Attachment B

Superintendent’s Memo #252-22

October 28, 2022

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

# REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

**For the 2023-2024 accreditation year based on data from the 2022-2023 school year**

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (§§ 22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.).

8 VAC 20-131-420.D of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states (in part):

*D. Alternative accreditation plans. Subject to the provisions of subsection B of this section, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in § 22.1-26 of the Code of Virginia, Governor's schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment may seek approval of an alternative accreditation plan from the board. Schools offering alternative education programs,* ***schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students as defined by the graduation rate formula adopted by the board may request that the board approve an alternative accreditation plan to meet the graduation and completion index benchmark****. Special purpose schools with alternative accreditation plans shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in* [*8VAC20-131-50*](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section50/) *or* [*8VAC20-131-51*](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section51/)*.*

In addition, pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:3](http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+22.1-253.13C3).H of the *Code of Virginia*, any school board, on behalf of one or more of its schools, may request the Board of Education for releases from state regulations and for approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of one or more of its schools as authorized for certain other schools by the Standards of Accreditation.

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we may be called to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised. We also understand that this school must meet all requirements of federal law including but not limited to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Strengthening Career and the Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V).

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| Date Approved by the Local School Board |  | Signature – Chairman of the School Board |
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| Submission Date |  | Signature – Division Superintendent |

# ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN TEMPLATE

# for Schools with 50 or Fewer students in the On-Time Graduation Cohort

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| **School Name** | **Division Name** |
| **School Address** |
| **Contact Person** |
| **Phone Number of Contact Person** | **Email of Contact Person** |

**All staff who should be copied on email correspondence:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** | **Email Address** |
|  |  |  |
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**Number of Students Enrolled by Grade:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Number of Students** |
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**Rationale for this Alternative Accreditation Plan proposal.**

The Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) can be significantly impacted by the outcome of a small number of students when the size of the graduating cohort is less than 50 students. For this reason, the GCI alone is not an appropriate measure to gauge the success of the graduating cohort for this school. Additional criteria are necessary to gauge the performance level associated with the GCI.

**Proposed Criteria**

The proposed criteria in this section are objective, measurable, and are directly associated with the school’s graduation rate. The points outlined in the table will be added to the GCI only if the school fails to meet the Level One GCI benchmark, and the On-Time Graduation Cohort size for the graduating class is 50 or fewer students. The maximum number of allowable points is determined by the cohort size:

* No bonus points assigned for 0-14 students.\*
* Maximum of five points for cohorts of 15-20 students.
* Maximum of four points for cohorts of 21-40 students.
* Maximum of three points for cohorts of 41-50 students.

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| **Description of Additional Criteria** | **Points Added to GCI for Meeting Criteria** |
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\*For cohort sizes less than 15 students or in cases where special circumstances warrant explanation and consideration in addition to the maximum point values outlined above, the local school board will submit a written appeal of this indicator to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to be presented to the Virginia Board of Education per [8VAC20-131-380 F. 6](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section380/) of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA). Please contact the Office of Accountability for more information at Accountability@doe.virginia.gov.