



*Regulations Establishing the Standards for
Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*

Review of Proposed Revisions, Parts I-VII

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Organization of the Standards of Accreditation (SOA)

Part I: Definitions and Purpose

Part II: Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

Part III: Student Achievement
Credits and requirements for graduation

Part IV: School Instructional Program
Elementary, middle, and high schools

Part V: School and Instructional Leadership
Roles and responsibilities of principals, teachers, support staff; staffing requirements and teaching loads

Part VI: School Facilities and Safety

Part VII: School and Community Communications
School Quality Profile

Part VIII: School Accreditation

Comprehensive Review of SOA

- **Notice of Intended Regulatory Action on June 27, 2013; Final review of proposed amended regulations in October 2013**
- **Comprehensive examination of regulations initiated in Fall 2014; pending regulations withdrawn for more extensive review**
- **Section-by-section review of regulations conducted from 2014; includes expected knowledge, skills, and competencies of a Virginia graduate; assessments; accountability and accreditation; School Quality Profile**
- **Proposed changes to regulations to implement legislation, including accreditation ratings recognizing progress and growth, approved by Board in final July 23, 2015 and are now incorporated in the SOA**
- **Discussion of definition and framework for the life and career-ready student and graduation credits and competencies began Fall 2015. Development of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* to include legislative directive of 5 Cs in 2016**
- **School Quality Profile approved June 2016**
- **Extensive public outreach: accountability committee meetings; public comments; roundtables; public hearings**
- **First review of Parts I-VII, September 2016; Second review November 2016; Final review January 2017**

Board Identified Changes to be Implemented through SOA, Parts I-VII

- Update purpose, philosophy and goals to reflect expectations for preparation of a Virginia graduate; recognition of multiple areas affecting school quality; provision of continuous improvement and support
- Expand the use of performance assessments and reduce number of credits verified by Standards of Learning tests
- Increase internships and work-based learning experiences
- Increase career exposure, exploration, and planning
- Emphasize the 5Cs (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship)
- Implement the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*
- Reflect changes in the School Quality Profile

Purpose; Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

Part I and Part II

Expanded to add objectives of :

- **Mastery of learning by graduating students in multiple areas to include academics, workplace skills, alignment of personal interests, knowledge and skills with career opportunities, and civic and community responsibility**
- **Attainment by students through their education of skills including creative and critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and responsible citizenship**
- **A system of accountability for quality public education and continual improvement**
- **Promotion and recognition of school quality and achievement in multiple areas**

Expand Use of Performance Assessments and Reduce Number of Credits Verified by Standards of Learning Tests

Part III Student Achievement, Requirements for Graduation

Verified credits required for Standard Diploma reduced from 6 to 4, with elimination of the Student Selected test, and reduction of verified credits in English from 2 to 1

Verified credits required for Advanced Diploma reduced from 9 to 4, with elimination of the Student Selected test, and reduction of verified credits in English, mathematics, laboratory science, and history and social science from 2 to 1 each

Earning locally awarded verified credits for a student who does not pass SOL tests expanded to English and mathematics. Since January 2017, locally awarded verified credits clarified and limited to the award of no more than one to meet graduation requirements (with exceptions for students with disabilities).

A verified credit can be earned when an authentic performance assessment for History and Social Science is administered and the student demonstrates mastery of content.

Students shall not be required to take an end-of-course SOL test in a subject after earning the number of verified credits required in that content area for graduation.

Other Changes to Part III Student Achievement

Language and technical edits added to:

- **reference requirements for Profile of a Graduate**
- **distinguish graduation requirements effective through 2017-2018 from those effective beginning in 2018-2019 (including transfer students)**
- **revise and expand language referencing instruction and achievement in workplace skills and achieving success in a global economy**
- **incorporate Code language that a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science, mathematics, or a career and technical education course credit for a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma**
- **clarify that laboratory science includes interdisciplinary courses which incorporate SOL content from multiple academic areas**

Since January, technical edits were made to the section on transfer students and achievement of standard and verified credits to clarify implementation of new graduation requirements but still account for those students in the pipeline before the ninth grade class of 2018-2019.

Increase career exposure, exploration, and planning

Part IV, School Instructional Program

Program of instruction and learning objectives

- Language added to reflect instructional requirements of Standards of Quality
- Language added to reference the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and instructional programs that ensure student acquisition of concepts, competencies, and experiences necessary to be successful in global economy, including: (1) alignment of knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career opportunities; (2) knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the world of work; and (3) mastery and demonstration of critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, citizenship

Increase career exposure, exploration, and planning

Part IV, School Instructional Program

Instructional program in elementary schools

- Language added to reference the requirement for elementary schools to provide instruction and information for career exploration

Instructional program in middle schools

- Language added to require a career investigation course to be taken by students in middle school to guide academic and career exploration and planning in accordance with the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* framework

January 2017: Language added permitting school divisions to use alternate means of providing the career and investigation course provided there is equivalency in content and rigor

Instructional program in secondary schools

- Provision of program of instruction which includes: (1) student attainment of knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences necessary to be successful in the global economy; (2) opportunities for students to attain and demonstrate the 5 Cs; (3) opportunities for students to participate in internships, externships, and other work-based learning experiences

Increase career exposure, exploration, and planning

Part IV, School Instructional Program

College and career readiness; career exposure, exploration, and planning

- Each elementary, middle, and secondary school shall provide for identification by all students of personal interests and abilities to support planning for post-secondary opportunities and career preparation. Includes exploration of career cluster areas in elementary schools, and in middle and high schools course information and planning and opportunities for educational academic experiences in and outside the classroom
- Provisions for the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) have been expanded. Addition of requirement for elementary school career exploration, beginning with the Academic and Career Plan Portfolio; middle school development of the ACP through completion of a career investigation course or an alternative means of delivery equivalent in content and academic rigor, including workplace readiness skills; completion of ACP by end of seventh grade; and expansion of monitoring of ACP in high school

Increase Internships and Work-based Learning Experiences

Part IV, School Instructional Program

Instructional program in secondary schools

- Language added to provide program of instruction which includes the offering of opportunities for internships, externships, and work-based experiences, and credentialing

College and career readiness; career exposure, exploration, and planning

- Language added to specify the requirements for implementation of career exposure, exploration, and planning in elementary, middle, and high school, including opportunities for internships and work-based learning

Emphasize the 5Cs

References to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship made in following sections:

- **Part I Purpose**
8VAC20-131-10
- **Part II Philosophy, goals, and objectives**
8VAC20-131-20
- **Part III Student Achievement**
8VAC20-131-51, Requirements for graduation
- **Part IV School Instructional Program**
8VAC20-131-100, Instructional program in secondary schools

Instructional Leadership

Part V, School and Instructional Leadership

Role of Principal

- **Revision of and expansion of section to reflect and align with standards provided in board's *Advancing Virginia's Leadership Agenda* guidance document**

School Quality Profile and School Communication Regarding Course Content

Part VII, School and Community Communications

School and community communications

- Revisions made to reference the School Quality Profile and delete School “Performance Report Card”
- Language added to specify categories of indicators and information required by the board to be included in the School Quality Profile

Other Areas of Change

Definition revisions – Added English Learner; added instructional day and hours; revised standard school year; revised teacher planning period and added planning time or elementary teachers; added authentic performance assessments; revised definitions of standard unit of credit to include alternatives to 140 clock hours; revised definition of verified unit of credit to include those awarded locally according to Board guidelines and those earned through mastery of content on authentic performance assessments; revised “locally developed authentic performance assessment” term to “authentic performance assessment”

Division Policy for Dropping Courses – Language added that Superintendent must certify that schedules are not changed to avoid end-of-course SOL tests

Flexibility on Standard Credit Based on 140 Clock Hours – School division may waive 140 clock hours on instruction to earn standard credit as prescribed in board guidelines, effective with students enrolled in 2015-2016 school year

Awards and Diploma Seals – Language added to establish the Board of Education’s Seal for Excellence in Science and the Environment

School Facilities and Safety – Revised requirements for fire drills and lock-down drills to align with legislation passed in 2016, HB 1279

Alignment with the Standards of Quality – Language added to comport with public education objectives, requirements for remediation, intervention, and instructional assistance, and graduation requirements in SOQ