# Attachment A, Supts. Memo No. 053-18

March 16, 2018

## Delivering Career Investigations Guidance Document for School Personnel

The *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* developed by the Board of Education describes the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences students should attain during their K-12 education to make them “life-ready.”

The *Profile* presents and describes four overlapping areas for student learning and achievement considered essential to success beyond high school.

Profile of a Virginia Graduate Graphic

**Content Knowledge**: Achieve and apply appropriate academic and technical knowledge.

**Workplace Skills**: Attain and demonstrate productive workplace skills, qualities, and behavior.

**Community and Civic Responsibility**: Build connections and value for interactions with diverse communities and understanding of the opportunities within civic organizations for service and decision-making.

**Career Planning**: Align knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career and civic opportunities.

Foundational skills for students to acquire and use in each of these areas are **critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship**.

The revisions to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools or Standards of Accreditation (SOA), 8VAC20-131-90. Instructional program in middle schools, states**:**

*“Each middle school shall provide a course in career investigation in accordance with the provisions of 8VAC20-131-140. School divisions may seek alternate means of delivering the career investigation course content provided it is equivalent in content and rigor and provides the foundation for students to develop their academic and career plans as described in 8VAC20-131-140 C 2. Possible alternative means to deliver the career investigation course content could include online methods, middle school exploratory course options, and delivering the course content through other courses.”*

### Why is Career Investigations Important?

The Career Investigation curriculum will assist students in bridging their academic and career development in the elementary grades with information on rigorous courses, career pathways, postsecondary options, and workplace trends in the middle grades to help them meet their goals for successful transition to high school graduation and beyond.

The Career Investigation curriculum supports the preparation of the “life ready” student and engages students in:

* demonstrating workplace readiness skills;
* exploring career clusters and pathways;



* completing a career interest assessment;
* participating in a work-based learning experience;
* applying the decision-making process to course
* selection and postsecondary options;
* creating the Academic and Career Plan; and
* connecting the world of work to responsibilities as a citizen, including personal, physical, and mental wellness.

#### Examples of Ways to Implement Career Investigations at the Middle School Level

Some examples of how the Career Investigations curriculum can be delivered are below. Options for schools could include, but are not limited to:

* **A stand-alone Career Investigations Course (9068-9 weeks, 9069-18 weeks, 9070-36 weeks)**School A includes the Career Investigations 9 Week Course, 9068, in the middle school exploratory wheel provided to all students. The course is taught through Career and Technical Education by a CTE or other qualified teacher with the assistance of school counselors for portions of the course that include the Academic and Career Plan and postsecondary exploration and planning.
* **Inclusion of Career Investigations course curriculum in all content areas**School B cross-walks the standards from the Career Investigations (CI) course ([9-week essential standards](http://www.cteresource.org/verso/courses/9068/career-investigations-tasklist)) with the standards in the four core areas as well as Health and Physical Education (PE) and determines which standards would be covered with fidelity in other curricular areas within the middle school curriculum. The remaining standards are met through a partnership with social studies/civics teachers and the [Junior Achievement Finance Park Program](http://www.myja.org/financepark/). School counselors continue to support the standards relating to the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) through individual meetings and classroom guidance lessons.
* **Delivering Career Investigations course curriculum through** **zero bell or homeroom options**   
    
  School C delivers the Career Investigations content through a teacher-school counselor collaboration in homerooms throughout one school year. School counselors work with homeroom teachers to develop lesson plans and access activities and resources from the Career Investigations (CI) course competencies ([9-week, 18-week, and 36-week essential standards](http://www.cteresource.org/verso/courses/9068/career-investigations-tasklist)) and deliver it to students twice a week for the entire school year. Administrators, teachers, and school counselors work collaboratively to cover all competencies in the course and worked with business and industry to teach portions of the curriculum.
* **Partnering horizontally and/or vertically between course disciplines or grade levels**   
    
  School D conducts a crosswalk and aligns the CI curriculum with academic and career planning activities as well as high school advisory activities. A determination is made on which lessons from the CI course would be led by school counselors, teachers, and/or advisory leaders. Pacing guides are developed for the CI course to be taught in Core+ and selected core classes. Administration introduce the student advisory concept and CI course to all middle school teachers and counselors (description, objectives, outline, pacing, and lesson plans). Professional development is provided on implementing lessons given the proposed instructional schedule for the course. The professional development gives the school an opportunity to set goals for Student Advisory and CI course implementation.
* **Locally Developed Competency-Based Modules**School E creates learning objectives and a teaching/resource guide for the competencies in the Career Investigations (CI) course ([9-week essential standards](http://www.cteresource.org/verso/courses/9068/career-investigations-tasklist)). Students are introduced to the competencies required through teachers and school counselors in sixth grade with the expectation that they will meet all competencies by the end of the eighth grade. Students have a range of learning experiences available at school, online, and in the community. School partnerships are created in school and with community stakeholders to accommodate student interest and learning styles. Students receive customized support through homerooms and individual and group counseling from school counselors to stay on pace to meet the CI objectives. Students show mastery of the CI Course competencies through local performance assessments developed collaboratively with community partners.
* **Infusion of Career Investigation curriculum into classes with school counselor support over multiple years**School F conducts a crosswalk between the Career Investigations (CI) course ([9-week essential standards](http://www.cteresource.org/verso/courses/9068/career-investigations-tasklist) and [Health](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/health/index.shtml) and [P.E.](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/physical_education/index.shtml) standards to determine which standards are being covered in Health and PE. Pacing guides are developed and school counselors work with Health and PE teachers to deliver the remaining standards through classroom guidance lessons over the sixth, seventh and eighth grade years.
* **Online Modules**School G allows students to complete state or locally approved online modules during their seventh grade year. Students self-pace to complete modules and receive support from teachers and school counselors as needed. Evidence of competency attainment is shared by earning an end-of-module credential, digital badge, or certificate of achievement provided by the student upon completion. School counselors meet individually with students to create the Academic and Career Plan (ACP).

### ****Career Investigations Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)****

1. **When does the Career Investigations requirement become effective?**

The new SOA school instructional program requirements are effective beginning in the 2018-2019 school year:   
  
 In 8VAC20-131-140.C.2: College and career preparation programs readiness; career exposure, exploration, and planning; and opportunities for postsecondary credit, it states:

*“In middle school, students are to complete a locally selected career interest inventory and select a career pathway. To support development of the ACP, students shall complete a career investigations course selected from the career and technical education state- approved list, or a school division-provided alternative means of delivering the career investigations course content, provided that the alternative is equivalent in content and academic rigor.”*

In 8VAC20-131-90.A. Instructional program in middle schools, it states:

*“School divisions may seek alternate means of delivering the career investigation course provided it is equivalent in content and rigor and provides the foundation for a student to develop their Academic and Career Plans as described in 8VAC20-131-140.B.2. Possible alternative means to deliver the career investigation course could include, but not be limited to: online methods, middle school exploratory course options, and delivering the course content through other courses.”*

1. **What teachers are eligible to teach Career Investigations?**

Any current Virginia teaching endorsement.

1. **Are students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP’s) and 504 Plans responsible for this requirement?**

Yes. All students with IEP’s and 504 Plans are required to take the course or have the content delivered in an alternate manner according to school policy.

Students with IEP’s and 504 Plans can meet the Career Investigations requirement by taking and passing the Education for Employment--Exploratory Development (2017) course, [(9031/9 weeks)](http://www.cteresource.org/apg/courses/9031/education-for-employment-exploratory-development), [(9032/12 weeks)](http://www.cteresource.org/apg/courses/9032/education-for-employment-exploratory-development), [(9082/18 weeks)](http://www.cteresource.org/apg/courses/9082/education-for-employment-exploratory-development), or [(9083/36 weeks)](http://www.cteresource.org/apg/courses/9083/education-for-employment-exploratory-development).

1. **Is the course required for a student who transfers from a private school or out-of-state during middle school?**

Yes. There is no waiver in place for the delivery of the Career Investigations content to students who transfer in the middle grades.

1. **Where do I find curriculum information and resources to assist in teaching the Career Investigations curriculum?**

The Career and Technical Education Career Investigations curriculum, including task lists, frameworks, and student competency records are located at [Virginia’s Educational Resource System Online](http://www.cteresource.org/verso/) (VERSO) under “Career Connections.”

Workplace Readiness Skills may be found in the first 21 competencies of Career Investigations and in every state CTE course. Each competency link opens a variety of related curriculum and instructional resources. The current list of 21 Workplace Readiness Skills was adopted by the Virginia Board of Education in April 2010. 21 Workplace Readiness Skills- (Word)

1. **How does my school/division show that the Career Investigations requirement has been met by all students?**

For students taking the Career Investigations course through Career and Technical Education (CTE), the submission of enrollment counts for all CTE state-approved 6-, 9-, 12-, 18-week and yearlong (36-week), as well as student competency attainment records for courses is required. The 2017-2018 Career and Technical Education Reporting System (CTERS) User’s Manual provides guidance for completion of the required reports for Career and Technical Education courses. The CTERS manual is available on the VDOE CTE website at [Link http://www.doe.virginia.gov/info\_management/data\_collection/instruction/career\_tech/](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/info_management/data_collection/instruction/career_tech/).

For schools delivering the Career Investigations content though alternate methods, the division is responsible for ensuring that the alternate method is equivalent in content and rigor and, at a minimum, provides students with planning for academic courses, work- based learning opportunities, completion of industry certifications, possible independent projects, and postsecondary education. It shall also include demonstration of personal, professional, and technical Workplace Readiness Skills and provide the foundation for students to develop their Academic and Career Plan (ACP).