

1 **State Board of Education**

2 **Revisions to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia**

3 Chapter 132

4 Virginia Standards of Accreditation

5 **Part I – Definitions and Purpose**

6 **8VAC20-132-10. Definitions.**

7 The following words and terms apply only to this chapter and do not supersede those  
8 definitions used for federal reporting purposes or for the calculation of costs related to the  
9 Standards of Quality (§ 22.1-253.13:1 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). When used in this  
10 chapter, these words shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates  
11 otherwise:

12 "Accreditation" means a process used by the Virginia Department of Education to evaluate  
13 public schools' compliance with the accountability system, based on student outcome and  
14 growth measures, the philosophy, goals, and objectives of public education in Virginia, and  
15 standards for student achievement, instructional programs, school and instructional leadership,  
16 school facilities and safety, and school and community communications in accordance with this  
17 chapter.

18 "Accountability" means the system within the accreditation process used by the Virginia  
19 Department of Education to differentiate the performance of public schools and identify  
20 schools for improvement, based on student achievement, growth, and other school quality  
21 indicators in accordance with this chapter.

22 "Additional test" means a test, including substitute tests approved by the board, that  
23 students may use in lieu of a Standards of Learning test to obtain verified credit.

24 "Authentic performance assessment" means a test that complies with guidelines adopted  
25 by the board that requires students to perform a task or create a product that is typically  
26 scored using a rubric. An authentic performance assessment may be used to confer verified  
27 credit in accordance with the provisions of 8VAC20-132-110 B 4.

28 "Board of Education" or "board" means the board responsible for the general supervision of  
29 the public schools system in Virginia as prescribed in Section 4 of Article VIII of the Constitution  
30 of Virginia and § 22.1-8 of the Code of Virginia.

31 "Class period" means a segment of time during the instructional day that is allocated to  
32 lessons, courses, testing and assessments, or other instructional activities and excludes  
33 homeroom.

34 "Credit accommodations" means adjustments to meet the standard and verified credit  
35 requirements for earning a Standard Diploma for students with disabilities.

36 "Department" means the Virginia Department of Education.

37 "Elementary school" means a public school with any grades kindergarten through 5.

38 "English learner" or "EL" means, as prescribed in the Elementary and Secondary Education  
39 Act (P.L. 89-10, as amended), an individual:

1. Who is aged three through 21 years;
2. Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
3. a. Who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;  
b. (1) Who is a Native American or Alaska native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and  
(2) Who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or  
c. Who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
4. Whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the:
  - a. Ability to meet the challenging state academic standards;
  - b. Ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
  - c. Opportunity to participate fully in society.

"Enrollment" means the act of complying with state and local requirements relative to the registration or admission of a child for attendance in a school within a local school division. This term also means registration for courses within the student's home school or within related schools or programs.

"First time" means the student has not been enrolled in the school at any time during the current school year (for purposes of [8VAC20-132-60](#) with reference to students who transfer in during the school year).

"Four core academic areas" means English, mathematics, science, and history and social science for purposes of testing for the Standards of Learning.

"Graduate" means a student who has earned a board recognized diploma, which includes the Advanced Studies Diploma, the Standard Diploma, and the Applied Studies Diploma.

"Growth" or "student growth" means student progress toward achievement of the knowledge and skills required by the summative Standards of Learning tests as demonstrated through a valid and reliable measure.

"High school" means a secondary school with, at least, grade 12 and that grants a board recognized diploma.

"Homebound instruction" means academic instruction provided to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods of time that prevent normal school attendance, based upon certification of need by a licensed physician or a licensed clinical psychologist.

"Instructional day" means all the time in a standard school day, from the beginning of the first scheduled class period to the end of the last scheduled class period, including passing time for class changes and excluding breaks for meals.

"Instructional hours" means the hours in a standard school day, from the beginning of the first scheduled class period to the end of the last scheduled class period, including passing time for class changes and excluding breaks for meals.

"Locally awarded verified credit" means a verified unit of credit awarded by a local school board in accordance with [8VAC20-132-110 B 3](#).

"Middle school" means a public school with any grades 6 through 8.

"Planning period" means a segment of time in middle and secondary schools during the instructional day that is unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties, is not less than 45 minutes or the equivalent of a class period, whichever is greater, and that includes passing time for class changes.

"Planning time" means a segment of time for elementary teachers that provides at least an average of 30 minutes per day for planning during the student's school week as provided in § [22.1-291.1](#) of the Code of Virginia.

"Recess" means a segment of unstructured recreational time exclusive of time provided for meals during the standard school day.

"Reporting group" means a group of students who are identified as having common characteristics including students identified as belonging to major racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners.

"School" means a publicly funded institution where students are enrolled for all or a majority of the instructional day and those students are reported in fall membership at the institution.

"Secondary school" means a public school with any grades 9 through 12.

"Standard school day" means a calendar day, including passing time for class changes and excluding breaks for meals, that averages a minimum of five and one-half instructional hours for students in grades 1 through 12 and a minimum of three instructional hours for students in kindergarten. Recess may be included in the calculation of required instructional hours for elementary school, provided that recess does not exceed 15% of the required instructional hours.

"Standard school year" means a school year of at least 180 teaching days or a total of at least 990 instructional hours per year, as specified in § [22.1-98](#) of the Code of Virginia.

"Standard unit of credit" or "standard credit" means credit awarded for a course in which the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the course. Local school boards may develop alternatives to the requirement for 140 clock hours of instruction as provided for in [8VAC20-132-110](#) and in accordance with board guidelines.

"Standards of Learning tests" or "SOL tests" means those criterion referenced, statewide, summative assessments approved by the board for use in the Virginia Assessment Program that measure mastery of knowledge and skills required by the Standards of Learning.

"Standards of Quality" means the Standards of Quality prescribed in Chapter 13.2 (§ [22.1-253.13:1](#) et seq.) of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia.

"Student" means a person of school age as defined by § 22.1-1 of the Code of Virginia, a child with disabilities as defined in § 22.1-213 of the Code of Virginia, and a person for whom English is a second language in accordance with § 22.1-5 of the Code of Virginia.

"Verified unit of credit" or "verified credit" means credit awarded for a course in which a student earns a standard unit of credit and (i) achieves a passing score on a corresponding end-of-course SOL test; (ii) achieves a passing score on an additional test as defined in this section as part of the Virginia Assessment Program; (iii) meets the criteria for the receipt of a locally awarded verified credit conferred in accordance with board criteria and guidelines as provided in 8VAC20-132-110 B 3 when the student has not passed a corresponding SOL test in English, mathematics, laboratory science, or history and social science; or (iv) meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit for English (writing) by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on an authentic performance assessment, as provided in 8VAC20-132-110 B 4.

"Virginia Assessment Program" means a system used to evaluate student achievement that includes SOL tests and additional tests that may be approved from time to time by the board.

8VAC20-132-20. Purpose.

The foremost purpose of public education in Virginia is to provide children with a high quality education giving them opportunities to meet their fullest potential in life. The standards for the accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools. The mission of the public education system is to educate students in the essential knowledge and skills in order that they may be equipped for citizenship, work, and an informed and successful life.

The Standards of Accreditation provide the foundation for the provision of a high quality public education, including a system of accountability and continuous improvement. They are intended to:

1. Provide an essential foundation of educational programs of high quality in all schools for all students.
2. Encourage and promote school quality and acknowledge achievement and continuous improvements by schools and school divisions in multiple areas.
3. Foster public confidence that graduating students have mastered multiple areas of learning to include academic subjects, workplace skills, career exploration and planning, and civic and community responsibility.
4. Assure recognition of Virginia's public schools by other institutions of learning.
5. Establish the means of determining the effectiveness of schools as prescribed in the Standards of Quality at § 22.1-253.13:3 of the Code of Virginia, including student learning and progress and student outcomes for multiple areas affecting school quality.

Section 22.1-253.13:3 A of the Code of Virginia requires the board promulgate regulations establishing standards for accreditation, which shall include student outcome and growth measures, requirements and guidelines for instructional programs and for the integration of educational technology into such instructional programs, administrative and instructional staffing levels and positions, including staff positions for supporting educational technology,

student services, auxiliary education programs such as library and media services, course and credit requirements for graduation from high school, community relations, and the philosophy, goals, and objectives of public education in Virginia.

The statutory authority for this chapter is delineated in § 22.1-19 of the Code of Virginia, which includes the requirement that the board shall provide for the accreditation of public elementary, middle, and secondary schools in accordance with regulations prescribed by it.

This chapter governs public schools operated by local school boards providing instruction to students as defined in [8VAC20-132-10](#). Other schools licensed under other state statutes are exempt from these requirements.

## Part II – Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

### [8VAC20-132-30. Philosophy, goals, and objectives.](#)

A. Achieving school quality and continuous improvement are accomplishments dependent upon multiple factors, including instruction, leadership, learning environment, professional staff development, student supports, parent and community engagement, and continual evaluation of outcomes. Goals and objectives to be achieved through these and other areas include student opportunities for learning, closure of achievement gaps, reduction of the dropout rate, increased graduation rates, and student mastery beyond minimum requirements.

Preparation of all students should result in graduates who have explored and understand what opportunities exist for them after high school and have the knowledge and abilities necessary for the next phase of their lives as adults. Students should attain essential knowledge and skills in order that they may be equipped to be responsible citizens, understand and meet expectations for work, gain and apply knowledge, and plan and achieve personal life goals. In addition to academic and technical knowledge, their education should encompass mastery of creative and critical thinking, analysis and problem solving, and the development of personal attributes such as communication and collaboration skills, dependability, and persistence.

The philosophy, goals, and objectives of individual schools should reflect and encompass the means by which the Standards of Learning and Standards of Accreditation are to be achieved.

The board's objective is to provide an educational foundation that ensures students are ready to be successful in a global economy, which includes changing and growing technology. Families, students, employers, representatives from institutions of higher education, and educators have all expressed concerns about adequate preparation of Virginia's students for the future. In addition to appropriate content knowledge, stakeholders have asked that graduates be prepared with skills and attributes such as critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship in order to be prepared to be successful in life and competitive in the work world. In response, the board is redesigning the public school experience for Virginia's students so that they are adequately prepared for the future challenges they face.

In Virginia, as a student progresses through elementary, middle, and secondary school, the college-ready, career-ready, and citizenship-ready student is expected to achieve and apply appropriate academic and technical knowledge; attain and demonstrate age-appropriate

productive workplace skills, qualities, and behavior; align knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career and civic opportunities; and attain and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary for productive citizenship and participation in communities and governments.

B. Each school shall have current philosophy, goals, and objectives that shall serve as the basis for all policies and practices and shall be developed using the following criteria:

1. The philosophy, goals, and objectives shall be developed with the advice of professional and lay people who represent the various populations served by the school and in consideration of the needs of the community and shall serve as a basis for the creation and review of the biennial school plan.

2. The school's philosophy, goals, and objectives shall be consistent with the Standards of Quality.

3. The goals and objectives shall (i) be written in plain language so as to be understandable to noneducators, including parents; (ii) to the extent possible, be stated in measurable terms; and (iii) consist primarily of measurable objectives to raise student and school achievement in the core academic areas of the Standards of Learning, to improve student and staff attendance, to reduce student dropout rates, to increase graduation rates, and to increase the quality of instruction through professional staff development and licensure.

4. The school staff and community representatives shall review annually the extent to which the school has met its prior goals and objectives, analyze the school's student performance data, including data by grade level or academic department as necessary, and report these outcomes to the division superintendent and the community in accordance with local school board policy. This report shall be in addition to the school performance report card required by [8VAC20-132-250 A](#).

### Part III – Student Achievement

#### [8VAC20-132-40. Student achievement expectations.](#)

A. Each student should learn the relevant grade level/course subject matter before promotion to the next grade. The division superintendent shall certify to the Department of Education that the division's promotion and retention policy does not exclude students from membership in a grade, or participation in a course, in which SOL tests are to be administered. Each school shall have a process, as appropriate, to identify and recommend strategies to address the learning, behavior, communication, or development of individual children who are having difficulty in the educational setting.

B. In kindergarten through eighth grade, where the administration of Virginia Assessment Program tests is required by the board, each student shall be expected to take the tests following instruction. Students who are accelerated shall take the test aligned with the highest grade level, following instruction in the content. No student shall take more than one test in any content area in each year, except in the case of expedited retakes as provided for in this section. Schools shall use the Virginia Assessment Program test results in kindergarten through eighth grade as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students. Students promoted to secondary school from eighth grade should have attained basic



mastery of the Standards of Learning in English, history and social science, mathematics, and science and should be prepared for secondary school work. Students shall not be required to retake the Virginia Assessment Program tests unless they are retained in grade and have not previously passed the related tests.

The board shall provide the same criteria for eligibility for an expedited retake of any SOL test, with the exception of the writing SOL tests, to each student regardless of grade level or course.

C. In kindergarten through grade 12, students may participate in a remediation recovery program as established by the board in English (reading) or mathematics or both.

D. The board recommends that students in kindergarten through grade 8 not be required to attend summer school or weekend remediation classes solely based on failing a SOL test in science or history and social science. However, any student who fails to achieve a passing score on all Standard of Learning assessments for the relevant grade level in grades 3 through 8 shall be required to attend a remediation program or to participate in another form of remediation. Further, any student who fails an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit shall be required to attend a remediation program or to participate in another form of remediation.

E. Each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction. The division superintendent shall certify to the Department of Education that the division's policy for dropping courses ensures that students' course schedules are not changed to avoid end-of-course SOL tests. Students who achieve a passing score on an end-of-course SOL test shall be awarded a verified unit of credit in that course in accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-110](#). Students may earn verified units of credit in any courses for which end-of-course SOL tests are available. Students shall not be required to take an end-of-course SOL test in an academic subject after they have earned the number of verified credits required for that academic content area for graduation, unless such test is necessary in order for the school to meet federal accountability requirements. Middle and secondary schools may consider the student's end-of-course SOL test score in determining the student's final course grade. However, no student who has failed an end-of-course SOL test but passed the related course shall be prevented from taking any other course in a content area and from taking the applicable end-of-course SOL test. The board may approve additional tests to verify student achievement in accordance with guidelines adopted for verified units of credit described in [8VAC20-132-110](#).

F. Participation in the Virginia Assessment Program by students with disabilities shall be prescribed by provisions of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. All students with disabilities shall be assessed with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments where necessary.

G. Any student identified as an English Learner (EL) shall participate in the Virginia Assessment Program. A school-based committee shall convene and make determinations regarding the participation level of EL students in the Virginia Assessment Program. In kindergarten through eighth grade, EL students may be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in the areas of writing and history and social science.

H. Students identified as foreign exchange students taking courses for credit shall be required to take the relevant Virginia Assessment Program tests, as specified in subsection E of this section. Foreign exchange students who are auditing courses are not eligible for academic credit for those courses and shall not be required to take the SOL tests for those courses.

[8VAC20-132-50. Requirements for graduation \(effective for students entering ninth grade prior to the 2018-2019 school year\).](#)

A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time. Students shall be awarded a diploma upon graduation from a Virginia high school.

The Advanced Studies Diploma shall be the recommended diploma for students pursuing baccalaureate study. Both the Standard Diploma and the Advanced Studies Diploma shall prepare students for postsecondary education and the career readiness required by the Commonwealth's economy.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades 9 through 12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level. To earn a verified unit of credit for these courses, students must meet the requirements of [8VAC20-132-110](#).

The following requirements shall be the only requirements for a diploma, unless a local school board has prescribed additional requirements that have been approved by the board. All additional requirements prescribed by local school boards that have been approved by the board remain in effect until such time as the local school board submits a request to the board to amend or discontinue them.

B. Requirements for a Standard Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2013–2014 and through the ninth-grade class of 2017–2018, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with a Standard Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	3	1
Laboratory Science <sup>2,6</sup>	3	1
History and Social Sciences <sup>3,6</sup>	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
World Language, Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education <sup>7</sup>	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	



Electives <sup>4</sup>	4	
Student Selected Test <sup>5</sup>		1
Career and Technical Education Credential <sup>8</sup>		
Total <sup>9</sup>	22	6

<sup>1</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra, Functions, and Data Analysis, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.

<sup>2</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics, or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science course credit.

<sup>3</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup>Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

<sup>5</sup>A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics or other areas as prescribed by the board in [8VAC20-132-110](#).

<sup>6</sup>Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association, or acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification, competency credential, or license for (i) the student-selected verified credit and (ii) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification, license, or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the board as an additional test to verify student achievement.

<sup>7</sup>Pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:4](#) of the Code of Virginia, credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine or performing arts or career and technical education. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a career and technical education course credit.

<sup>8</sup>Students shall earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board of Education, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject

area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the standard diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

<sup>9</sup>Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

Beginning with first-time ninth-grade students in the 2016–2017 school year, students shall be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in [8VAC20-132-310 B](#).

3. The board shall establish, through guidelines, credit accommodations to the standard and verified credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Such credit accommodations for students with disabilities may include:

- a. Approval of alternative courses to meet the standard credit requirements;
- b. Modifications to the requirements for local school divisions to award locally awarded verified credits;
- c. Approval of additional tests to earn a verified credit;
- d. Adjusted cut scores required to earn verified credit; and
- e. Allowance of work-based learning experiences.

The student's IEP or 504 Plan shall specify any credit accommodations that are applicable.

Students completing the requirements for the Standard Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection H of this section.

#### C. Requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2013–2014 and through the ninth-grade class of 2017–2018, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with an Advanced Studies Diploma.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English	4	2
Mathematics <sup>1</sup>	4	2
Laboratory Science <sup>2</sup>	4	2

History and Social Sciences <sup>3</sup>	4	2
World Language <sup>4</sup>	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education <sup>5</sup>	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	3	
Student Selected Test <sup>6</sup>		1
Total <sup>7</sup>	26	9

<sup>1</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.

<sup>2</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science course credit.

<sup>3</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.

<sup>4</sup>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

<sup>5</sup>Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a career and technical education course credit.

<sup>6</sup>A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics or other areas as prescribed by the board in [8VAC20-132-110](#).

<sup>7</sup>Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course, or may be a course required to earn this diploma that is offered online.

**331** Students completing the requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma may be eligible to  
**332** receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection H of  
**333** this section.

**334** Beginning with first-time ninth-grade students in the 2016–2017 school year, students shall  
**335** be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated

external defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in [8VAC20-132-310 B](#).

D. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their IEP and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas shall be awarded Applied Studies Diplomas.

E. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for a Standard Diploma, an Advanced Studies Diploma, or an Applied Studies Diploma shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion. The requirements for Certificates of Program Completion are developed by local school boards in accordance with the Standards of Quality.

F. In accordance with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law and [8VAC20-30](#), Regulations Governing Adult High School Programs, students who do not qualify for diplomas may earn a high school equivalency credential.

G. At a student's request, the local school board shall communicate or otherwise make known to institutions of higher education, potential employers, or other applicable third parties, in a manner that the local school board deems appropriate, that a student has attained the state's academic expectations by earning a Virginia diploma and that the value of such a diploma is not affected in any way by the accreditation status of the student's school.

H. Awards for exemplary student performance. Students who demonstrate academic excellence or outstanding achievement may be eligible for one or more of the following awards:

1. The Governor's Seal shall be 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.

2. The Board of Education Seal shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "A".

3. The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal shall be awarded to students who earn a Standard Diploma or an 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; or (i) 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 (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The board shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.

4. The Board of Education's Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) 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; and (ii) either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association; (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (c) pass an examination approved by the board that confers college-level credit in a technology or computer science area. The board shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.

5. The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) complete Virginia and United States history and Virginia and United States government courses with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies; and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include: (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick, or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation shall be deemed to have met this community service requirement.

6. The Board of Education's Seal of Biliteracy shall be awarded to students who demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one other language and meet additional criteria established by the board. Such seal shall be awarded to eligible students graduating from public high schools in the Commonwealth beginning in 2016.

7. Students may receive other seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance in accordance with criteria defined by the local school board.

I. Students completing graduation requirements in a summer school program shall be eligible for a diploma. The last school attended by the student during the regular session shall award the diploma unless otherwise agreed upon by the principals of the two schools.

J. Students who complete Advanced Placement courses, college-level courses, or courses required for an International Baccalaureate Diploma shall be deemed to have completed the requirements for graduation under these standards provided they have earned the standard units of credit and earned verified units of credit in accordance with the requirements for the Standard Diploma and the Advanced Studies Diploma, as specified in subsections B and C of this section.

K. Students shall be counseled annually regarding the opportunities for using additional tests for earning verified credits, as provided in accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-](#)

110, and the consequences of failing to fulfill the obligations to complete the requirements for verified units of credit.

8VAC20-132-51. Requirements for graduation (effective with the students who enter the ninth grade in the 2018–2019 school year).

A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time. Students shall be awarded a diploma upon graduation from a Virginia high school.

Both the Standard Diploma and the Advanced Studies Diploma shall provide multiple paths toward college, career, and citizenship readiness for students to follow in the later years of high school. Each such pathway shall provide meaningful and rigorous opportunities tied to instruction to achieve workplace and citizenship skills through experiences such as internships, externships, credentialing, and blended learning, which may be offered for credit toward high school graduation.

In accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board, the instructional program leading to a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma shall ensure that students (i) attain the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences necessary to be successful in the evolving global economy whether immediately entering the world of work or pursuing a postsecondary education and (ii) acquire and be able to demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades 9 through 12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level. To earn a verified unit of credit for these courses, students must meet the requirements of 8VAC20-132-110.

The requirements in this section shall be the only requirements for a diploma, unless a local school board has prescribed additional requirements that have been approved by the board. All additional requirements prescribed by local school boards that have been approved by the board remain in effect until such time as the local school board submits a request to the board to amend or discontinue them.

#### B. Requirements for a Standard Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2018–2019 and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with a Standard Diploma.

A "standard unit of credit" or "standard credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the course. Local school boards may develop alternatives to the requirement for 140 clock hours of instruction as provided for in 8VAC20-132-110 and in accordance with board guidelines.

A "verified unit of credit" or "verified credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which a student earns a standard unit of credit and (i) achieves a passing score on a

461 corresponding end-of-course SOL test; (ii) achieves a passing score on an additional test,  
462 as defined in [8VAC20-132-10](#) as part of the Virginia Assessment Program; (iii) meets the  
463 criteria for the receipt of a locally awarded verified credit conferred in accordance with  
464 board criteria and guidelines as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 3](#) when the student has  
465 not passed a corresponding SOL test in English, mathematics, laboratory science, or  
466 history and social science; or (iv) meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit for  
467 English (writing) by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on  
468 authentic performance assessments as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 4](#).  
469 No more than one locally awarded verified credit may be used to satisfy these  
470 requirements, except as provided in subdivision 3 of this subsection for credit  
471 accommodations for students with disabilities.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit	
	Required	Verified Credits Required
English (reading and writing)	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History and Social Science	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
World Language, Fine Arts, or Career and Technical Education	2	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	4	
Total	22	5
Discipline Area	Specifications	



Mathematics	<p>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among: algebra I, geometry, algebra functions, and data analysis, algebra II, or other mathematics courses approved by the board to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.</p>
Laboratory Science	<p>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selection from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics, or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and shall include interdisciplinary courses that incorporate Standards of Learning content from multiple academic areas. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science course credit.</p> <p>A laboratory science verified credit may be awarded to students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and (i) pass two examinations or occupational competency assessments in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association; (ii) acquire two professional licenses in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia; or (iii) pass one examination or competency assessment from clause (i) and acquire one license from clause (ii). The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the board as an additional test to verify student achievement.</p>
History and Social Science	<p>Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include Virginia and U.S. history, Virginia and U.S. government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.</p>
World Language, Fine Arts, or Career and Technical Education	<p>Per the Standards of Quality, credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine or performing arts or career and technical education. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a career and technical course</p>

credit.

#### Electives

Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

#### Additional Requirements for Graduation

(i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course, or (ii) earn a career and technical

Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate Course or Career and Technical Education Credential

In accordance with the Standards of Quality, students shall (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, International Baccalaureate, or dual enrollment course; (ii) complete a high-quality work-based learning experience, as established by board guidance on work-based learning; or (iii) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the standard diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.

#### Virtual Course

Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.

Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED)

Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in [8VAC20-132-310 B](#).

#### Demonstration of the five Cs

Students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board.

3. The board shall establish through guidelines credit accommodations to the standard and verified credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Such credit accommodations for students with disabilities may include:

- a. Approval of alternative courses to meet the standard credit requirements;
- b. Modifications to the requirements for local school divisions to award locally awarded verified credits;
- c. Approval of additional tests to earn a verified credit;
- d. Adjusted cut scores required to earn verified credit; and
- e. Allowance of work-based learning experiences.

The student's IEP or 504 Plan shall specify any credit accommodations applicable for the student.

Students completing the requirements for the Standard Diploma may be eligible to receive an honor deemed appropriate by the local school board as described in subsection H of this section.

#### C. Requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma.

1. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2018–2019 and beyond, students shall earn the required standard and verified units of credit described in subdivision 2 of this subsection.

2. Credits required for graduation with an Advanced Studies Diploma.

A "standard unit of credit" or "standard credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the course. Local school boards may develop alternatives to the requirement for 140 clock hours of instruction as provided for in [8VAC20-132-110](#) and in accordance with board guidelines.

A "verified unit of credit" or "verified credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which a student earns a standard unit of credit and (i) achieves a passing score on a corresponding end-of-course SOL test; (ii) achieves a passing score on an additional test, as defined in [8VAC20-132-10](#), as part of the Virginia Assessment Program; (iii) meets the criteria for the receipt of a locally awarded verified credit conferred in accordance with board criteria and guidelines as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 3](#) when the student has not passed a corresponding SOL test in English, mathematics, laboratory science, or history and social science; or (iv) meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit for English (writing) by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on an authentic performance assessment, as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 4](#).

No more than one locally awarded verified credit may be used to satisfy these requirements.

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Credits Required
English (reading and writing)	4	2
Mathematics	4	1

Laboratory Science	4	1
History and Social Science	4	1
World Language	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	3	
Total	26	5
Discipline Area	Specifications	
Mathematics	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: algebra I, geometry, algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.	
Laboratory Science	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and shall include interdisciplinary courses that incorporate Standards of Learning content from multiple academic areas. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a science course credit.	
History and Social Science	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include Virginia and U.S. history, Virginia and U.S. government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The board shall approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.	
World Language	Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages. A student who is pursuing an advanced diploma and whose individualized education program specifies a credit accommodation for world language may substitute two	

	<p>standard units of credit in computer science for two standard units of credit in a world language. For any student who elects to substitute a credit in computer science for a credit in world language, the student's school counselor must provide notice to the student and parent or guardian of possible impacts related to college entrance requirements.</p>
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education	Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a career and technical credit.
Electives	Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.
Additional Requirements for Graduation	
Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate Course or Career and Technical Education Credential	<p>In accordance with the Standards of Quality, students shall (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, International Baccalaureate, or dual enrollment course; (ii) complete a high-quality work-based learning experience as established by board guidance on work-based learning; or (iii) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the advanced studies diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.</p>
Virtual Course	Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.
Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED).	<p>Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in <a href="#">8VAC20-132-310 B</a>.</p>
Demonstration of the five Cs	Students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration,

communication, and citizenship in accordance with the  
Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board.

D. Requirements for an Applied Studies Diploma. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, a student with disabilities who completes the requirements of the student's IEP and does not meet the requirements for other diplomas shall be awarded Applied Studies Diplomas in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations regarding special education.

Students who pursue an Applied Studies Diploma shall be allowed to pursue a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma at any time during high school. Such students shall not be excluded from courses or tests required to earn these diplomas.

E. Requirements for Certificates of Program Completion. In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board but do not qualify for a Standard Diploma, an Advanced Studies Diploma, or an Applied Studies Diploma shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion. The requirements for Certificates of Program Completion are developed by local school boards in accordance with the Standards of Quality.

F. In accordance with the provisions of the compulsory attendance law and [8VAC20-30](#), Regulations Governing Adult High School Programs, students who do not qualify for diplomas may earn a high school equivalency credential. The requirements for the General Achievement Adult High School Diploma are provided in [8VAC20-30-20](#).

G. At a student's request, the local school board shall communicate or otherwise make known to institutions of higher education, potential employers, or other applicable third parties, in a manner that the local school board deems appropriate, that a student has attained the state's academic expectations by earning a Virginia diploma and that the value of such a diploma is not affected in any way by the accreditation status of the student's school.

H. Awards for exemplary student performance. Students who demonstrate academic excellence and outstanding achievement may be eligible for one or more of the following awards:

1. The Governor's Seal shall be 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 shall earn the student at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or dual enrollment courses.

2. The Board of Education Seal shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "A."

3. The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal shall be awarded to students who earn a Standard Diploma or an 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 or (i) 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 (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The board shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.

4. The Board of Education's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Seal shall be awarded to students who meet criteria established by the board.

5. The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) complete Virginia and United States history and Virginia and United States government courses with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies; and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick, or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation shall be deemed to have met this community service requirement.

6. The Board of Education's Seal of Biliteracy shall be awarded to students who demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one other language and meet additional criteria established by the board.

7. The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Science and the Environment shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) complete at least three different first-level board-approved laboratory science courses and at least one rigorous advanced-level or postsecondary-level laboratory science course, each with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) complete laboratory or field-science research and present that research in a formal, juried setting; and (iii) complete at least 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities that involve the application of science such as environmental monitoring, protection, management, or restoration.

8. Students may receive other seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance in accordance with criteria defined by the local school board.

I. Students completing graduation requirements in a summer school program shall be eligible for a diploma. The last school attended by the student during the regular session shall award the diploma unless otherwise agreed upon by the principals of the two schools.

J. Students who complete Advanced Placement courses, college-level courses, or courses required for an International Baccalaureate Diploma shall be deemed to have completed the course requirements for graduation under these standards provided they have earned the total number of standard units of credit and verified units of credit in each discipline area in



590 accordance with the requirements for the Standard Diploma and the Advanced Studies  
591 Diploma, as specified in subsections B and C of this section.

592 K. Students shall be counseled annually regarding the opportunities for using additional  
593 tests for earning verified credits, as provided in accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-](#)  
594 [110](#), and the consequences of failing to fulfill the obligations to complete the requirements for  
595 verified units of credit.

596 [8VAC20-132-60](#). *Transfer students.*

597 A. The provisions of this section pertain generally to students who transfer into Virginia high  
598 schools. Students transferring in grades kindergarten through 8 from Virginia public schools or  
599 nonpublic schools accredited by one of the approved accrediting constituent members of the  
600 Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) shall be given recognition for all grade-level work  
601 completed. The academic record of students transferring from all other schools shall be  
602 evaluated to determine appropriate grade placement in accordance with policies adopted by  
603 the local school board. The State Testing Identifier (STI) for students who transfer into a Virginia  
604 public school from another Virginia public school shall be retained by the receiving school.

605 B. For the purposes of this section, the term "beginning" means within the first 20 hours of  
606 instruction per course. The term "during" means after the first 20 hours of instruction per  
607 course.

608 C. Standard or verified units of credit earned by a student in a Virginia public school shall be  
609 transferable without limitation regardless of the accreditation status of the Virginia public  
610 school in which the credits were earned. Virginia public schools shall accept standard and  
611 verified units of credit from other Virginia public schools, Virginia's virtual learning program,  
612 Virtual Virginia, and state-operated programs. Standard units of credit also shall be accepted for  
613 courses satisfactorily completed in accredited colleges and universities when prior written  
614 approval of the principal has been granted or the student has been given credit by the previous  
615 school attended.

616 D. A high school shall accept credits toward graduation received from Virginia nonpublic  
617 schools accredited by one of the approved accrediting constituent members of the VCPE. The  
618 board shall maintain contact with the VCPE and may periodically review its accrediting  
619 procedures and policies as part of its policies under this section.

620 Nothing in these standards shall prohibit a public school from accepting standard units of  
621 credit toward graduation awarded to students who transfer from all other schools when the  
622 courses for which the student receives credit generally match the description of or can be  
623 substituted for courses for which the receiving school gives standard credit, and the school  
624 from which the child transfers certifies that the courses for which credit is given meet the  
625 requirements of [8VAC20-132-110 A](#).

626 E. The academic record of a student transferring from other Virginia public schools shall be  
627 sent directly to the school receiving the student upon request of the receiving school in  
628 accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-150](#), Management of the Student's Scholastic Record  
629 in the Public Schools of Virginia. The State Testing Identifier (STI) for students who transfer into  
630 a Virginia public school from another Virginia public school shall be retained by the receiving  
631 school.

F. The academic record of a student transferring into Virginia public schools from other than a Virginia public school shall be evaluated to determine the number of standard units of credit that have been earned, including credit from schools outside the United States, and the number of verified units of credit needed to graduate in accordance with subsection G of this section. Standard units of credit also shall be accepted for courses satisfactorily completed in accredited colleges and universities when the student has been given credit by the previous school attended.

Students transferring above the tenth grade from schools or other education programs that do not require or give credit for health and physical education shall not be required to take these courses to meet graduation requirements.

Students transferring into a Virginia public school from other than a Virginia public school shall earn no fewer than the number of verified units listed in subdivision G 1 or G 2 of this section. The school division shall accept the following tests from the sending state, country, private school, or Department of Defense Educational Activity school for the purpose of awarding verified units of credit in courses previously completed at another school or program of study, for the purpose of awarding a Virginia high school diploma:

1. End-of-course tests required for graduation by the sending state;
2. Exit tests required for graduation by the sending state; and
3. National norm-referenced achievement tests. When students transfer to a Virginia public school from a state that requires a national norm-referenced achievement test, and that state education agency has set a "cut score" or passing score for the purpose of graduation, the school division shall accept the test for the purpose of awarding a verified credit if the test includes some content in a subject for which a verified credit may be awarded. If that state education agency has not set a cut score for the norm-referenced test, the test may not be used for the purpose of awarding a verified credit or earning a high school diploma.

Any substitute test approved by the board for verified credit shall be accepted in lieu of the applicable SOL tests if the applicable standard credit has been earned by the student.

The sending state's test must include content in the subjects for which verified credit is awarded. The test does not have to be comparable to a Virginia SOL test, so long as the test includes some content in the subject area. If the test includes some content from more than one subject, verified credits shall be awarded for every subject area covered by the test.

G. Students entering a Virginia public high school for the first time after the tenth grade shall earn as many credits as possible toward the prescribed graduation requirements. However, schools may substitute courses required in other states in the same content area if the student is unable to meet the specific content requirements of [8VAC20-132-50](#) or [8VAC20-132-51](#), respectively, without taking a heavier than normal course load in any semester, by taking summer school, or by taking courses after the time when the student otherwise would have graduated.

The graduation requirements for students transferring into a Virginia high school for the first time shall be as follows:

1. For a Standard Diploma:

a. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the ninth grade prior to the 2018–2019 school year shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#). Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the ninth grade in the 2018–2019 school year or thereafter shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#).

b. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the tenth grade prior to the 2019–2020 school year or at the beginning of the eleventh grade prior to the 2020–2021 school year shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of four verified units of credit: one each in English, mathematics, history, and science. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the tenth grade in the 2019–2020 school year or thereafter or at the beginning of the eleventh grade in the 2020–2021 school year or thereafter, shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#).

c. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade prior to the 2020–2021 school year or at the beginning of the twelfth grade prior to the 2021–2022 school year shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of two verified units of credit: one in English and one in mathematics if participation in mathematics testing is required by federal law, otherwise, such verified credit may be of the student's own choosing. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade in the 2020–2021 school year or thereafter, or at the beginning of twelfth grade in the 2021–2022 school year or thereafter, shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of two verified units of credit: one in English and one in mathematics if participation in mathematics testing is required by federal law, otherwise, such verified credit may be of the student's own choosing.

d. Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior or twelfth grade year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma following the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#) for students entering prior to the 2021–2022 school year, or following the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#) for students entering in the 2021–2022 school year or thereafter. If it is not possible for the student to meet the requirements for a diploma, arrangements should be made for the student's previous school to award the diploma. If these arrangements cannot be made, a waiver of the verified unit of credit requirements may be available to the student. The Department of Education may grant such waivers upon request by the local school board in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the board.

2. For an Advanced Studies Diploma:

a. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the ninth grade prior to the 2018–2019 school year shall earn credit as

prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#). Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the ninth grade in the 2018-2019 school year or thereafter shall earn credit as prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#).

b. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the tenth grade prior to the 2019–2020 school year or at the beginning of the eleventh grade prior to the 2020–2021 school year shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of six verified units of credit: two in English and one each in mathematics, history, and science and one of the student's own choosing. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time at the beginning of or during the tenth grade in the 2019–2020 school year or thereafter or at the beginning of the eleventh grade in the 2020–2021 school year or thereafter shall earn credit as prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#).

c. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade prior to the 2020–2021 school year or at the beginning of the twelfth grade prior to the 2021–2022 school year shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of four verified units of credit: one in English, one in mathematics if required participation in mathematics testing is required by federal law, otherwise such verified credit may be of the student's own choosing, and two additional verified credits of the student's own choosing. Students entering a Virginia high school for the first time during the eleventh grade in the 2020–2021 school year or thereafter, or at the beginning of the twelfth grade in the 2021–2022 school year or thereafter, shall meet the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#), except that such students shall only be required to earn a minimum of two verified units of credit: one in English, and one in mathematics if required participation in mathematics testing is required by federal law, otherwise such verified credit may be of the student's own choosing.

d. Students transferring after 20 instructional hours per course of their senior or twelfth grade year shall be given every opportunity to earn a diploma following the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-50](#) for students entering prior to the 2021–2022 school year, or following the graduation requirements prescribed in [8VAC20-132-51](#) for students entering in the 2021–2022 school year or thereafter. If it is not possible for the student to meet the requirements for a diploma, arrangements should be made for the student's previous school to award the diploma. If these arrangements cannot be made, a waiver of the verified unit of credit requirements may be available to the student. The Department of Education may grant such waivers upon request by the local school board in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the board.

3. For an Applied Studies Diploma: In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Plan and do not meet the requirements for other diplomas

shall be awarded Applied Studies Diplomas in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations regarding special education.

Students who pursue an Applied Studies Diploma shall be allowed to pursue a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma at any time during high school. Such students shall not be excluded from courses or tests required to earn these diplomas.

4. For a Certificate of Program Completion: In accordance with the requirements of the Standards of Quality, students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by the local school board, but do not qualify for a Standard Diploma, an Advanced Studies Diploma, or an Applied Studies Diploma shall be awarded Certificates of Program Completion. The requirements for Certificates of Program Completion are developed by local school boards in accordance with the Standards of Quality.

H. Any local school division receiving approval to increase its course credit requirements for a diploma may not deny either the Standard Diploma or the Advanced Studies Diploma to any transfer student who has otherwise met the requirements contained in these standards if the transfer student can only meet the division's additional requirements by taking a heavier than normal course load in any semester, by taking summer school, or by taking courses after the time when the student otherwise would have graduated.

I. The transcript of a student who graduates or transfers from a Virginia secondary school shall conform to the requirements of [8VAC20-160](#), Regulations Governing Secondary School Transcripts.

J. The accreditation status of a high school shall not be included on the student transcript provided to colleges, universities, or employers. The board expressly states that any student who has met the graduation requirements and has received a Virginia diploma holds a diploma that should be recognized as equal to any other Virginia diploma of the same type, regardless of the accreditation status of the student's high school. It is the express policy of the board that no student shall be affected by the accreditation status of the student's school. The board shall take appropriate action, from time to time, to ensure that no student is affected by the accreditation status of the student's school.

#### Part IV – School Instructional Program

##### [8VAC20-132-70. Program of instruction and learning objectives.](#)

A. As required by the Standards of Quality, each local school board shall develop and implement a program of instruction for grades kindergarten through 12 that is aligned to the Standards of Learning and meets or exceeds the requirements of the board. The program of instruction shall emphasize reading, writing, speaking, mathematical concepts and computations, proficiency in the use of computers and related technology, computer science and computational thinking, including computer coding, and scientific concepts and processes; essential skills and concepts of citizenship, including knowledge of Virginia history and world and United States history, economics, government, world languages, international cultures, health and physical education, environmental issues, and geography necessary for responsible participation in American society and in the international community; fine arts, which may include music and art, and practical arts; knowledge and skills needed to qualify for further

education, gainful employment, or training in a career or technical field; and development of the ability to apply such skills and knowledge in preparation for eventual employment and lifelong learning and to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

B. As described in [8VAC20-132-51](#) and in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board, the instructional program and learning objectives shall ensure that students (i) attain the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences necessary to be successful in the evolving global economy whether immediately entering the world of work or pursuing a postsecondary education and (ii) acquire and be able to demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship. Consistent with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate, the instructional program and learning objectives shall ensure that, as age appropriate, during the kindergarten through grade 12 experience, students achieve and apply appropriate career development and technical knowledge. During the elementary and middle school years, students shall explore personal interests, be exposed to different types of careers, and plan for career development. In the later school years students are to attain and demonstrate productive workplace skills, qualities, and behaviors; align knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career opportunities; and understand and demonstrate civic responsibility and community engagement.

C. Each school shall provide a program of instruction that promotes individual student academic achievement in the essential academic disciplines and shall provide additional instructional opportunities that meet the abilities, interests, and educational needs of students. Each school shall establish learning objectives to be achieved by students at successive grade levels that meet or exceed the knowledge and skills contained in the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history and social science adopted by the board and shall continually assess the progress of each student in relation to the objectives.

D. Instruction shall be designed to accommodate all students, including those identified with disabilities in accordance with the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) or § 504 of [the Rehabilitation Act](#), as amended, those identified as gifted or talented, and those who are ELs. Students with disabilities shall have the opportunity to receive a full continuum of education services, in accordance with [8VAC20-81](#), Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia and other pertinent federal and state laws and regulations.

#### [8VAC20-132-80. Instructional program in elementary schools.](#)

A. The elementary school shall provide each student a program of instruction that corresponds to the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history and social science. In addition, each school shall provide instruction in art, music, and physical education and health and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness during the regular school year in accordance with guidelines established by the board. In addition, each school shall provide instruction in career exploration in accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-140](#).

B. In kindergarten through grade 3, reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics shall be the focus of the instructional program. Schools shall maintain an early skills and knowledge achievement record in reading and mathematics for each student in grades kindergarten



through 3 to monitor student progress and to promote successful achievement on the third grade SOL tests. This record shall be included with the student's records if the student transfers to a new school.

In accordance with the Standards of Quality, local school boards shall implement early identification, diagnosis, and assistance for students with reading and mathematics problems and provide instructional strategies and reading and mathematics practices that benefit the development of reading and mathematics skills for all students.

C. To provide students with sufficient opportunity to learn, local school divisions shall provide a minimum of 680 hours of the required 990 hours of instructional time to students in elementary school in the four academic disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and history and social science.

Students who are not successfully progressing in early reading proficiency or who are unable to read with comprehension the materials used for instruction shall receive additional instructional time in reading, which may include summer school.

In accordance with the Standards of Quality, local school divisions shall provide reading intervention services to students in grades kindergarten through 3 who demonstrate deficiencies based on their individual performance on the SOL reading test or any reading diagnostic test that meets criteria established by the Department of Education. The local school division, in its discretion, shall provide such reading intervention services prior to promoting a student from grade 3 to grade 4.

D. Elementary schools are encouraged to provide instruction in world languages.

#### **8VAC20-132-90. Instructional program in middle schools.**

A. The middle school shall provide each student a program of instruction that corresponds to the Standards of Learning for English, mathematics, science, and history and social science. In addition, each school shall provide instruction in art, music, world language, physical education and health, and career and technical exploration and shall require students to participate in a program of physical fitness during the regular school year in accordance with guidelines established by the board. Each middle school shall provide a course in career investigation in accordance with the provisions of 8VAC20-132-140. 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 8VAC20-132-140 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.

B. The middle school shall provide a minimum of eight courses to students in the eighth grade. English, mathematics, science, and history and social science shall be required. Four elective courses shall be available: level one of a world language, one in health and physical education, one in fine arts, and one in career and technical exploration.

C. Level one of a world language and an Algebra I course shall be available to all eighth grade students. For any secondary school credit-bearing course taken in middle school, parents may request that grades be omitted from the student's transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course in accordance with policies adopted by the local school board.



Notice of this provision must be provided to parents with a deadline and format for making such a request. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent a middle school from offering any other credit-bearing courses for graduation.

D. To provide students a sufficient opportunity to learn, each student shall be provided a total of 560 instructional hours per year in the four academic disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and history and social science.

E. Each school shall ensure that students who are unable to read with comprehension the materials used for instruction receive additional instruction in reading, which may include summer school.

F. In accordance with the Standards of Quality each school shall ensure that students in grades 6 through 8 who need targeted mathematics remediation and intervention, including remediation or intervention for computational deficiencies as demonstrated by their individual performance on any diagnostic test or grade-level SOL mathematics test, shall receive additional instruction in mathematics, which may include summer school. Students in grades 6 through 8 who are at-risk of failing the algebra I end-of-course test shall be provided algebra readiness intervention services.

#### [8VAC20-132-100. Instructional program in secondary schools.](#)

A. The secondary school, in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board, shall provide a program of instruction to ensure that students (i) attain the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences necessary to be successful in the evolving global economy whether immediately entering the world of work or pursuing a postsecondary education and (ii) acquire and be able to demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship in accordance with 8VAC20-132-70 and the Profile of a Virginia Graduate.

The secondary school shall provide each student a program of instruction in the four core academic areas of English, mathematics, science, and history and social science that identifies the knowledge and skills that students should attain, giving due consideration to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship, in the early years of high school and enables each student to meet the prescribed graduation requirements. The secondary school shall offer opportunities for each student, including:

1. Career and technical education choices that incorporate knowledge of regional workforce needs and opportunities; prepare the student as a career and technical education program completer in one of three or more occupational areas; and that prepare the student for technical or preprofessional postsecondary programs;
2. Coursework and experiences that prepare the student for college-level studies including access to at least three Advanced Placement (AP) courses, college-level courses for degree credit, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, Cambridge courses, or any combination thereof;
3. Preparation for college admissions tests;
4. Study and exploration of the fine arts and world languages; and

924 5. Participation in work experiences such as internships, externships, and other work-  
925 based learning experiences, and attaining workforce and career readiness and industry  
926 credentials.

927 B. Minimum course offerings for each secondary school shall provide opportunities for  
928 students to meet the graduation requirements stated in this chapter and must include:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science (Laboratory)	4
History and Social Science	4
World Language	3
Electives	4
Career and Technical Education	11
Fine Arts	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Economics and Personal Finance	1
Total Units	39

929 C. Classroom driver education may count for 36 class periods, or the equivalent in minutes,  
930 of health education. Students shall not be removed from classes other than health and physical  
931 education for the in-car phase of driver education.

932 D. Each school shall ensure that students who are unable to read with comprehension the  
933 materials used for instruction receive additional instruction in reading, which may include  
934 summer school.

935 E. In accordance with the Standards of Quality, each school shall ensure that students who  
936 need targeted mathematics remediation and intervention, including remediation or  
937 intervention for computational deficiencies as demonstrated by their individual performance  
938 on any diagnostic test or grade-level SOL mathematics test shall receive additional instruction in  
939 mathematics, which may include summer school. Students in grade 9 who are at-risk of failing  
940 the algebra I end-of-course test, as demonstrated by their individual performance on any  
941 diagnostic test that has been approved by the department, shall be provided algebra readiness  
942 intervention services.

943 [8VAC20-132-110. Standard and verified units of credit.](#)

944 A. A "standard unit of credit" or "standard credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which  
945 the student successfully completes 140 clock hours of instruction and the requirements of the  
946 course. A school division may waive the requirement that a student receive 140 clock hours of  
947 instruction to earn a standard credit, effective with students enrolled in the 2015-2016 school  
948 year, as prescribed in the Standards of Quality and board guidelines. When credit is awarded in  
949 less than whole units, the increment awarded must be no greater than the fractional part of the  
950 140 hours of instruction provided. If a school division elects to award credit on a basis other

than the 140 clock hours of instruction required for a standard unit of credit defined in this subsection, the local school division shall provide the board with satisfactory proof, based on board guidelines, that the students for whom the 140-clock-hour requirement is waived have learned the content and skills included in the relevant Standards of Learning. In addition, the local school division shall develop a written policy approved by the superintendent and school board that ensures:

1. That the content of the course for which credit is awarded is comparable to 140 clock hours of instruction; and
2. That upon completion, the aims and objectives of the course have been met.

B. A "verified unit of credit" or "verified credit" is a credit awarded for a course in which a student earns a standard unit of credit and completes one of the following:

1. Achieves a passing score on a corresponding end-of-course SOL test. In accordance with the provisions of the Standards of Quality, students may earn a standard and verified unit of credit for any elective course in which the core academic Standards of Learning course content has been integrated and the student passes the related end-of-course SOL test. Such course and test combinations must be approved by the board.

Upon waiver of the 140-clock-hour requirement according to board guidelines, qualified students who have received a standard unit of credit shall be permitted to sit for the relevant SOL test to earn a verified credit without having to meet the 140-clock-hour requirement.

2. Achieves a passing score on an additional test, as defined in 8VAC20-132-10, as a part of the Virginia Assessment Program.

3. Meets the criteria for the receipt of a locally awarded verified credit when the student has not passed a corresponding SOL test.

- a. Students who enter the ninth grade for the first time prior to the 2018-2019 school year and do not pass SOL tests in English, mathematics, science, or history and social science may receive locally awarded verified credits from the local school board in accordance with criteria established in guidelines adopted by the board. Credit accommodations for students with disabilities may be used to confer locally awarded verified credits as provided in 8VAC20-132-50 B 3.

- b. Students who enter the ninth grade for the first time in the 2018-2019 school year or thereafter and do not pass SOL tests in English, mathematics, laboratory science, or history and social science may receive locally awarded verified credits from the local school board in accordance with criteria established in guidelines adopted by the board. No more than one locally awarded verified credit may be used to satisfy graduation requirements, except as provided in 8VAC20-132-51 B 3 for students with disabilities seeking a standard diploma.

4. Meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit in English (writing) by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on an authentic performance assessment, that complies with guidelines adopted by the board. Such students shall not also be required to take the corresponding SOL test in English (writing).

C. The board may from time to time approve additional tests for the purpose of awarding verified credit. Such additional tests, which enable students to earn verified units of credit, must, at a minimum, meet the following criteria:

1. The test must be standardized and graded independently of the school or school division in which the test is given;
2. The test must be knowledge based;
3. The test must be administered on a statewide, multistate, or international basis, or administered as part of another state's accountability assessment program; and
4. To be counted in a specific academic area, the test must measure content that incorporates or exceeds the Standards of Learning content in the course for which verified credit is given.

The board shall set the score that must be achieved to earn a verified unit of credit on the additional test options.

D. With such funds as are appropriated by the General Assembly, the board shall provide opportunities for students who meet criteria adopted by the board to have an expedited retake of a SOL test to earn verified credit.

E. The provisions of this section are effective on and after the beginning of the 2018–2019 academic year.

#### [8VAC20-132-120. Summer school.](#)

A. The courses offered and the quality of instruction in the summer school program shall be comparable to that offered during the regular school term. At the middle and secondary school levels, credit for courses taken for credit toward graduation other than a repeat course shall be awarded in accordance with the requirements of 8VAC20-132-110. Students must also meet the requirements for SOL testing if appropriate.

B. Summer school instruction at any level, which is provided as part of a state-funded remedial program, shall be designed to improve specific identified student deficiencies. Such programs shall be conducted in accordance with regulations adopted by the board.

#### [8VAC20-132-130. Elective courses.](#)

Locally developed elective courses offered for credit toward high school graduation shall be approved by the division superintendent and local school board.

#### [8VAC20-132-140. College and career readiness; career exposure, exploration, and planning; and opportunities for postsecondary credit.](#)

A. Each middle and secondary school shall provide for the early identification and enrollment of students in a program with a range of educational and academic experiences related to college and career readiness in and outside the classroom, including an emphasis on experiences that will motivate disadvantaged and minority students to prepare for a career or postsecondary education.

B. Beginning with the 2013–2014 academic year and through the 2017–2018 academic year:

1. All schools shall begin development of a personal Academic and Career Plan (ACP) for each seventh-grade student with completion by the fall of the student's eighth-grade

year. Students who transfer from other than a Virginia public school into the eighth grade shall have the plan developed as soon as practicable following enrollment. Beginning with the 2014–2015 academic year, students who transfer into a Virginia public school after their eighth-grade year shall have an ACP developed upon enrollment. The components of the ACP shall include the student's program of study for high school graduation and a postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests. The ACP shall be developed in accordance with guidelines established by the board and signed by the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official designated by the principal. The ACP shall be included in the student's record and shall be reviewed and updated, if necessary, before the student enters the ninth and eleventh grades. The school shall have met its obligation for parental involvement if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian of the responsibility for the development and approval of the ACP. Any personal ACPs prescribed by local school boards for students in grades 7 through 12 and in effect as of June 30, 2009, are approved to continue without further action by the board.

2. Beginning in the middle school years, students shall be counseled on opportunities for beginning postsecondary education and opportunities for obtaining industry certifications, occupational competency credentials, or professional licenses in a career and technical education field prior to high school graduation. Such opportunities shall include access to at least three Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Cambridge courses or three college-level courses for degree credit pursuant to 8VAC20-132-100. Students taking advantage of such opportunities shall not be denied participation in school activities for which they are otherwise eligible. Wherever possible, students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit (dual enrollment), under the following conditions:

- a. Written approval of the secondary school principal prior to participation in dual enrollment must be obtained;
- b. The college must accept the student for admission to the course; and
- c. The course must be given by the college for degree credits (no remedial courses will be accepted).

Schools that comply with this standard shall not be penalized in receiving state appropriations.

C. Beginning with the 2018–2019 academic year:

1. Each elementary, middle, and secondary school shall provide for the identification by all students of personal interests and abilities to support planning for postsecondary opportunities and career preparation. Such support shall include provision of information concerning exploration of career cluster areas in elementary schools and course information and planning for college preparation programs, opportunities for educational and academic experiences in and outside the classroom, including internships and work-based learning, and the multiple pathways to college and career readiness in middle and secondary school.

2. Beginning in the elementary school years, students are to explore the different occupations associated with career clusters and select areas of interest. Students shall begin the development of an academic and career plan portfolio (ACPP) in elementary grades to include information about interests, values such as dependability and responsibility, and skills supporting decisions about their future interests and goals. The ACPP is a repository for planning notes, class projects, interest inventory results, awards and recognitions, and other information related to academic and career plans and preparation. The ACPP is student led and updated and revised as the student continues to plan for the student's future throughout school years. The information contained in the ACPP shall serve as the foundation for creating the ACP in grade 7.

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. The course, or its alternative, shall address, at a minimum, planning for academic courses, work-based learning opportunities, completion of industry certifications, possible independent projects, and postsecondary education. The course, or its alternative, shall include demonstration of personal, professional, and technical workplace readiness skills.

All schools shall continue development of a personal ACP with each seventh-grade student with completion by the end of the fall semester of the student's eighth-grade year. Students who transfer from other than a Virginia public school into the eighth grade shall have the ACP developed as soon as practicable following enrollment. Students who transfer into a Virginia public school after their eighth-grade year shall have an ACP developed upon enrollment. The components of the ACP shall include the student's program of study for high school graduation and a postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests. In secondary school, a career-related learning experience shall be chosen by the student and documented in the ACP.

3. The ACP shall be developed in accordance with guidelines established by the board and signed by the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official or officials designated by the principal. The ACP shall be included in the student's record and shall be reviewed and updated annually.

4. Beginning in the middle school years, students shall be counseled on opportunities for beginning postsecondary education and opportunities for obtaining industry certifications, occupational competency credentials, or professional licenses in a career and technical education field prior to high school graduation. Such opportunities shall include access to at least three Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Cambridge courses or three college-level courses for degree credit pursuant to 8VAC20-132-100. Students taking advantage of such opportunities shall not be denied participation in school activities for which they are otherwise eligible.

1117 5. Wherever possible, students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take  
1118 college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit  
1119 (dual enrollment), under the following conditions:

1120 a. Written approval of the secondary school principal prior to participation in dual  
1121 enrollment must be obtained;

1122 b. The college must accept the student for admission to the course;

1123 c. The course must be given by the college for degree credits (no remedial courses  
1124 will be accepted); and

1125 d. Students participating in courses offered by an institution of higher education  
1126 shall be permitted to exceed a full course load in order to participate in courses that  
1127 lead to a degree, certificate, or credential at such institution.

1128 **8VAC20-132-150. Standard school year and school day.**

1129 A. The standard school year shall be 180 instructional days or 990 instructional hours. The  
1130 standard school day, including passing time for class changes and excluding breaks for meals,  
1131 shall average a minimum of five and one-half instructional hours for students in grades  
1132 kindergarten through 12. Recess may be included in the calculation of required instructional  
1133 hours for elementary school, provided that recess does not exceed 15% of the required  
1134 instructional hours.

1135 B. All students in grades kindergarten through 12 shall maintain a full day schedule of  
1136 classes (5-1/2 hours), unless a waiver is granted in accordance with policies defined by the local  
1137 school board.

1138 **8VAC20-132-160. Family Life Education.**

1139 Each school may implement the Standards of Learning for the Family Life Education  
1140 program promulgated by the board or a Family Life Education program consistent with the  
1141 guidelines developed by the board, which shall have the goals of reducing the incidence of  
1142 pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases and substance abuse among teenagers.

1143 **8VAC20-132-170. Off-site instruction.**

1144 A. Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or  
1145 in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance based upon  
1146 certification of need by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist. For students  
1147 eligible for special education or related services, the Individualized Education Program (IEP)  
1148 committee must revise the IEP, as appropriate. Credit for the work shall be awarded when it is  
1149 done under the supervision of a licensed teacher qualified in the relevant subject areas and  
1150 employed by the local school board, and there is evidence that the instructional time  
1151 requirements or alternative means of awarding credit adopted by the local school board in  
1152 accordance with the provisions of 8VAC20-132-110 have been met.

1153 B. Schools are encouraged to pursue alternative means to deliver instruction to  
1154 accommodate student needs through virtual courses, emerging technologies, and other similar  
1155 means. Students may enroll in and receive a standard and verified unit of credit for supervised  
1156 virtual courses with prior approval of the principal. The local school board shall develop policies  
1157 governing this method of delivery of instruction that shall include the provisions of 8VAC20-

132-110 and the administration of required SOL tests prescribed by 8VAC20-132-40. For courses offered for possible high school credit, standard units of credit shall be awarded for successful completion of such courses when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher qualified in the relevant subject areas. A verified unit of credit may be earned when the student has successfully completed the requirements specified in 8VAC20-132-110.

#### 8VAC20-132-180. Library media, materials, and equipment.

A. Each school shall maintain an organized library media center as the resource center of the school and provide a unified program of media services and activities for students and teachers before, during, and after school. The library media center shall contain hard copy, electronic technological resources, materials, and equipment that are sufficient to meet research, inquiry, and reading requirements of the instructional program and general student interest.

B. Each school shall provide a variety of materials, resources, and equipment to support the instructional program.

#### 8VAC20-132-190. Extracurricular and other school activities; recess.

A. School sponsored extracurricular activities shall be under the direct supervision of the staff and shall contribute to the educational objectives of the school. Extracurricular activities must be organized to avoid interrupting the instructional program. Extracurricular activities shall not be permitted to interfere with the student's required instructional activities. Extracurricular activities and eligibility requirements shall be established and approved by the superintendent and the school board.

B. Competitive sports of a varsity nature (scheduled league games) shall be prohibited as a part of the elementary school program.

C. Each elementary school shall provide students with a daily recess during the regular school year as determined appropriate by the school.

D. Local school boards shall provide a program of physical activity for all students in grades kindergarten through 5 consisting of at least 20 minutes per day or an average of 100 minutes per week during the regular school year and available to all students in grades 6 through 12 with a goal of at least 150 minutes per week on average during the regular school year.

### Part V – School and Instructional Leadership

#### 8VAC20-132-200. Role of the principal.

A. The principal is recognized as the instructional leader and manager of the school and is responsible for:

1. Fostering the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision of teaching and learning that leads to student academic progress and school improvement;
2. Fostering the success of all students by developing, advocating, and sustaining an academically rigorous, positive, and safe school climate for all stakeholders;



- 1197 3. Fostering effective human resources management by appropriately assigning,  
1198 selecting, inducting, supporting, evaluating, and retaining quality instructional and  
1199 support personnel;
- 1200 4. Fostering the success of all students by communicating and collaborating effectively  
1201 with stakeholders;
- 1202 5. Fostering the success of all students by demonstrating professional standards and  
1203 ethics, engaging in continuous professional development, and contributing to the  
1204 profession; and
- 1205 6. Providing leadership that results in acceptable, measurable student academic  
1206 progress based on established standards.

1207 As a matter of policy, the board, through these standards, recognizes the critically  
1208 important role of principals to the success of public schools and the students who attend those  
1209 schools and recommends that local school boards provide principals with the maximum  
1210 authority available under law in all matters affecting the school, including instructional  
1211 leadership, school climate, human resources management, organizational management,  
1212 communication and community relations, and student academic progress, in a manner that  
1213 allows the principal to be held accountable in a fair and consistent manner for matters under  
1214 the principal's direct control.

1215 B. As the instructional leader, the principal is responsible for ensuring that students are  
1216 provided an opportunity to learn and shall:

- 1217 1. Lead the collaborative development and sustainment of a student-centered shared  
1218 vision for educational improvement and work collaboratively with staff, students,  
1219 parents, and other stakeholders to develop a mission and programs for effective  
1220 teaching and learning, consistent with the division's strategic plan and school's goals;
- 1221 2. Collaboratively plan, implement, support, monitor, and evaluate instructional  
1222 programs that enhance teaching and student academic progress, and lead to school  
1223 improvement;
- 1224 3. Analyze current academic achievement data and instructional strategies and monitor  
1225 and evaluate the use of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment, by grade and  
1226 by discipline, to:
- 1227 a. Make appropriate educational decisions to improve classroom instruction,  
1228 increase student achievement, and improve overall school effectiveness; provide  
1229 timely and accurate feedback to students and parents and to inform instructional  
1230 practices; and direct and require appropriate prevention, intervention, or  
1231 remediation to those students performing below grade level or not meeting  
1232 expectations, including passing the SOL tests;
- 1233 b. Involve the staff of the school in identifying and evaluating professional  
1234 development needed to improve student achievement and provide professional  
1235 development opportunities and ensure that the staff participate in those activities;
- 1236 c. Evaluate and improve classroom practices and instruction; and

- 1237 d. Seek to ensure students' successful attainment of knowledge and skills set forth in  
1238 the Standards of Learning;
- 1239 4. Ensure that students' records are maintained and that criteria used in making  
1240 placement and promotion decisions, as well as any instructional interventions used to  
1241 improve the student's performance, are included in the record;
- 1242 5. Protect the academic instructional time from unnecessary interruptions and  
1243 disruptions and provide collaborative leadership for the design and implementation of  
1244 effective and efficient schedules that protect and maximize instructional time;
- 1245 6. Involve students, staff, parents, and the community to create and sustain a positive,  
1246 safe, and healthy learning environment that enforces state, division, and local rules,  
1247 policies, and procedures and consistently model and collaboratively promote high  
1248 expectations, mutual respect, care, and concern for students, staff, parents, and the  
1249 community;
- 1250 7. Create a culture of shared accountability and continuous school improvement;
- 1251 8. Involve students, families, staff, and other stakeholders to promote community  
1252 engagement;
- 1253 9. Maintain records of students who drop out of school, including their reasons for  
1254 dropping out and actions taken to prevent these students from dropping out;
- 1255 10. Notify the parents of rising eleventh-grade and twelfth-grade students of:
- 1256 a. The number of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation; and  
1257 b. The remaining number of such units of credit the individual student requires for  
1258 graduation; and
- 1259 11. Notify the parent or guardian of students removed from class for disciplinary  
1260 reasons for two or more consecutive days in whole or in part. The school shall have met  
1261 its obligation if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian.
- 1262 C. As the school manager, the principal shall:
- 1263 1. Support, manage, and oversee the school's organization, operation, and use of  
1264 resources;
- 1265 2. Demonstrate and communicate a knowledge and understanding of Virginia public  
1266 education rules, regulations, laws, and school division policies and procedures;
- 1267 3. Work with staff to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy and to  
1268 facilitate constructive communication by establishing and maintaining a current  
1269 handbook of personnel policies and procedures;
- 1270 4. Ensure the use of data systems and technology to support goals;
- 1271 5. Disseminate information to staff, parents, and other stakeholders in a timely manner  
1272 through multiple channels and sources;
- 1273 6. Work with the community to involve parents and citizens in the educational program;
- 1274 7. Facilitate communication with parents by maintaining and disseminating a current  
1275 student handbook of policies and procedures that includes the school division's

- 1276 standards of student conduct and procedures for enforcement, along with other  
1277 matters of interest to parents and students;
- 1278 8. Manage the supervision and research-based evaluation of staff in accordance with  
1279 local and state requirements;
- 1280 9. Maintain a current record of staff's licenses and endorsements to ensure compliance  
1281 and professional development completed by staff;
- 1282 10. Follow local and state laws and policies with regard to finances, school  
1283 accountability, and reporting;
- 1284 11. Maintain records of receipts and disbursements of all funds handled, which shall be  
1285 audited annually by a professional accountant approved by the local school board; and
- 1286 12. Ensure the security of all tests administered to students, including those required by  
1287 the board and the local school division. This includes:
- 1288 a. The requirement that all schools adhere to a policy that prohibits students' access  
1289 to cell phones and other electronic devices with texting or camera capabilities during  
1290 the administration of the SOL tests;
- 1291 b. The requirement that, to the extent possible, the teacher should not administer  
1292 the SOL test associated with the grade level content or class taught;
- 1293 c. Notification to teachers of the penalties for breaching security on SOL tests,  
1294 including actions against the teacher's license and civil penalties; and
- 1295 d. Establishment of penalties for students who breach security on SOL tests.

1296 **8VAC20-132-210. Role of professional teaching staff.**

- 1297 The professional teaching staff shall be responsible for providing instruction that is  
1298 educationally sound in an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy, which is conducive to  
1299 learning, and in which all students are expected to achieve the objectives of the Standards of  
1300 Learning for the appropriate grade level or course. The staff shall:
- 1301 1. Serve as role models for effective oral and written communication with special  
1302 attention to the use of standard English;
- 1303 2. Strive to strengthen the basic skills of students in all subjects and to close any  
1304 achievement gaps among groups of students in the school;
- 1305 3. Establish teaching objectives to achieve the following:
- 1306 a. Identify what students are expected to learn; and
- 1307 b. Inform students of the achievement expected and keep them engaged in learning  
1308 tasks;
- 1309 4. Provide for individual differences of students through the use of differentiated  
1310 instruction, varied materials, and activities suitable to their interests and abilities; and
- 1311 5. Assess the progress of students and report promptly and constructively to them and  
1312 their parents.

**1313**     **8VAC20-132-220. Role of support staff.**

**1314**         The school's support staff shall work with the principal and professional teaching staff to  
**1315** promote student achievement and successful attainment of the school's goals.

**1316**     **8VAC20-132-230. Administrative and support staff; staffing requirements.**

**1317**         A. Each school shall have at a minimum the staff as specified in the Standards of Quality  
**1318** with proper licenses and endorsements for the positions they hold.

**1319**         B. The principal of each middle and secondary school shall be employed on a 12-month  
**1320** basis.

**1321**         C. Each elementary, middle, and secondary school shall employ school counseling staff as  
**1322** prescribed by the Standards of Quality. School counseling shall be provided for students to  
**1323** ensure that a program of studies contributing to the student's academic achievement and  
**1324** meeting the graduation requirements specified in this chapter is being followed.

**1325**         D. Each member of the school counseling staff in the counseling program for elementary,  
**1326** middle, and secondary schools shall spend at least 80% of his staff time during normal school  
**1327** hours in direct counseling of individual students or groups of students.

**1328**         E. A middle school classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more  
**1329** than the instructional day minus one planning period per day or the equivalent with no more  
**1330** than 150 students or 25 class periods per week. If a middle school classroom teacher teaches  
**1331** more than 150 students or 25 class periods per week, an appropriate contractual arrangement  
**1332** and compensation shall be provided.

**1333**         F. The secondary classroom teacher's standard load shall be based on teaching no more  
**1334** than the instructional day minus one planning period per day or the equivalent with no more  
**1335** than 150 students or 25 class periods per week. If a secondary school classroom teacher  
**1336** teaches more than 150 students or 25 class periods per week, an appropriate contractual  
**1337** arrangement and compensation shall be provided.

**1338**         G. Middle or secondary school teachers shall teach no more than 150 students per week;  
**1339** however, physical education and music teachers may teach 200 students per week. If a middle  
**1340** or secondary school physical education or music teacher teaches more than 200 students per  
**1341** week, an appropriate contractual arrangement and compensation shall be provided.

**1342**         H. Each elementary classroom teacher shall be provided at least an average of 30 minutes  
**1343** per day during the students' school week as planning time. Each full-time middle and secondary  
**1344** classroom teacher shall be provided one planning period per day or the equivalent, as defined  
**1345** in 8VAC20-132-10, unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.

**1346**         I. Staff-student ratios in special education and career and technical education classrooms  
**1347** shall comply with regulations of the board.

**1348**         J. Student support positions as defined in the Standards of Quality shall be available as  
**1349** necessary to promote academic achievement and to provide support services to the students in  
**1350** the school.

1351 Part VI – School Facilities and Safety

1352 8VAC20-132-240. School facilities and safety.

1353 A. Each school shall be maintained in a manner ensuring compliance with the Virginia  
1354 Statewide Building Code (13VAC5-63). In addition, the school administration shall:

- 1355 1. Maintain a physical plant that is accessible, barrier free, safe, and clean;  
1356 2. Provide for the proper outdoor display of flags of the United States and of the  
1357 Commonwealth of Virginia;  
1358 3. Provide suitable space for classrooms, administrative staff, pupil personnel services,  
1359 library and media services, and for the needs and safety of physical education;  
1360 4. Provide adequate, safe, and properly-equipped laboratories to meet the needs of  
1361 instruction in the sciences, technology, fine arts, and career and technical programs;  
1362 5. Provide facilities for the adequate and safe administration and storage of student  
1363 medications; and  
1364 6. Carry out the duties of the threat assessment team established by the division  
1365 superintendent and implement policies established by the local school board related to  
1366 threat assessment, pursuant to § 22.1-79.4 of the Code of Virginia.

1367 B. Each school shall maintain records of regular safety, health, and fire inspections that have  
1368 been conducted and certified by local health and fire departments. The frequency of such  
1369 inspections shall be determined by the local school board in consultation with the local health  
1370 and fire departments. In addition, the school administration shall:

- 1371 1. Equip all exit doors with panic hardware as required by the Virginia Statewide  
1372 Building Code (13VAC5-63);  
1373 2. Conduct a fire drill at least twice during the first 20 days of school and conduct at  
1374 least two additional fire drills during the remainder of the school term. Evacuation  
1375 routes for students shall be posted in each room; and  
1376 3. Conduct a lock-down drill at least twice during the first 20 days of school and conduct  
1377 at least two additional lock-down drills during the remainder of the school term.

1378 C. Each school shall have contingency plans for emergencies that include staff certified in  
1379 cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the Heimlich maneuver, and emergency first aid.

1380 Each school building with instructional or administrative staff of 10 or more shall have at  
1381 least three employees with current certification or training in emergency first aid,  
1382 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of an automated external defibrillator. If one or  
1383 more students diagnosed as having diabetes attend such school, at least two employees shall  
1384 have been trained in the administration of insulin and glucagon.

1385 Each school building with instructional or administrative staff fewer than 10 shall have at  
1386 least two employees with current certification or training in emergency first aid,  
1387 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of an automated external defibrillator. If one or  
1388 more students diagnosed as having diabetes attend such school, at least one employee shall  
1389 have been trained in the administration of insulin and glucagon.

1390 D. In addition, the school administration shall ensure that the school has:

1. Written procedures to follow in emergencies such as fire, injury, illness, allergic reactions, and violent or threatening behavior. This shall include school board policies for the possession and administration of epinephrine in every school, to be administered by any school nurse, employee of the school board, employee of a local governing body, or employee of a local health department who is authorized by a prescriber and trained in the administration of epinephrine to any student believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction. The plan shall be outlined in the student handbook and discussed with staff and students during the first week of each school year;
2. Space for the proper care of students who become ill;
3. A written procedure, in accordance with guidelines established by the local school board, for responding to violent, disruptive, or illegal activities by students on school property or during a school sponsored activity; and
4. Written procedures to follow for the safe evacuation of persons with special physical, medical, or language needs who may need assistance to exit a facility.

#### Part VII – School and Community Communications

##### 8VAC20-132-250. School and community communications.

A. Each school shall promote communication and foster mutual understanding with parents and the community. Each school shall:

1. Involve parents, citizens, community agencies, and representatives from business and industry in developing, disseminating, and explaining the biennial school plan; on advisory committees; in curriculum studies; and in evaluating the educational program.
2. Provide annually to the parents and the community a school performance report card in a manner prescribed by the board and consistent with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 89-10, as amended). The school performance report card shall include designated information for the most recent three-year period. Such information shall be designated by the board to include indicators of the following: accountability, assessments, enrollment and demographics, college and career readiness, finance, learning environment, and teacher quality. Specific indicators shall include:
  - a. Virginia Assessment Program results by percentage of participation and proficiency and disaggregated by student reporting groups.
  - b. School performance, disaggregated by student reporting groups, on each school quality indicator described in 8VAC20-132-270 B, the school's overall performance category described in 8VAC20-132-270 E, and whether the school is identified for improvement under 8VAC20-132-300.
  - c. Accreditation status.
  - d. Attendance and absenteeism for students.
  - e. Information related to school safety to include incidents of crime and violence.
  - f. Information related to qualifications and educational attainment of the teaching staff.

1431 g. In addition, secondary schools' school performance report card shall include the  
1432 following:

1433 (1) Advanced Placement (AP) information to include percentage of students who  
1434 take AP courses and percentage of students who take AP tests;

1435 (2) International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge course information to include  
1436 percentage of students who are enrolled in IB or Cambridge programs and  
1437 percentage of students who receive IB or Cambridge Diplomas;

1438 (3) College-level course information to include percentage of students who take  
1439 college-level courses including dual enrollment courses;

1440 (4) Number and percentage of (i) graduates by diploma type as prescribed by the  
1441 board, (ii) certificates awarded to the senior class including high school equivalency  
1442 preparation program credentials approved by the board, and (iii) students who do  
1443 not complete high school;

1444 (5) As a separate category on the school performance report card, the number of  
1445 students obtaining board-approved industry certifications and passing state  
1446 licensure examinations, national occupational competency assessments and Virginia  
1447 workplace readiness skills assessments while still in high school and the number of  
1448 career and technical education completers who graduated; and

1449 (6) Number and percentage of dropouts.

1450 3. Cooperate with business and industry in formulating career and technical educational  
1451 programs and conducting joint enterprises involving personnel, facilities, training  
1452 programs, and other resources.

1453 4. Encourage and support the establishment or continuation of a parent-teacher  
1454 association or other organization and work cooperatively with it.

1455 B. At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide to its students' parents or  
1456 guardians information on the availability of and source for receiving:

1457 1. The learning objectives developed in accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-](#)  
1458 [70](#) to be achieved at their child's grade level or, in high school, a copy of the syllabus for  
1459 each of their child's courses, and a copy of the school division promotion, retention, and  
1460 remediation policies;

1461 2. The Standards of Learning applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and  
1462 the approximate date and potential impact of the child's next SOL testing; and

1463 3. An annual notice to students in all grade levels of all requirements for Standard  
1464 Diploma and Advanced Studies Diploma, and the board's policies on promotion and  
1465 retention as outlined in [8VAC20-132-30](#).

1466 The division superintendent shall report to the department compliance with this subsection  
1467 as required by [8VAC20-132-300](#).



Part VIII – School Accountability

8VAC20-132-260. Expectations for school accountability.

A. The system of school accountability provides a means of determining the quality and effectiveness of schools for the purposes of:

1. Building on strengths in schools and addressing specific areas needing improvement;
2. Driving continuous improvement in school achievement for all schools;
3. Identifying areas for technical assistance and the use of school improvement resources;
4. Providing a comprehensive picture of school quality information to the public; and
5. Informing the accreditation of schools by the board based on the conditions specified in 8VAC20-132-300.

B. The accountability system, which presents expectations and standards for schools and school divisions, shall:

1. Be used to publish the annual school performance report card, as referenced in 8VAC20-132-250, which provides information to parents, citizens, the community, businesses and other agencies, and the general public about school characteristics and about a comprehensive range of school indicators;
2. Fulfill the state accountability provisions for schools and divisions as presented in this part and the federal accountability provisions required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 89-10, as amended) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USC § 1400 et seq.); and
3. Identify schools, based on student outcome and growth measures, that require multi-year school support plans to improve performance on school quality indicators, which shall be taken into consideration in accrediting schools consistent with 8VAC20-132-300 alongside compliance with the standards for student achievement, instructional programs, school and instructional leadership, school facilities and safety, and school and community communications in this chapter.

8VAC20-132-270. Measurement of school quality for accountability.

A. Requirements for Indicator Selection. School quality for the purposes of accountability shall be measured for each school using multiple indicators as provided for in this part. School quality indicators include student academic outcomes and other factors that are associated with student learning.

Designation of school quality indicators by the board is based on the following criteria:

1. Research demonstrates that the indicator is related to student academic outcomes, such as academic achievement and success beyond high school;
2. Standardized procedures exist across schools and school divisions for collection of data used for the indicator so that the indicator is measured consistently and comparably statewide;
3. The data used in the indicator is reliable and valid;

1507 4. Performance in the indicator can be positively impacted through division and school-  
1508 level policies and procedures;

1509 5. The indicator meaningfully differentiates among schools based on progress of all  
1510 students and student reporting groups; and

1511 6. The indicator does not unfairly impact one type or group of schools or students.

1512 B. School Quality Indicators. Specific indicators designated by the board for accountability  
1513 purposes include the following:

1514 1. For all schools, academic achievement on board-approved Standards of Learning tests  
1515 in reading, mathematics, and science, as measured through a weighted mastery index  
1516 that gives full credit, or a weight of 1, in the numerator for students who attain grade-  
1517 level proficiency; partial credit, or a weight of less than 1, in the numerator for students  
1518 who do not attain grade-level proficiency; and bonus credit, or a weight greater than 1,  
1519 in the numerator for students who exceed grade-level proficiency;

1520 2. For elementary and middle schools, growth in reading and mathematics, as measured  
1521 by an individual student's year-over-year progress on the Standards of Learning tests;

1522 3. For high schools, graduation rate, which shall primarily be based on the four-year  
1523 adjusted cohort graduation rate as prescribed in the Elementary and Secondary  
1524 Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended) and may include other graduation rate measures  
1525 determined by the board consistent with federal requirements;

1526 4. Readiness for all students as measured by:

1527 a. for all schools, chronic absenteeism, defined as those who miss 10% or more of  
1528 the school year regardless of reason, excluding students receiving homebound  
1529 instruction, as defined in [8VAC20-132-10](#); and

1530 b. for high schools, college, career, and civic readiness as measured by the extent to  
1531 which a school's students demonstrate preparedness for postsecondary experiences  
1532 such as successful completion of advanced high school coursework, acquisition of  
1533 approved industry-recognized credentials, and meeting qualifications for military  
1534 service;

1535 5. For all schools, the progress of EL students toward achieving proficiency in English, as  
1536 measured by board-approved English language proficiency assessments consistent with  
1537 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended); and

1538 6. At the Board's discretion, additional indicators of school quality consistent with  
1539 subsection G of this section.

1540 C. EL and Transfer Students. When calculating the academic achievement and growth  
1541 indicators described in subsection B of this section for the purpose of school accountability, the  
1542 following tolerances for EL and transfer students shall apply:

1543 1. The scores of recently arrived EL students enrolled in Virginia public schools fewer  
1544 than 3 semesters may be removed from the calculation used to measure the academic  
1545 achievement and growth indicators consistent with the Elementary and Secondary  
1546 Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended). Completion of a semester shall be based on  
1547 school membership days. Membership days are defined as the days the student is

officially enrolled in a Virginia public school, regardless of days absent or present. For a semester to count as a completed semester, a student must have been in membership for a majority of the membership days of the semester. These semesters need not be consecutive. The scores of students who were formerly classified as English learners may be included in the calculation to measure the academic achievement and growth indicators for 4 years after the student ceases to be identified as an English learner consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended).

2. In accordance with the provisions of [8VAC20-132-40](#), all students who transfer into Virginia public schools are expected to take and pass all applicable SOL tests in the content areas in which they receive instruction.

3. All students who transfer within a school division shall have their scores counted in the calculation of the school's academic achievement and growth indicators. Students who transfer into a Virginia school from home instruction or from another Virginia school division, another state, or another country in grades kindergarten through 8 shall be expected to take all applicable SOL tests or additional tests approved by the board as outlined in [8VAC20-132-110](#). If the transfer takes place after the 20th instructional day following the opening of school, the scores on these tests may be used in calculating the academic achievement and growth indicators applied to school accountability.

4. Students who transfer into a Virginia middle or secondary school from home instruction or from another Virginia school division, another state, or another country and enroll in a course for which there is an end-of-course SOL test shall be expected to take the test or additional tests for that course approved by the board as outlined in [8VAC20-132-40](#) and [8VAC20-132-110](#). If the transfer takes place after 20 instructional hours per course have elapsed following the opening of school or beginning of the semester, if applicable, the scores on those tests may be used in calculating the academic achievement and growth indicators applied to school accountability.

5. Students who enroll on the first day of school and subsequently transfer to a school outside of the division for a total amount of instructional time equal to or exceeding 50% of a current school year or semester, whether the transfer was a singular or multiple occurrence, and return during the same school year shall be expected to take any applicable SOL test. The scores of those tests may be used in measuring the school academic achievement and growth indicators in the year in which the transfers occur.

D. School Performance Calculation and Weighting: The board shall meaningfully differentiate schools annually, beginning with the 2025-26 school year, using data collected from the 2024-2025 school year, based on the school quality indicators described in subsection B of this section.

Consistent with the requirements for the weighting of indicators for annual meaningful differentiation in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended), an overall score for each school shall be calculated by:

1. For elementary and middle schools, a weighted measure, consisting of the school quality indicators described in subsection B of this section, such that the academic

achievement mastery index comprises between 50 and 70 percent of a school's score and growth comprises up to 40 percent of a school's score.

2. For high schools, a weighted measure, consisting of the school quality indicators described in subsection B of this section, such that the academic achievement mastery index comprises between 40 and 60 percent of a school's score and the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate as prescribed in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended) comprises at least 15 percent of a school's score.

E. Public Reporting. To provide parents and the public with transparent and clear information about the overall performance of schools, the board shall use the calculation in subsection D of this section to assign schools into at least four performance categories on an annual basis. The scores associated with each performance category shall be determined by the board and posted on the portion of the Department's website relating to the school performance report card, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, using data collected from the 2024-2025 school year. A school's performance category shall be reported separately from its accreditation status and shall not affect a school's accreditation status. Further, the board shall review the scores associated with each performance category at least once every three years.

F. Student Groups: Any school identified for targeted support or additional targeted support under [8VAC20-132-280](#) based on the performance of a reporting group, including students belonging to each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners, shall have their overall performance category described in subsection E of this section lowered by one level.

G. Board responsibilities.

1. The board may adopt special provisions related to the measurement and use of a school quality indicator as prescribed by the board. The board may also alter the inclusions and exclusions from indicator calculations or school ratings by providing adequate notice to local school boards.

2. The board may add new assessments or discontinue the use of existing assessments in the Virginia Assessment Program by providing adequate notice to local school boards. As specified in the Standards of Quality, the board may adopt special provisions related to the administration and use of any SOL tests as applied to school quality indicators for any period during which the Standards of Learning content or assessments in that area are being revised and phased in. Notice shall be provided to local school boards regarding the special provisions prior to statewide administration of such tests.

3. The board may adopt valid and reliable measures of student growth to be used in calculating the growth indicators for reading and mathematics and in determining the progress of English learners toward English proficiency.

4. The board may incorporate additional school quality indicators into the calculation described in subsection D of this section, according to its criteria as specified in subsection A of this section.

H. Schools with non-tested grades. To use the school quality indicators to meaningfully differentiate among schools with grade configurations that do not house a grade or offer

courses for which SOL tests or additional tests approved by the board as outlined in [8VAC20-132-110](#) are administered, such schools shall be paired with another school in the division housing one or more of the grades in which SOL tests are administered. The pairing of such schools shall be made upon the recommendation of the division superintendent. The schools should have a "feeder" relationship and the grades should be contiguous.

[8VAC20-132-280. Identification of schools for improvement and required actions.](#)

A. Using the indicators and weights described in [8VAC20-132-270](#) and consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended), the Department shall identify schools as follows:

1. Comprehensive support. For school identification in the 2025-2026 school year, this category shall include at least the lowest-scoring 5% of schools based on the calculation described in [8VAC20-132-270 D](#). In subsequent identification years, the board shall set a minimum score on such calculation for identification for comprehensive support informed by the baseline established in the 2025-26 school year. In addition, any high school where the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, as prescribed in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended), is below 67% shall be identified for comprehensive support, starting with identification in the 2025-26 year. Comprehensive support schools shall be identified once every three years, and no school in comprehensive support shall be placed in the highest performance category described in [8VAC20-132-270 E](#).

2. Targeted support. For school identification in the 2025-26 school year and all subsequent identification years, this category shall include any school that is not identified for comprehensive support where the performance of any reporting group within a school using the calculation described in [8VAC20-132-270 D](#) is below the score by which schools are identified for comprehensive support. Targeted support schools shall be identified annually, and the performance of the reporting group shall be reflected in the school's performance category consistent with [8VAC20-132-270 F](#).

3. Additional targeted support. For school identification beginning in the 2028-29 school year, this category shall include any targeted support school where the performance of any reporting group within a school using the calculation described in [8VAC20-132-270 D](#) meets the criteria in subdivision 2 of this subsection after being identified for targeted support in the previous three years. Additional targeted support schools shall be identified once every three years, and the performance of the reporting group shall be reflected in the school's performance category consistent with [8VAC20-132-270 F](#).

Responses and actions to be taken by schools, under the leadership of division superintendents and school principals, school divisions, and the Department as a result of school identification are as prescribed in subsections B, C, and D of this section.

B. Targeted and Additional Targeted Support. The school and its school division shall work cooperatively, and in consultation with stakeholders including principals, teachers, and parents, to develop and implement a multi-year school support plan to improve student outcomes, which shall be incorporated as a component of the school's comprehensive, unified long-range plan in [8VAC20-132-300 B 9](#).

In developing and revising such plan, the school and its school division shall conduct a needs assessment to determine the issues and conditions that are likely contributing to the school's performance on the school quality indicators for all students and reporting groups; identify the resources the school may require to implement its plan and how any resource needs will be addressed; and develop a plan for implementation with goals, measurable objectives, evidence-based strategies, and actions designed to improve performance on the school quality indicators to exit targeted support or additional targeted support status.

School division and school staff shall:

1. Identify factors related to the school's performance on the school quality indicators described in [8VAC20-132-270 B](#) for all students and reporting groups as part of the school's comprehensive needs assessment;
2. Use the results of the comprehensive needs assessment to develop and revise the multi-year school support plan to include goals, measurable objectives, at least two evidence-based strategies, and actions that address the factors identified in the needs assessment that are related to the school's performance on the school quality indicators. The Department may implement an audit process to ensure compliance with this provision;
3. Review available resources for the school, which may include reviewing division-level and school-level budgeting; identify the resources the school may require to implement its multi-year support plan; and include how any resource needs will be addressed in such plan. The school's multi-year support plan shall be approved by the school division and local school board and published on the website for the school and school division. The Department may implement an audit process to ensure compliance with this provision;
4. Implement the evidence-based strategies and actions with fidelity;
5. Regularly evaluate the impact of plan implementation and evidence of the school's progress, monitor changes on the school quality indicators for all students and reporting groups, and make adjustments as warranted; and
6. Evaluate progress on the school quality indicators for all students and each reporting group at the end of each year and assess the results of the school support plan actions at the end of two years. If no progress is made within the two-year period on the school quality indicators, the plan shall be revised.

The board shall establish criteria for sufficient improvement on the school quality indicators for schools to exit additional targeted support. If the school is reidentified for additional targeted support after three years, the school must undergo a review conducted by the Department, or under its guidance, to identify further or alternative evidence-based strategies and actions to improve student achievement on the school quality indicators. Review of other data by the Department, or under its guidance, may occur based on the school's multi-year school support plan. Revised school support plans developed as a result of the review shall be reviewed through a Department-established process, which may include peer review by staff from other school divisions. Further, if such a school receives funding under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended), the school shall be



identified for comprehensive support and required to implement actions specified in subsection C of this section.

School divisions with schools identified for targeted or additional targeted support may request technical assistance from the Department.

#### C. Comprehensive Support.

1. Multi-year support plans. If a school is identified for comprehensive support, the school and school division shall work cooperatively, and in consultation with the Department and with stakeholders including principals, teachers and parents, to develop and implement a multi-year support plan to improve student outcomes, which shall be incorporated as a component of the school's comprehensive, unified, long-range plan in [8VAC20-132-300 B 9](#).

The Department shall develop a standardized template to develop multi-year support plans for schools in comprehensive support which divisions and schools must use. In developing such plan, the school and school division, in consultation with the Department, shall conduct a needs assessment to determine the issues and conditions that are likely contributing to the school's performance on the school quality indicators; identify the resources the school may require to implement its plan and how any resource needs will be addressed; and develop a plan for implementation with goals, measurable objectives, evidence-based strategies, and actions to achieve improvement on the school quality indicators and exit comprehensive support status.

In consultation and with support from Department staff, school division and school staff shall:

(a) Identify factors related to the school's performance on the school quality indicators described in [8VAC20-132-270 B](#) for all students and reporting groups as part of the school's comprehensive needs assessment;

(b) Use the results of the comprehensive needs assessment to develop a multi-year school support plan that includes goals, measurable objectives, at least four evidence-based strategies, and actions that address the factors in the needs assessment that are related to the school's performance on the school quality indicators;

(c) Review available resources for the school, which may include reviewing division-level and school-level budgeting; identify the resources the school may require to implement its multi-year support plan; and include how any resource needs will be addressed in such plan.

(d) Submit the completed multi-year support plan to the Department through the division superintendent for Department approval. The school's proposed plan shall also be provided to the local school board for review prior to submission;

(e) Amend the plan if the Department disapproves any portion thereof, as needed to secure the Department's approval and publish the approved plan on the website for the school and school division;



1755 (f) Implement the approved multi-year support plan's evidence-based strategies and  
1756 actions with fidelity; and

1757 (g) Meet regularly with Department staff to evaluate the impact of plan  
1758 implementation and monitor evidence of the school's progress, to track  
1759 improvement on the school quality indicators and whether the school is on track to  
1760 exit comprehensive support status, and to identify next steps, including whether  
1761 adjustments to the plan are warranted.

1762 2. Schools Failing to Meet Exit Criteria. The board shall establish criteria for sufficient  
1763 improvement on the school quality indicators for schools to exit comprehensive  
1764 support. If a school is reidentified for comprehensive support after implementing its  
1765 plan for three years, the multi-year support plan described in subdivision 1 shall be  
1766 revised with greater direction and intervention from the Department, including that the  
1767 Department will determine more rigorous actions, consistent with the Elementary and  
1768 Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as amended), to improve student outcomes on the  
1769 school quality indicators.

1770 The level of direction and intervention from the Department may include requiring the local  
1771 school division superintendent and the Superintendent of Public Instruction to enter into an  
1772 agreement that shall delineate the responsibilities for the school staff, school division staff, and  
1773 Department staff and shall include required goals, measurable objectives, evidence-based  
1774 strategies, and actions to improve student achievement and to improve performance on the  
1775 school quality indicators.

1776 D. Division responsibilities. In addition to facilitating the development of multi-year school  
1777 support plans, school divisions with schools identified for additional targeted and  
1778 comprehensive support under subsection A of this section shall create a division support plan  
1779 to improve student outcomes in such schools, which shall be incorporated into the long-range  
1780 comprehensive plan for the division in [8VAC20-132-300 B 9](#). Division support plans shall be  
1781 published on the website for the division. In developing and revising such plan, the school  
1782 division shall:

1783 1. Conduct a needs assessment to determine division-level issues and conditions that  
1784 are likely contributing to the school's performance on the school quality indicators;

1785 2. Review the resources available to identified schools compared to other schools in the  
1786 division and identify resources identified schools may require to implement their school  
1787 support plans. Such plans shall be informed by a division needs assessment and each  
1788 identified school's multi-year improvement plan;

1789 3. Include how the division will support effective implementation of the required actions  
1790 and evidence-based interventions within the school support plan for each identified  
1791 school in the division; and

1792 4. Regularly evaluate the impact of plan implementation and evidence of the division's  
1793 progress in implementing the plan, monitor changes on the school quality indicators for  
1794 all students and reporting groups in identified schools compared to those that are not  
1795 identified in the division, and make adjustments as warranted.

E. Once every three years, the board shall review the performance scores used to identify schools for comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support status in the school accountability system.

**8VAC20-132-290. Recognitions and rewards for school and division accountability.**

Schools and divisions shall be recognized by the board in accordance with guidelines the board shall establish for the Exemplar School Recognition Program to recognize (i) schools or school divisions that exceed board-established requirements or show continuous improvement on the school quality indicators and (ii) schools, school divisions, and school boards that implement effective, innovative practices. Such recognition may include:

1. Public announcements recognizing individual schools and divisions;
2. Tangible rewards;
3. Waivers of certain board regulations;
4. Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or
5. Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.

In addition to board recognition, local school boards shall adopt policies to recognize individual schools through public announcements, media releases, and participation in community activities when setting policy relating to schools and budget development, as well as other appropriate recognition.

**Part IX – School Accreditation**

**8VAC20-132-300. Accreditation.**

A. The board shall adopt a process to accredit schools based on the school accountability requirements and student outcome and growth measures, as well as compliance with the standards for student achievement, school instructional programs, school and instructional leadership, school facilities and safety, and school and community communications described in this chapter.

The Department shall develop guidance, templates, evidentiary exemplars, or rubrics to demonstrate how it will objectively measure school and division compliance with each of the standards of accreditation described in subsection B of this section. All such guidance shall be submitted to the board for approval, and final guidance shall be published on the Department's website and directly provided to local school divisions.

B. The principal of each new or existing school and the division superintendent shall annually document and report to the Department of Education, in a manner prescribed by the board, satisfactory evidence of the following:

1. The division's promotion and retention policies have been developed in accordance with the requirements of **8VAC20-132-40**;
2. Compliance with the requirements to offer courses that shall allow students to complete the graduation requirements in **8VAC20-132-50** and **8VAC20-132-51**, as applicable;
3. The school and school division's ability to offer the instructional program prescribed in **8VAC20-132-70** through **8VAC20-132-100**;

4. The school and school division's offering of history and social science and English, to include writing, as prescribed in [8VAC20-132-70 C](#);

5. Compliance with the leadership and staffing requirements of [8VAC20-132-200](#) through [8VAC20-132-230](#);

6. Compliance with the facilities and safety provisions of [8VAC20-132-240](#);

7. Compliance with the parental notification provisions of [8VAC20-132-250 B](#);

8. The Standards of Learning have been fully incorporated into the school division's curriculum in all accreditation-eligible schools, and the Standards of Learning material is being taught to all students eligible to take the SOL tests;

9. A long-range comprehensive plan for the division and a comprehensive, unified, long-range school plan has been prepared and implemented as required by the Standards of Quality in accordance with § [22.1-253.13:6 C](#) of the Code of Virginia for each division and school. The comprehensive plans shall be reviewed and updated as needed on an annual basis. Such plans shall be published on the website of each division and school and be available to students, parents, staff, and the public. Each comprehensive division and school plan shall be evaluated as part of the development of the next plan.

To develop such plans, schools shall conduct a comprehensive needs assessment, in collaboration with their school division staff, to identify needed actions to ensure continuous improvement for their students. For schools receiving comprehensive, targeted, or additional targeted support, results of the needs assessment shall be used to develop its multi-year school support plan, consistent with the requirements specified in [8VAC20-132-280](#), which shall be included in the school's comprehensive, unified, long-range plan;

10. Actions prescribed by [8VAC20-132-280](#) have been completed, and in the case of a school identified for comprehensive support, a corrective action plan for continuous improvement aligned to its multi-year school support plan demonstrates the support plan is being implemented with fidelity and the school is on track to improve student achievement, growth, and performance on other school quality indicators in [8VAC20-132-270](#) consistent with subsection C of this section; and

11. Actions taken to correct any noncompliance issues that the school reported in the previous year.

C. Accreditation designations. Effective no later than the academic year 2025-26, schools shall be assigned one of the following accreditation designations.

1. Fully Accredited.

a. For a school that is not identified for comprehensive support under [8VAC20-132-280](#) based on its performance on the school quality indicators in [8VAC20-132-270 B](#), once all required evidence in subsection B of this section is submitted to the Department, deemed satisfactory, and approved for compliance, the school shall be designated "Fully Accredited."

b. If a school is identified for comprehensive support, the required evidence in subsection B must be submitted to the Department, deemed satisfactory, and

approved for compliance along with a corrective action plan for continuous improvement. Such plan must demonstrate the school is faithfully implementing its Department-approved multi-year school support plan under [8VAC20-132-280](#) and include data showing the school's progress in improving student achievement, growth, and performance on other school quality indicators.

If the school is not among the lowest performing 5% on the school quality indicators in the current year (or has improved the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate above 67%, for schools identified due to low graduation rates), the school shall be designated "Fully Accredited." Further, the board may grant an exception and designate schools identified for comprehensive support as "Fully Accredited" who have not met the progress threshold using current year data, but are improving at a rate, using data from previous years, that would lead to the school meeting the exit criteria established by the board in [8VAC20-132-280](#) within the required timeline.

## 2. Conditionally Accredited.

a. If any piece of required evidence in subsection B of this section is submitted to the Department and determined to be unsatisfactory or noncompliant, a school shall be designated "Conditionally Accredited" until such school successfully submits additional evidence and is deemed to meet the conditions set forth in subsection B of this section by the Department.

b. If the corrective action plan for continuous improvement submitted by a school identified for comprehensive support does not demonstrate such school has improved from the lowest-performing 5% on the school quality indicators in the current year (or improved the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate above 67%, for schools identified due to low graduation rates) or is improving at a rate, using data from previous years, that would lead to the school meeting the exit criteria established by the board in [8VAC20-132-280](#) within the required timeline, the school shall be designated "Conditionally Accredited." If a school identified for comprehensive support is "Conditionally Accredited," the Department shall require, and approve, revisions to the school's multi-year support plan under [8VAC20-132-280 C](#) to include more rigorous actions to improve student achievement, growth, and performance on the school quality indicators.

## 3. Accreditation Denied.

a. If a school is designated "Conditionally Accredited" and the school or school division fails to submit additional documentation consistent with subsection A of this section, it may be designated by the board as "Accreditation Denied."

b. If a school identified for comprehensive support is designated "Conditionally Accredited" and fails to submit, amend, adopt, and implement a revised multi-year support plan with more rigorous actions, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall review the school for potential designation by the board as "Accreditation Denied" and shall present the results of such review to the board with recommendations. If the board determines that any such school is at not on track to improve student achievement, growth, and performance on other school quality

1919 indicators and meet the exit criteria in [8VAC20-132-280](#) due to its failure to adopt  
1920 and implement a multi-year school support plan and corrective action plan with  
1921 fidelity as required by this section, the board shall designate such school as  
1922 "Accreditation Denied."

1923 The local school board shall be given an opportunity to correct such failure, and if  
1924 successful in a timely manner, the school's "Accreditation Denied" designation may  
1925 be rescinded at the board's discretion.

1926 c. If the board determines that the local school board failed to demonstrate progress  
1927 in developing or implementing the corrective action plan on behalf of any school  
1928 designated "Accreditation Denied," the local school board shall enter into a  
1929 memorandum of understanding with the board, which shall delineate  
1930 responsibilities for the local school board, the board, school division staff, school  
1931 staff, and Department staff and shall also include required goals, measurable  
1932 objectives, and actions, based on a division-level needs assessment, to improve  
1933 student achievement and to improve performance on school quality indicators.  
1934 Department staff shall meet regularly with school division staff to monitor the  
1935 memorandum of understanding and corrective action plan, to track progress on the  
1936 school quality indicators, and to identify next steps. School divisions that do not  
1937 demonstrate evidence of progress under the memorandum of understanding and  
1938 the associated corrective action plan shall be subject to additional actions, which  
1939 may include more frequent meetings with Department staff, required technical  
1940 assistance, or appearance before the board.

1941 D. Any school in violation of this chapter shall be subject to appropriate action by the board  
1942 including withholding the school's accreditation rating.

1943 E. A school's accreditation rating may be withheld by action of the board for any school  
1944 found to be in violation of test security procedures pursuant to § [22.1-19.1](#) of the Code of  
1945 Virginia.

1946 F. Review cycles. If a school has been designated "Fully Accredited" for three consecutive  
1947 years and is not receiving comprehensive support as specified in [8VAC20-132-280](#), the board  
1948 shall review the accreditation status of the school every three years. If a school is identified for  
1949 comprehensive support during its triennial accreditation period, the school shall be required to  
1950 receive approval from the Department of its school support plan, consistent with [8VAC20-132-](#)  
1951 [280](#), and submit a corrective action plan to the Department consistent with subsection C of this  
1952 section each subsequent year within that triennial period.

1953 If the board finds that a school with multi-year accreditation status that is not identified for  
1954 comprehensive support would have been accredited every year of the triennial review period,  
1955 the board shall accredit the school for another three years. A multi-year accreditation status  
1956 shall not relieve any school or division of annual reporting requirements, nor shall it relieve any  
1957 school or division of annual review of school quality indicators used for school accountability  
1958 and subsequent actions as appropriate and provided for in [8VAC20-132-270](#) and [8VAC20-132-](#)  
1959 [280](#).

1960 G. Division-level reviews and corrective actions. Because a high proportion of schools  
1961 identified for support under [8VAC20-132-280](#) within a single division may be indicative of a  
1962 division-level failure to implement the Standards of Quality or other division-level action or  
1963 inaction, school divisions with at least 40% of their schools identified for comprehensive or  
1964 additional targeted support or 10 or more schools identified for comprehensive support will be  
1965 required to undergo a division-level academic and resource allocation review conducted by the  
1966 Department consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([P.L. 89-10](#), as  
1967 amended).

1968 After the completion of such review, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall present  
1969 the results of such review to the board with recommendations. Each local school board shall,  
1970 within a time period specified by the board, enter into a memorandum of understanding with  
1971 the board and shall subsequently submit to the board for approval a corrective action plan,  
1972 consistent with criteria established by the board, delineating responsibilities for the local school  
1973 board, the board, school division staff, school staff, and Department staff and setting forth  
1974 specific actions and a schedule designed to ensure that schools within its school division meet  
1975 the standards established by the board and improve performance on the school quality  
1976 indicators. If the board determines that the proposed correction action plan is not sufficient to  
1977 enable all schools within the division to meet the standards established by the board, the board  
1978 may return the plan to the local school board with directions to submit an amended plan  
1979 pursuant to board guidance. Such corrective action plans shall be part of the relevant school  
1980 division's comprehensive plan pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:6](#).

1981 Department staff shall meet regularly with school division staff to monitor the  
1982 memorandum of understanding and corrective action plan, to track progress on the school  
1983 quality indicators, and to identify next steps.

1984 School divisions that do not demonstrate evidence of progress under the memorandum of  
1985 understanding and the associated corrective action plan shall be subject to additional actions,  
1986 which may include more frequent meetings with Department staff, required technical  
1987 assistance, or appearance before the board.

1988 H. At-risk add-on funds. As provided in the appropriation act, if the board has required a  
1989 local school board to submit a corrective action plan pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:3 A](#) of the Code  
1990 of Virginia, either for the school division pursuant to a division level review or for any schools  
1991 within its division that have been designated as not meeting the standards as approved by the  
1992 board, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall determine and report to the board  
1993 whether each such local school board has met its obligation to develop and submit such  
1994 corrective action plan and is making adequate and timely progress in implementing the plan.  
1995 Additionally, if an academic review process undertaken pursuant to § [22.1-253.13:3 A](#) of the  
1996 Code of Virginia has identified actions for a local school board to implement, the  
1997 Superintendent of Public Instruction shall determine and report to the board whether the local  
1998 school board has implemented required actions. If the Superintendent of Public Instruction  
1999 certifies that a local school board has failed or refused to meet any of those obligations, the  
2000 board shall withhold payment of some or all at-risk add-on funds otherwise allocated to the  
2001 affected division pursuant to this allocation for the pending fiscal year. In determining the  
2002 amount of at-risk add-on funds to be withheld, the board shall take into consideration the



extent to which such funds have already been expended or contractually obligated. The local school board shall be given an opportunity to correct its failure and, if successful in a timely manner, may have some or all of its at-risk add-on funds restored at the board's discretion.

I. Additional remedies. The board may exercise its authority to seek school division compliance with school laws pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Code of Virginia when any school within a division receives an accreditation designation other than "Fully Accredited."

In accordance with the Standards of Quality at § 22.1-253.13:3 A of the Code of Virginia, if the board determines that a school division has failed or refused, and continues to fail or refuse, to comply with any of the Standards of Quality, including the requirement for local school boards to maintain schools designated as "Accredited" as provided in § 22.1-253.13:3 A of the Code of Virginia, the board may petition the circuit court having jurisdiction in the school division to mandate or otherwise enforce compliance with such standard, including the development or implementation of any required corrective action plan that a local school board has failed or refused to develop or implement in a timely manner.

J. The board shall provide a process for a local school board to appeal an accreditation designation under subsection C of this section for any school in the division. The board shall grant such appeals only in limited circumstances that warrant special consideration. In order to appeal such designation the local school board shall submit a request to the board, signed by the chairman of the school board and the division superintendent, explaining why the school board is appealing the designation and shall include documentation supporting the request.

#### [8VAC20-132-310. Waivers and alternative accreditation plans.](#)

A. Except as specified in this section, the board may grant, for a period of up to five years, a waiver of requirements of this chapter that are not mandated by state or federal law or designed to promote health or safety. The board may grant all or a portion of the request for a waiver and designate conditions as appropriate. Waivers of requirements in [8VAC20-132-40](#), [8VAC20-132-50](#), [8VAC20-132-51](#), [8VAC20-132-70](#), and [8VAC20-132-260](#) through [8VAC20-132-320](#) shall not be granted, and no waiver may be approved for a program that violates the Standards of Quality.

B. Waivers of some of the requirements of this chapter may be granted by the board based on submission of a request from the division superintendent and chairman of the local school board. The request shall include documentation of the justification and need for the waiver. In no event shall waivers be granted to the requirements of Part III ([8VAC20-132-40](#) et seq.) of this chapter except that the board may provide for the waiver of certain graduation requirements and the subsequent award of a high school diploma in [8VAC20-132-50](#) and [8VAC20-132-51](#) upon (i) the board's initiative; (ii) the request of a local school board; or (iii) upon the request of the parent of any high school senior who died in good standing prior to graduation during the student's senior year. Such waivers shall be granted only for good cause and shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. The board shall develop guidelines for implementing this chapter.

Any student with a disability whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan documents that the student cannot successfully complete training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or the use of automated external defibrillators, including hands-



on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as required for graduation in [8VAC20-132-50 B 2](#) and [8VAC20-132-50 C 2](#) and [8VAC20-132-51 B 2](#) and [8VAC132-51 C 2](#) shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

C. Waivers for innovative or school experimental programs. With the approval of the local school board, schools seeking to implement experimental or innovative programs, or both, that are not consistent with this chapter shall submit a waiver request to the board for evaluation and approval prior to implementation. The request must include the following:

1. Purpose and objectives of the experimental or innovative programs;
2. Description and duration of the programs;
3. Anticipated outcomes;
4. Number of students affected;
5. Evaluation procedures; and
6. Mechanisms for measuring goals, objectives, and student academic achievement.

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 using different graduation rate measures than those specified in [8VAC20-132-270 B](#). 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 [8VAC20-132-50](#) or [8VAC20-132-51](#).

As set forth in the Standards of Quality and according to department procedures, any school board may request the board for release from state regulations or, on behalf of one or more of its schools, for approval of an Individual School Accreditation Plan for the evaluation of the performance of one or more of its schools as authorized for schools enumerated in this subsection, based on special circumstances.

[8VAC20-132-320. Effective dates.](#)

A. Graduation requirements.

1. The graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2013–2014 school year and prior to the 2018–2019 school year shall be those provided in [8VAC20-132-50](#).
2. The graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade for the first time in the 2018–2019 school year and beyond shall be those provided in [8VAC20-132-51](#).
3. The graduation requirements applicable to students transferring into a Virginia high school for the first time shall be as determined by [8VAC20-132-60 G](#).

B. Locally awarded verified credits.

2086 1. Locally awarded verified credits conferred for English, mathematics, laboratory  
2087 science, and history and social science for students entering the ninth grade for the first  
2088 time prior to the 2018–2019 school year shall be as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 3 a](#).  
2089 2. Locally awarded verified credits conferred for English, mathematics, laboratory  
2090 science, and history and social science for students entering the ninth grade for the first  
2091 time in 2018–2019 or thereafter shall be as provided in [8VAC20-132-110 B 3 b](#).  
2092 C. Academic and career planning.  
2093 1. The requirements for academic and career planning prescribed in [8VAC20-132-140 B](#)  
2094 shall be effective beginning with the 2013–2014 academic year and through the 2017–  
2095 2018 academic year.  
2096 2. The requirements for Academic and Career Plans prescribed in [8VAC20-132-140 C](#)  
2097 shall be effective beginning with the 2018–2019 academic year.  
2098 D. Unless otherwise specified, the remainder of this chapter shall become effective  
2099 beginning with the 2025-26 academic year.