on the seven types of WBL methods of instruction used in Virginia. The WBL methods are divided into three categories: Career-exploration; Pre-professional development; and Career-preparation. These categories assist in linking WBL to instructional activities, as well as the goals of each experience. Career-exploration experiences, such as job shadowing or mentorship, happen in middle or early high school and are intended to inform students about the range of career options and expose them to different workplace environments.

Extended internships and service learning are Pre-professional activities which are related to high school course work and deepen a student's knowledge about careers of interest, and further develop personal qualities and workplace readiness skills. Career-preparation methods, such as student apprenticeships and cooperative education, encompass more long-term career-preparation experiences. They are structured to provide students with the opportunity to apply technical and practical knowledge and skills needed in the career that the student intends to pursue.

Due to the intensity and significant number of work hours involved, Career-preparation is the only WBL method in CTE that currently offers students an opportunity to earn a standard credit towards graduation. Local school divisions may use the *Career and Technical Education Work-Based Learning Guide* to implement WBL or to develop their own guidelines for administering WBL. When developing local guidelines for administering WBL, a division shall identify requirements for the course if offering standard credit.

III. Create a Category of "Requirements" for Diploma Expectations

This proposal discussed and endorsed by the Board at its work session is to add a "requirements" category to the description of what a student must accomplish in order to earn a diploma. This category would capture expectations that are not currently included as standard or verified credits. A requirement is an expectation for graduation and may be put in place by the General Assembly or by the Board of Education.

Expectations for graduation from a Virginia high school are specified in the Standards of Accreditation. Currently, sections 8VAC20-131-50 and 8VAC20-131-110 of the SOA address the subject areas students must learn and the verification of learning. At present, mastery of content knowledge is documented through the awarding of standard credits and verified credits. A standard credit is earned by completion of course requirements or demonstration of mastery of the content in accordance with Board guidelines. A verified credit is earned by passing an end-of-course test or substitute tests or other examinations and assessments approved by the Board, after earning a standard credit in a subject. In addition, the SOA provides diploma expectations for which a student does not earn a standard or verified credit upon completion but that must be met in order for the student to graduate. These include legislative directives, such as earning a CTE credential.

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The legislative directives which are in the current SOA include the following:

- In order to earn a Standard Diploma, students must earn a CTE credential that has been approved by the Board (Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4. D.2).
- Beginning with first-time ninth grade students in 2016-2017, requirements for the Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas include training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators (Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.D.2).
- Requirements for the Standard Diploma must include at last two sequential electives chosen from a concentration of courses (Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.D.2).
- Students earning a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be noncredit-bearing (Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.D.3).

Through its identification of the four domains of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*, the Board is considering some expectations for student achievement that are not met through standard or verified credits and could be considered requirements. One example is expanding career exposure, exploration, and planning in elementary school, middle school, and high school, and requiring a career investigations course in middle school. Exposure to and demonstration of the 5 Cs of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking, and citizenship is another potential requirement.

The addition of a requirements category would clarify diploma expectations. The Board has suggested that requirements for the diploma could be aligned with the Profile framework. For example, the completion of a career investigation course could be included as a requirement under "Career Pathways" to illustrate selection of career choices aligned with personal interests and skills.

The following chart illustrates the current expectations of the Standard and Advanced Studies diplomas and also provides an example of potential requirements.

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Diploma Expectations

Current Credits				
	Standard Diploma		**Advanced Studies Diploma**	
	Standard Units	**Verified Credits**	**Standard Units**	**Verified Credits**
English	4	2	4	2
Math	3	1	4	2
Science	3	1	4	2
History/Social Science	3	1	4	2
Student-selected		1		1
Health and P.E.	2		2	
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or CTE	2			
Foreign Language			3	
Fine Arts or CTE			1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1		1	
Electives	4		3	
TOTAL	**22**	**6**	**26**	**9**

Current Requirements		
	Standard Diploma	**Advanced Studies Diploma**
	One virtual course, which may be noncredit-bearing	One virtual course, which may be noncredit-bearing
	Training in first aid, CPR and the use of automated external defibrillators	Training in first aid, CPR and the use of automated external defibrillators
	Career and Technical Education (CTE) credential	
	Two sequential electives chosen from a concentration of courses	

Potential New Requirements Under Consideration by the Board of Education	
	Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning
	Capstone Project
	Demonstration of the 5 Cs
	Career Exploration Decision-Making Points and Career Investigation Course

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IV. Expand the Use of Locally-Developed Performance Assessments and Reduce the Number of Verified Credits

The Board of Education accepted a proposal to: (1) expand the use of locally-developed performance assessments to verify history/social science credits and (2) reduce the number of verified credits needed to earn a high school diploma to four. Under this proposal, a student would be required to earn one verified credit in each core subject area in order to graduate, as shown below.

- Mathematics — Passing SOL Test or Substitute Test approved by the Board
- English — Passing SOL Test or Substitute Test approved by the Board
- Science — Passing SOL Test or Substitute Test approved by the Board
- History/Social Science — Completion of a local authentic assessment with focus on some or all of the 5 Cs

At present, 22 standard units of credit and six verified credits are needed to earn a Standard Diploma, and 26 standard units of credit and nine verified credits are needed for an Advanced Studies Diploma. This proposal would reduce the number of verified credits by two (from six to four) for the Standard Diploma and reduce the number of verified credits needed for the Advanced Studies Diploma by five (from nine to four). The number of standard units of credit would remain the same for both diplomas.

"Verified unit of credit" or "verified credit" is defined in section 8VAC20-131-5 of the Standards of Accreditation as “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.” In addition, section 8VAC20-131-50 of the Standards of Accreditation sets forth the requirements for graduation and specifies the number of standard and verified credits a student must earn in order to graduate with a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma. The new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which will be fully implemented beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, requires state standardized testing in mathematics and reading in each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12 and testing in science at least once in grades 3 through 5, 6 through 9 and 10 through 12. The academic assessment requirements are set forth in section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v) of ESSA.

ESSA testing requirements, as well as current and proposed state testing requirements, are depicted in the following chart.

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High School Testing Expectations

Content Area	ESSA Testing	Standard Diploma		Advanced Studies Diploma		Proposed
		Standard Units	Verified Credits	Standard Units	Verified Credits	Verified Credits
English	1	4	2	4	2	1
Math	1	3	1	4	2	1
Science	1	3	1	4	2	1
History/Social Science		3	1	4	2	1
Student-selected			1		1	
Health and P.E.		2		2		
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or CTE		2				
Foreign Language				3		
Fine Arts or CTE				1		
Economics and Personal Finance		1		1		
Electives		4		3		
TOTAL	**3**	**22**	**6**	**26**	**9**	**4**

Currently, section 8VAC20-131-110 of the Standards of Accreditation permits students who do not pass Standards of Learning tests in science or history and social science to receive locally awarded verified credits from the local school board in accordance with criteria established in guidelines adopted by the Board of Education. In accordance with the *Guidance Document Governing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, the awarding of verified credit using this process currently applies only for the Standard Diploma; this process does not apply to awarding verified credit for an Advanced Studies Diploma. The Board of Education recently approved the concept of expanding the availability of locally awarded verified credits to include English and mathematics as well as science and history/social science.

Under the current guidance, in order to be eligible to earn locally awarded verified credits in science or history/social science, a student must pass the high school course and meet other specified criteria. This proposal would amend the criteria presently enumerated in the guidance, and it would expand the use of locally-verified credit – which is earned by passing a locally-developed performance assessment – to students pursuing either an Advanced Studies or Standard Diploma.

Section 8VAC20-131-50 of the SOA provides that students who complete a CTE program sequence and pass a licensure examination or occupational competency assessment in a CTE

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field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association, or acquire a professional license in a CTE 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 awarding of verified credit using this process applies only for the Standard Diploma. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the Board of Education as an additional test to verify student achievement. These substitutions are depicted in the following chart:

Substitutions

Substitutions:	**ESSA Testing**	**Standard Diploma**	**Advanced Studies Diploma**	**Proposed**
Locally-awarded verified credit may be substituted for Science and History/Social Science verified credit	No	Yes	No	Yes
CTE certification or licensure exam may be substituted for student-selected verified credit	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A
For CTE program sequence **and** certification or licensure exam, second credit may be substituted for Science **or** History/Social Science verified credit	No	Yes	No	Yes

This proposal would reduce the number of verified credits required to earn either a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma to four: one verified credit per core subject. In addition, this proposal would continue to allow locally-awarded verified credit to be substituted for history and social science for the Standard Diploma and would also extend the process to include the Advanced Studies Diploma. Furthermore, this proposal would change the eligibility criteria for earning locally awarded verified credit that is currently set forth in the Board's guidance document. Similarly, students pursuing a Standard Diploma who complete a CTE program sequence and obtain a certification in which more than one verified credit is conferred will continue to be able to substitute one credit for science or history and social science. This proposal will extend that process to students pursuing an Advanced Studies Diploma.

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Proposals for Further Consideration and Feedback

At its May 25 work session, the Board discussed and supported the following proposals for additional research and further consideration:

1. Establish one Virginia diploma (versus the current two) – The Virginia Diploma would be a merger of the current Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas. This new, merged Virginia Diploma may require twenty-five standard credits, four of which would need to be verified. Every student would be required to earn four standard credits each in English, math, science, and history/social science. Most educators expressed support for the move from two diplomas to a single diploma. While many parents expressed support for one diploma, it is likely that some parents may oppose the elimination of the Advanced Studies Diploma. Parents as well as Board members discussed the rigor of the program of studies as most important, not the name of the diploma. Currently, forty-two states only have one diploma. VDOE staff will review college-going (and other pertinent) data in those states to further inform the Board's deliberations.

2. Establish a requirement for Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning – The Board supported the idea of providing students with additional opportunities to be exposed to and demonstrate the 5 Cs of critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship and application of content knowledge. There was discussion about how valid and consistent assessments could be implemented to determine whether students have been exposed to and demonstrated Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning. The Board also discussed additional opportunities for students to demonstrate the 5 Cs through alternative experiences such as capstone projects, performance assessments, and/or work-based learning. In addition, it was suggested that any requirements for student exposure or demonstration of the 5 Cs include a capstone project as the "default" option for documenting experiences for graduation. Local divisions would be responsible for providing students with the opportunities to meet this requirement.

3. Capstone Project – The Board supported the idea of students completing a capstone project during their high school careers. Capstone projects are opportunities for a student or group of students to pursue learning about topics of choice, engage in research to answer questions, use analytical skills, and develop a final project that reflects understanding of the topic while giving students an opportunity to apply academic concepts. These projects are often designed to encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and the development of communication skills by engaging with the community. Capstone projects must be well-designed and monitored by staff to ensure quality and a meaningful student learning experience. The Board viewed completion of a Capstone Project as one opportunity for a student to demonstrate and incorporate the 5 Cs, and decided to include Capstone Projects as an option under the Applied Knowledge and Experiential Learning proposal.

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4. Increase Mathematics requirements – This proposal would increase mathematics requirements for high school students and provide opportunities for a breadth of mathematics experiences beyond the traditional Algebra-Geometry-Algebra II pathway that is currently provided. In the proposed Virginia Diploma, students would be required to earn three standard mathematics credits (one verified credit) to satisfy graduation requirements, but all students would be involved in mathematical thinking and problem-solving experiences in each year of high school. Students could continue on the pathway many currently complete in order to meet the Advanced Studies Diploma requirements and college admission expectations. For students who do not currently engage in mathematics every year in high school, this requirement could be met in multiple ways. Students could take courses such as computer science, computer programming, engineering, accounting, or business-related finance. Students would also be permitted to take courses more aligned with applied and career-specific Career Plans, such as Construction Math or Business Math. The proposal to increase mathematics requirements would ensure that students do not "time-out" in math during their high school years but would also create new options to align with career and academic planning goals.

5. Establish alternative options for Science – Currently, approximately 54 percent of students receiving a Standard Diploma take a sequence of science courses that includes Earth Science, Biology, and either Ecology or Animal Studies. These students generally do not take courses in the disciplines of Chemistry or Physics. This proposal would offer students a two-year sequence that would include one-semester courses in Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, thereby creating an option for students to earn two standard credits in science while gaining exposure to a broader array of scientific principles and topics. Any remaining science credit requirements for these students could be earned by taking courses in computer science, computer programing, or engineering, or courses that are designed to be more applied and career-specific such as Science for Welders. The current pathway in science would continue to be available for students who want to take year-long courses in Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. It was suggested that the department explore providing schools with variable sequencing options for science to begin with Physics and conclude with Earth Sciences.

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Timeline for Moving Forward

July & August 2016:

- The Board will consider changes to its accountability system to align with the Profile and ESSA.
- Public comments will be elicited through public hearings:
  - Mid July – hearings in Williamsburg and Manassas
  - Late August – hearings in Abingdon and Lynchburg
- Public comments will also be elicited through a VDOE Web site survey, and written correspondence.

September 2016:

- Virginia Department of Education staff will present a draft of the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) to the Board for consideration – the revised SOA will include the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* expectations, revised graduation requirements, and proposed changes to the accountability system.
- Additional opportunities for public comment.

November 2016:

- The Board will approve proposed revisions to the SOA based on stakeholder participation and submit for executive review, pursuant to the Administrative Process Act.

The proposed changes must become effective for the freshman class of 2018-2019.

Conclusion

The Board of Education is working in consultation with stakeholders to establish the policies, guidance, capacity, and professional development necessary to develop and implement a *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* that identifies the knowledge and skills that students should attain during high school in order to be successful adults and contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth. Included in the Profile is consideration of the "5 Cs" – critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

The Board's *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* describes the preparation and competencies of the Virginia graduate, which encompasses the areas of content knowledge, workplace skills, community engagement and civic responsibility, and career exploration and provides flexibility for multiple pathways toward college and career readiness. Based on information provided from further stakeholder participation, public comment, and staff research as directed by the Board, the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* will be finalized, and proposed amendments to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* will be brought forward to the Board to initiate the revision of the regulations.

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