



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

July 13, 2012

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: 2012 General Assembly Revisions to the Standards of Quality**

The 2012 General Assembly approved revisions to the *Standards of Quality (SOQ)*, §§ [22.1-253.13:1](#) through [22.1-253.13:9](#) of the *Code of Virginia*. The revisions became effective July 1, 2012, and were made to Standards One, Three, Four, and Nine.

[HB  
1181](#)

Amends Standard One (§ [22.1-253.13:1](#)) by requiring local school divisions to provide reading intervention services to students in grade three who demonstrate deficiencies on their individual performance on the *Standards of Learning* reading test or any reading diagnostic test that meets criteria established by the Department of Education. The local school division, in its discretion, is required to provide such reading intervention services prior to promoting a student from grade three to grade four. Reading intervention services may include the use of: 1) special reading teachers; 2) trained aides; 3) volunteer tutors; 4) computer-based reading tutorial programs; 5) aides to instruct in-class groups; and 6) extended instructional time.

The state budget ([2012-2014 Appropriation Act](#)) includes language that requires local school divisions to partner with the parents of third-grade students who demonstrate reading deficiencies and discuss with them developed plans for remediation and testing. The language also requires that the results of all reading diagnostic tests and reading remediation be discussed with the student and with the student's parent prior to a student being promoted to fourth grade.

[HB  
1184](#)

Amends Standard One (§ [22.1-253.13:1](#)) by requiring local school boards and community colleges to develop agreements allowing high school students to complete an associate's degree or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies from a community college concurrent with a high school diploma. The bill provides that students and their parents shall be notified of such agreements.

The bill also amends Standard Nine (§ [22.1-253.13:9](#)) by requiring the Department of Education, in its guidelines for calculating an award under the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program, to take into account the number of high school students who earn the one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies or an associate's degree from a community college concurrent with a high school diploma.

[HB  
1215](#)

Amends Standard Three (§ [22.1-253.13:3](#)) to require the Board of Education to promulgate regulations establishing standards for the accreditation of virtual schools that enroll students full

time.

[HB 552 SB 387](#) Amends Standard Three (§ [22.1-253.13:3](#)) to replace the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability.”

[HB 1061 SB 489](#) Amends Standard Four (§ [22.1-253.13:4](#)) by consolidating the number of Board of Education-approved diplomas and other changes. The bills address: 1) a career and technical education credential within the Standard Diploma; 2) a requirement for the completion of one virtual course to earn a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma; and 3) accommodations for students with disabilities to earn a Standard Diploma. The bills eliminate the Modified Standard Diploma, Standard Technical Diploma, Advanced Technical Diploma and General Achievement Diploma. The General Achievement Adult High School Diploma is created with additional requirements related to career and technical education.

More information on this legislation can be found at:  
<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/accreditation/index.shtml>.

[Attachment A](#) includes all nine standards of the *Standards of Quality* with the changes effective July 1, 2012, highlighted with italicized and underlined text. [Attachment B](#) includes the state budget language related to Early Reading Intervention and to SOQ-related staffing flexibility provisions.

You may find the final legislative reports for the 2012 General Assembly session on the Department’s Web site at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/legislation/> and in Superintendent’s Memorandum #138-12, dated May 25, 2012, which provides information regarding legislation passed by the 2012 General Assembly at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents\\_memos/2012/138-12.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2012/138-12.shtml).

Please contact the Office of Policy at (804) 225-2092, or by e-mail at [policy@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:policy@doe.virginia.gov), if you need additional information or have questions about these bills.

PIW/MJP/kfg

Attachments:

- a. [Code of Virginia – Standards of Quality – Effective July 12, 2012](#) (Word)
- b. [Excerpts from the 2012-2014 Appropriation Act – Item 139 – Chapter 3 – 2012 Special Session I of the General Assembly](#) (Word)