# Superintendent’s Memo 119-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 8, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## **SUBJECT:** **Criteria for Awarding Diploma Seals for the Class of 2019-2020**

The criteria for awarding certain diploma seals to students graduating with the 2019-2020 cohort have been revised. Diploma seals should be awarded based on the eligibility criteria provided below for students who are unable to meet all of the standard requirements of certain diploma seals (changes in bold typeface). These new requirements are designed to maintain existing pathways to the diploma seal as well as academic rigor, but recognize that some final seal requirements may be unattainable due to the extended school closures. Please note that the existing diploma seal requirements remain unchanged for future graduating cohorts.

## The Governor’s Seal

The Governor's Seal is awarded to students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies 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. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**.

## Board of Education Seal

The Board of Education Seal is awarded to students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "A" beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2006-2007 and beyond. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**.

## Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal

The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal is awarded to students who:

* Earn a Standard or Advanced Studies 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. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**;
* OR 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 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. See [The Path to Industry Certification](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/path_industry_certification/index.shtml) for the current approved licenses and examinations.

## Board of Education’s STEM Seal

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. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**;

* AND successfully complete a **25-**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.

**[The requirement that the student must also pass either a CTE STEM-H credential or examination approved by the Board that confers a college-level credit in a STEM field is stricken.]**

## Board of Education's Advanced Mathematics and Technology Seal

The Board of Education's Advanced Mathematics and Technology Seal is awarded to students who earn either a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma and satisfy all of the mathematics requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma (four units of credit including Algebra II; two verified units of credit) with a "B" average or better. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**; and either

* pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association;
* OR **successfully complete all courses necessary to earn a professional license and in lieu of the examination, submit a portfolio of student work which is signed by the division superintendent or designee;**
* OR **pass a course associated with an examination that is approved by the Board of Education and which may confer college-level credit or a dual enrollment/concurrently enrolled course in a technology or computer science area**.

The Board of Education shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements. See [The Path to Industry Certification](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/path_industry_certification/index.shtml) for the current approved licenses and examinations.

## Board of Education's Excellence in Civics Education Seal

The Board of Education's Excellence in Civics Education Seal is awarded to students who meet each of the following four criteria:

* Satisfy the requirement to earn a Modified Standard Diploma, a Standard Diploma, or an Advanced Studies Diploma;
* Complete Virginia & United States History and Virginia & United States Government courses with a grade of "B" or higher. **If a Pass/Fail grade option is used, school divisions are provided the discretion to determine if a student has met the qualification**;
* Complete **25** hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities, such as volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick, or less fortunate; participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; participating in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC); participating in political campaigns, government internships, Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; and 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; and
* Have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies.

## Board of Education’s Seal of Biliteracy

The Board of Education’s Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to students who earn a Board of Education-approved diploma and:

* Pass all required End-of-Course Assessments in English reading and writing at the proficient or higher level **or pass all required English courses;**
* **AND** demonstrate proficiency at the intermediate/midlevel or higher in one or more languages other than English as demonstrated through an assessment from a list approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. **For students who have not completed an assessment as of the time of school closing, school divisions should:**
	+ **Accept student evidence submitted through the Virginia LinguaFolio® Online language portfolio system or the traditional LinguaFolio® paper portfolio, with teacher verification of meeting the intermediate/midlevel requirements; or**
	+ **Accept assessments completed with one of the remote proctoring options offered by the assessment providers; or**
	+ **Award the Seal up to one year after graduation at such time as the candidate is able to complete and submit the required evidence.**

If you have additional questions regarding this guidance, please contact the Office of Policy at policy@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/MFB/LAH