

## STANDARDS OF LEARNING TESTS THE VIRGINIA ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### I. Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests and Verified Units of Credit

#### I. General.

The Virginia Board of Education has established educational objectives known as the Standards of Learning, which form the core of Virginia's educational program, and other education objectives, which together are designed to ensure the development of the skills that are necessary for success in school and in preparation for life in the years beyond.

The Albemarle County School Board has developed and implemented a program of instruction that is aligned to the Standards of Learning and that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Virginia Board of Education. It awards diplomas to all secondary school students, including students who transfer from nonpublic schools or from home instruction, who meet the requirements prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education and meet such other requirements as are prescribed by the School Board and approved by the Virginia Board of Education.

The Albemarle County School Board requires an additional local high school graduation requirement pursuant to Section 8 VAC 20-131-50 (A) of the Board of Education's Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia. The Freshman Seminar course will count as one of the current VDOE elective credit requirements for graduation and will not increase the number of credits a student needs to earn a diploma. Transfer students will not be required to take the course if they transfer after the ninth-grade year. However, the course will have a non-credit bearing mentoring component that will extend into tenth through twelfth grade.

The Albemarle County School Board awards diplomas and certificates in accordance with state laws and regulations. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from high school are those in effect when the student enters ninth grade for the first time.

#### Virginia Assessment Program

In kindergarten through eighth grade, where ~~Standards of Learning (SOL)~~ the administration of Virginia Assessment Program tests are required by the Virginia Board of Education, each student is expected to take the ~~SOL~~ tests following instruction. Students who are accelerated shall take the test aligned with the highest grade level, following instruction in the content.s of the grade level enrolled or the tests for the grade level of the content received in instruction. 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 8VAC 20-131-30. Schools ~~will~~ use the ~~SOL~~ test ~~assessment~~ results in kindergarten through eighth grade as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students.

Each student in middle and secondary school shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction. ~~Students who enroll in high school as freshmen before July 1, 2018, as sophomores before July 1, 2019, as juniors before July 1, 2020 or as seniors before July 1, 2021 are required to earn standard and verified units of credit as specified in the regulations of the Board of Education and as described below. The superintendent certifies 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 will be awarded a verified unit of credit in that course in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-110. Students may earn verified credits in any courses for which end-of-course SOL tests are available. Students are not 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.

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

Any student identified as an English Learner (EL) participates in the Virginia Assessment Program. A school-based committee convenes and makes 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, history, and social science.

## Definitions

### Authentic Performance Assessment

An "Authentic Performance Assessment" is a test that complies with guidelines adopted by the Virginia Board of Education that requires students to perform a task or create a product that is typically scored using a rubric.

### Standard Unit of Credit

The "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. ~~for graduation is based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction and successful completion of the requirements of the course.~~ A standard unit of credit may also be awarded based on a waiver of the 140-clock hour requirement as provided in Policy IKFD, Alternative Paths to Attaining Standard Units of Credit.

### Verified Unit of Credit

A “verified 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.
2. Achieves a passing score on an additional test, as defined in 8 VAC 20-131-5, as 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.
4. Meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit in history and social science by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on an authentic performance assessment that complies with guidelines adopted by the Board of Education.
5. 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 that complies with guidelines adopted by the Board of Education. for graduation is based on a minimum of 140 clock hours of instruction, successful completion of the requirements of the course, and the achievement by the student of a passing score on the end of course SOL test ~~doe~~ that course or additional tests as described below.

~~A student may also earn a verified unit of credit by the following methods:~~

- ~~• 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 SOL 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 of Education.~~
- ~~• upon waiver of the 140 clock hour requirement according to the Board of Education’s Guidelines for Graduation Requirements; Local Alternative Paths to Standard Units of Credit and Policy IKFD Alternative Paths to Attaining Standard Units of Credit qualified students who have received a standard unit of credit will be permitted to sit for the relevant SOL test to earn a verified credit without having to meet the 140 clock hour requirement.~~

Students may also earn verified credits by taking alternative tests to the SOL assessment. Such tests may only be those approved by the Virginia Board of Education, and the student may earn verified credits only by achieving that score established by the Board of Education.

~~Participation in SOL testing program by students with disabilities will be prescribed by provisions of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. All students with disabilities will be assessed with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments where necessary.~~

~~All students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) will participate in the SOL testing program. A school based committee will convene and make determinations regarding the participation level of the LEP students. In kindergarten through eighth grade, LEP students may~~

~~be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in the areas of writing, science, and history and social science.~~

### Virginia Assessment Program

~~The “Virginia Assessment Program” is 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 of Education.~~

## ~~H. Graduation Requirements~~

### ~~A. Generally~~

~~The School Board awards diplomas to all secondary school students, including students who transfer from nonpublic schools or from home instruction, who meet the requirements prescribed by the Board of Education and meet such other requirements as are prescribed by the School Board and approved by the Board of Education.~~

### ~~B. Types of Diplomas and Certificates~~

~~The Albemarle County School Board will award the following types of diplomas and certificates in accordance with state laws and regulations.~~

#### ~~1. Standard Diploma~~

~~To graduate with a Standard Diploma, a student must earn at least 22 standard units of credit by passing required courses and electives, and earn at least six verified credits by passing end-of-course SOL tests or other assessments approved by the Board of Education.~~

~~Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2013-2014, a student must also:~~

- ~~▪ Earn a board-approved career and technical education credential to graduate with a Standard Diploma; and~~
- ~~▪ Successfully complete one virtual course, which may be non-credit bearing.~~

~~The school counselor can advise on available courses to fulfill the requirements for a Standard Diploma.~~

<b>Standard Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.B)</b>			
<b>Discipline Area</b>	<b>Standard Credits: effective with first-time ninth graders in 2003- 2004 through 2010-2011</b>	<b>Standard Credits: effective with first-time ninth graders in 2011- 2012 and beyond</b>	<b>Verified Credits: effective for first-time ninth graders in 2003- 2004 and beyond</b>
English	4	4	2
Mathematics	3	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	3	1
History & Social Sciences	3	3	1
Health & Physical Education	2	2	-
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1	-	-
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	-	2	-
Economics and Personal Finance	-	1	-
<u>Electives</u>	6	4	-
Student Selected Test	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>

2. Advanced Studies Diploma

To graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma, a student must earn at least 24 or 26 standard units of credit, depending on when he or she entered ninth grade, and at least nine verified units of credit:

~~▪ Students who entered ninth grade for the first time during and after 2011-2012 must earn at least 26 standard units of credit.~~

~~▪ Students who entered ninth grade before 2011-2012 must earn at least 24 standard units of credit.~~

~~Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2013-2014, a student must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be non-credit bearing, to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma.~~

~~The school counselor can advise on available courses to fulfill the requirements for an Advanced Diploma.~~

<b>Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.C)</b>			
<b>Discipline Area</b>	<b>Standard Credits: effective with first-time ninth graders in 2003- 2004 through 2010-2011</b>	<b>Standard Credits: effective with first- time ninth graders in 2011-2012 and beyond</b>	<b>Verified Credits- effective with ninth graders in 2000- 2001 and beyond</b>
English	4	4	2
Mathematics	4	4	2
Laboratory Science	4	4	2
History & Social Sciences	4	4	2

Foreign Languages	3	3	-
Health & Physical Education	2	2	-
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1	1	-
Economics and Personal Finance	-	1	-
Electives	2	3	-
Student Selected Test	-	-	1
Total	24	26	9

### 3. ~~Modified Standard Diploma~~

~~The Modified Standard Diploma is intended for certain students at the secondary level who have a disability and are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Eligibility and participation in the program are determined by the student's IEP team and the student, when appropriate. Decisions of eligibility and participation may be made at any point after the student's eighth grade year. Written consent from parent/guardian must be obtained for a student to choose this diploma program.~~

**NOTE:** ~~The Modified Standard Diploma will not be an option for students with disabilities who enter the ninth grade for the first time beginning in 2013-2014. Credit accommodations allow students with disabilities who previously would have pursued a Modified Standard Diploma to earn a Standard Diploma.~~

~~The student must:~~

- ~~▪ be allowed to pursue a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma at any time throughout his or her high school career;~~
- ~~▪ not be excluded from courses and tests required to earn a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma; and~~
- ~~▪ pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments as prescribed by the Board;~~

- For students who entered the ninth grade prior to 2000-01, the literacy and numeracy competency assessments were the reading and mathematics subtests of the LPT.
- For students who entered the ninth grade in 2000-01 and beyond, the literacy and numeracy competency assessments are the eighth grade English Reading test and the eighth grade Mathematics SOL test (Board action – November 30, 2000).
- The Board also approved four additional substitute assessments to satisfy the literacy and numeracy requirements for students pursuing a Modified Standard Diploma.
  - Substitute Numeracy and Literacy Tests for the Modified Standard Diploma Superintendent's Memo – Informational #53, March 5, 2004
  - Cut Scores for Substitute Tests for the Modified Standard Diploma Superintendent's Memo – Informational #103, May 21, 2004

<b>Modified Standard Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.D)</b>	
<b>Discipline Area</b>	<b>Standard Credits</b>
English	4
Mathematics	3
Laboratory Science	2
History & Social Sciences	2
Health & Physical Education	2
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1
<u>Electives</u>	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>

#### 4. Applied Studies Diploma

An Applied Studies Diploma will be awarded to each disabled student who successfully completes the requirements set forth in his/her IEP, but does not meet the requirements for other diplomas.



~~The school board will notify the parent of students with disabilities who have an IEP and who fail to meet the requirements for graduation of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-213 et seq.~~

~~5. — Certificates of Program Completion~~

~~A Certificate of Program Completion will be awarded to any student who completes a prescribed program of studies defined by the local school board but who is not eligible to receive a standard, advanced studies, modified standard, or applied studies diploma.~~

~~The school board will notify the parent of students who fail to graduate or who fail to achieve the number of verified units of credit required for graduation as provided in the Standards for Accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the student who does not graduate or achieve such verified units of credit is a student for whom English is a second language, the school board will notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-5.~~

~~6. — General Educational Development (GED)~~

~~a. — Generally~~

~~The Board of Education has established a program of testing for general educational development (GED) through which persons may earn a high school equivalency certificate or a General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD). The following persons may participate in the testing program:~~

- ~~• persons who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting the school attendance requirements set forth in Va. Code § 22.1-254;~~
- ~~• persons 16 years of age or older who have been instructed by their parents in their home pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-254.1 and who have completed such home school instruction;~~
- ~~• persons who have been excused from school attendance pursuant to subsections B and C of Va. Code § 22.1-254;~~
- ~~• persons for whom an Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP) has been granted pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § 22.1-254; and~~

- ~~persons 16 through 18 years of age who are housed in adult correctional facilities and who are actively pursuing a GED certificate but who are not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § 22.1-254;~~
- ~~persons 16 years of age or older who have been expelled from school pursuant to Va. Code §§ 22.1-277.06 through 22.1-277.08; and~~
- ~~persons required by court order to participate in the testing program.~~

~~Under no circumstances will anyone under the age of 16 be eligible for the testing program.~~

~~Only those entities designated by the Department of Education as official Virginia GED testing centers will determine whether an individual is eligible to take GED tests. GED tests will be administered only at official Virginia GED testing centers or addendum test sites that have been approved by the Virginia GED Administrator and the GED Testing Service.~~

~~Official test scores may be accepted from an approved state agency, an official jurisdiction responsible for overseeing GED testing, or an official GED testing center outside of Virginia.~~

~~An individual may take the full battery of tests up to three times during a calendar year. Test scores may be combined in accordance with GED Testing Service policy.~~

~~b. General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD)~~

~~A General Achievement Adult High School Diploma is intended to provide a diploma option for individuals who are:~~

- ~~at least 18 years old and not enrolled in public school;~~
- ~~not otherwise be subject to Virginia's compulsory school attendance requirements.~~

~~In order to be awarded a General Achievement Adult High School Diploma, candidates must:~~

1. ~~earn a total of twenty credits including the following:~~
  - ~~four credits in English; three credits in mathematics;~~
  - ~~two credits in science;~~
  - ~~two credits in history and social sciences; and~~
  - ~~nine credits in electives with at least two sequential in area of concentration or specialization.~~

~~The required credits may be earned by enrolling in:~~

- ~~a public school if the candidate meets the age requirements;~~
- ~~a community college or other institution of higher education;~~
- ~~an adult high school program; or~~

- ~~correspondence, distance learning, and online courses.~~

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2. ~~Achieve a passing score on a high school equivalency (HSE) examination approved by the Board, currently the only approved HSE examination in Virginia is the GED test.~~

~~High School Equivalence Credential (HSE)~~

~~Currently, the only Virginia Board approved high school equivalency examination in Virginia is the General Education Development (GED) test, developed by the American Council of Education to enable persons who have not graduated from high school to demonstrate the attainment of abilities normally associated with the completion of a high school program of study. Delivered in a computer based format, the test consists of four content areas: Reasoning through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies.~~

~~GED certificates may be issued to individuals who:~~

- ~~are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in a public or private high school; and~~
- ~~achieve the minimum passing score requirements set by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education or such higher score requirements that may be established by the Virginia Board of Education.~~

3. ~~Successfully complete an education or training program designated by the board approved career and technical education credential such as the successful completion of an industry certification (e.g., career readiness certificate), a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment.~~

Amended: April 24, 2008; October 10, 2013; September 11, 2014; May 12, 2016; September 8, 2016

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-253.13:4  
8 VAC 20-131-5

8 VAC 20-131-30

8 VAC 20-131-40

8 VAC 20-131-50

8 VAC 20-131-51

8 VAC 20-131-110

Guidelines for Graduation Requirements; Local Alternative Paths to Standard Units of Credit (Virginia Board of Education Oct. 2015)

Cross Refs:	<u>IAA</u>	<u>Notification of Learning Objectives</u>
	<u>IKFA</u>	<u>Locally Awarded Verified Credits</u>
	<u>IKFD</u>	<u>Alternative Paths to Attaining Standard Units of Credit</u>
	<u>IKH</u>	<u>Retaking SOL Assessments</u>