# Superintendent’s Memo # 034-19

[](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/index.shtml)  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: February 1, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: New Virginia Diploma Seal for STEM

House Bill 167, which amends § 22.1-253.13:4 of the *Code of Virginia,* was signed into law by Governor Ralph Northam on March 23, 2018. The legislation required the Board of Education to establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) for any student graduating from a public high school in the Commonwealth in 2018 to be awarded such a diploma seal. This diploma seal will replace the Advanced Mathematics and Technology diploma seal earned by students in prior years.

The following language pertaining to the Seal for STEM is included in the proposed revisions to the Standards of Accreditation (SOA):

*The Board shall establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) for the Board of Education approved diplomas. The Board shall consider including criteria for (i) relevant coursework; (ii) technical writing, reading, and oral communication skills; (iii) relevant training; and (iv) industry, professional, and trade association national certifications.*

In July 2018, the Department of Education convened an Advisory Committee to develop proposed criteria for the Seal. The Committee’s findings were presented to the Superintendent of Public Instruction who recommended the Board approve the proposed criteria. On October 18, 2018, the Board of Education approved the Proposed Criteria for Awarding a Diploma Seal for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The criteria adopted by the Board state:

*The Board of Education’s STEM Seal shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and*

* *satisfy all Math and Science requirements for the Advanced Studies diploma with a “B” average or better in all course work, and*
* *successfully complete a 50 hour or more work-based learning opportunity in a STEM area, and*
* *satisfy all requirements for a Career and Technical Education concentration.  A concentration is a coherent sequence of two or more state-approved courses as identified in the course listing within the*[*CTE Administrative Planning Guide*](http://cteresource.org/apg/)*, and*
* *pass one of the following:*
  + *a Board of Education CTE STEM-H credential examination, or*
  + *an examination approved by the Board that confers a college-level credit in a STEM field*

This Diploma Seal for STEM will be available to all graduating seniors in the Class of 2019 and beyond. The prior version of the Diploma Seal for Advanced Mathematics and Technology will remain available for students who entered high school prior to the 2018-2019 school year.

Local school divisions will be responsible for determining if the student has met the requirements.

For questions about the Seal of STEM criteria, please contact Dr. Tina Manglicmot, Director of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, by email at [Tina.Manglicmot@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Tina.Manglicmot@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at (804) 786-2481.

JFL/TMM/pf

Links:

* [Virginia Graduation (Diploma) Seals of Achievement](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/diploma_seals/index.shtml)
* [House Bill 167](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?ses=181&typ=bil&val=hb167)