Attachment A

# Proposed Revisions to Guidelines for Standard Diploma Credit Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

**~~Adopted~~**

**~~September 28, 2017~~**

## Student Eligibility Criteria

Credit accommodations for the Standard Diploma shall be determined by the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or 504 plan committee, including the student where appropriate, at any point after the student’s eighth grade year. The school must secure the informed written consent of the parent/guardian and the student, as appropriate, to choose credit accommodations after review of the student’s academic history and full disclosure of the student’s options.

The student must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive credit accommodations for the Standard Diploma:

1. Student must have a current IEP or 504 plan with standards-based content goals.
2. Student has a disability that precludes him or her from achieving and progressing commensurate with grade level expectations, but is learning on-grade-level content.
3. Student needs significant instructional supports to access grade level SOL content and to show progress.
4. Based on multiple objective measures of past performance, student might not be expected to achieve the required standard and verified units of credit within the standard time frame.

## Assessments Used to Verify Credits

1. Identify and approve additional substitute tests to earn a verified credit. The Board of Education may from time to time approve additional tests that are recommended by the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the purpose of awarding verified credit. The Virginia Department of Education may partner with a local school division in the procedure to nominate an additional test. Such additional tests, which enable students to earn verified units of credit, must, at a minimum, meet the following criteria:
2. The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school divisions in which the test is given;
3. The test must be knowledge based;
4. The test must be administered on a multistate or international basis, or administered as part of another state’s accountability assessment program; and
5. To be counted in a specific academic area, the test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the SOL content in the course for which verified credit is given.
6. Permit the continued use of the Virginia Modified Achievement Standards Test (VMAST) for verified credit purposes for Algebra I and EOC reading. To take the VMAST for verified credit purposes, a student must meet all current VMAST eligibility requirements and beginning in the 2014-2015 school year the student must also meet the following additional criteria:
7. Student must pass the high school course; and
8. Score 374 or below on the end-of-course Standards of Learning test after taking the test at least twice.

Beginning in 2014-2015, scores of students who participate in VMAST will no longer be included in the participation rate or pass rate calculations for federal accountability, as required for approval of Virginia’s *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* flexibility application.

## 3. Expanded Use of Locally Awarded Verified Credit (LAVC)

According to Superintendent’s memo, [#130-18 Locally Awarded Verified Credits http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\_memos/2018/130-18.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2018/130-18.shtml), students with disabilities who are eligible for credit accommodations shall not be subject to the limitations on the number of verified credits that may be awarded through this process. The following procedure applies.

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* Students with disabilities who entered the ninth grade for the first time prior to 2018-2019 that require more than three LAVC in any subject must have the eligibility criteria for credit accommodations properly documented in the IEP or 504 plan.
* Students with disabilities entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2018-2019 and beyond that require more than one LAVC must have the eligibility criteria for credit accommodations properly documented in the IEP or 504 plan.

## 4. Expanded Score Range for Expedited Retakes of Standards of Learning Tests

1. Permit local school boards to offer the opportunity for the expedited retake of end-of-course Standards of Learning tests with the exception of the writing Standards of Learning test. Eligible students must:
   1. Have passed the course associated with the test (or is passing the course at the time of test); and
   2. One of the following:

i. Failed the test by a narrow margin; or

1. “narrow margin” criteria shall be defined as a scaled score of 350-374.

ii. Failed the test by any margin and have extenuating circumstances that would warrant retesting; or

iii. Did not sit for the regularly scheduled test for legitimate reasons.

## 5. Course Offerings

1. Approve additional course options available only to students with disabilities to meet the standard credit requirements for the Standard Diploma
2. Augment the Personal Finance course (3120) to include the 21 Work Readiness Skills (WRS) for the Commonwealth. Allow this augmented course to meet the Economics and Personal Finance requirement *if* the student has earned at least three standard credits in history and social science. The economics strand in these courses would be deemed a credit accommodation. Upon completion of the augmented Personal Finance course, the student may take the WRS assessment to earn the Board-approved Work Readiness Skills credential. This approach would satisfy the graduation requirements for economics and personal finance, history and social sciences, and the workplace credential.
3. Establish minimum content courses in the subject areas required for verified credits and provide flexibility in how the courses are delivered. Allow parts I and II of certain required courses to each earn a standard credit towards the total number required in the subject area. The student must successfully complete:

i. Four standard credits in English and one verified credit each in Reading and Writing

ii. Three standard credits in mathematics that include Algebra I and Geometry, and one verified credit in mathematics

iii. Three standard credits in science that include Earth Science and Biology, and one verified credit in science

iv. Three standard credits in history and social science that include Virginia and U.S. History and Virginia and U.S. Government, and one verified credit in history and social science

## 6. Special Permission Credit Accommodation (requires submission of documentation to VDOE)

The special permission credit accommodation permits local school boards to award locally awarded verified credits in reading, writing, mathematics, science and history, to certain students with disabilities. Eligible students must:

1. pass the high school course based on a non-modified curriculum,
2. score below 375 on the SOL test,
3. have a documented disability that presents a unique or significant challenge to the degree that the student is unable to demonstrate knowledge of the course content on the SOL test using available accommodations, and
4. demonstrate achievement in the academic content through an appeal process administered at the local level.

The decision to consider a special permission credit accommodation should be made through the IEP and/or 504 review process. ~~Using the IEP and 504 processes will increase parental participation in the decision-making and increase IEP team members’ understanding of the division level appeals process for awarding LAVC. Awarding a LAVC is not an IEP team decision but is subject to the local school board policy and the Guidance Governing the Use of Locally-Awarded Verified Credits. However, the IEP team will be helpful in determining appropriate evidence of student achievement in the content area for consideration during the appeals process.~~ School divisions must submit a *Special Permission Credit Accommodation* *Form* to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) for each student being considered for a locally awarded verified credit with an SOL scaled score below 375. Documentation regarding the disability that prevents the student from fully demonstrating their knowledge of the course content on the SOL test even with accommodations must be included on the form. This documentation should include evidence of the use or consideration of other credit accommodations and other substitute assessment options. VDOE staff will review the submitted documentation and will return forms that do not meet the requirements included in these guidelines to the school division for additional work. ~~Documentation will be subject to periodic review by Department staff on behalf of the Board.~~

~~gathered during the review will be used to provide technical assistance to school divisions and may be shared in summary form with the Board~~

~~Required Documentation:~~

## Additional Credit Accommodations

The Board may, from time to time approve additional credit accommodations.