Attachment A

Superintendent’s Memo #082-21

March 26, 2021

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

# REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

**For the 2022-2023 accreditation year based on data from the 2021-2022 school year**

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (§§ 22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review prior to **June 30**. This allows time for review by the Board at the beginning of the school year in which the plan is to be implemented.

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

*D. Alternative accreditation plans. Subject to the provisions of subsection B of this section, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in § 22.1-26 of the Code of Virginia, Governor's schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment may seek approval of an alternative accreditation plan from the board Special purpose schools with alternative accreditation plans shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8VAC20-131-50 or 8VAC20-131-51.*

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

The *Guidelines Governing the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states:

In accordance with the provisions of 8VAC20-131-420(B) of the standards*,* *waivers 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 accordance with 8VAC20-131-420, waivers of requirement in [8VAC20-131-30](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section30/), [8VAC20-131-50](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section50/), [8VAC20-131-51](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section51/), [8VAC20-131-70](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section70/), and [8VAC20-131-370](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section370/) through [8VAC20-131-430](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title8/agency20/chapter131/section430/) shall not be granted, and no waiver may be approved for a program that violates the Standards of Quality.

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

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

# ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN TEMPLATE

**School Name:**

**Division Name:**

**School Address:**

**Contact Person:**

**Phone Number:**

**Email:**

**Grade Levels Served:**

**Number of Students Enrolled by Grade:**

1. Describe the characteristics of the student population and the purpose of the school. Specifically, what is the special purpose of the school that qualifies it for this flexibility? How are students identified for attendance at this school?
2. Indicate which accreditation indicators, as they are currently calculated, are not an appropriate measure of the school’s success.

Achievement Indicators in Core areas of Mathematics, English, and Science

Achievement Gaps in Mathematics and Reading

Graduation Completion Index

Dropout Rate

Chronic Absenteeism

College, Career and Civic Readiness

1. Why are the current measures for the indicators selected in question 2 not appropriate, as they are currently calculated, for this school?

1. For each of the indicators listed in question 2, clearly describe the alternate means of evaluating the indicator that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school (include how state assessments are used for the first two indicators, if they are selected). Please include sample calculations to describe how the alternate data will be evaluated for each indicator.

Please note, for academic achievement and achievement gap indicators, each subject must be evaluated separately (i.e., one calculation combining all subjects cannot be used for the mathematics, reading and science achievement indicator).

1. What programs and planning activities are in place that will allow students to be successful when they return to a regular school setting, as appropriate? If not appropriate, explain why.

1. Indicate the waivers requested for accrediting standards that are not being met, and the rationale for these waivers.