

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

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 and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to August 1 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. 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 to meet the graduation and completion index benchmark. 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.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.*

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

Date Approved by the Local School Board

Signature – Chairman of the School Board

Submission Date

Signature – Division Superintendent

ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN TEMPLATE

School Name: Community Public Charter School

Division Name: Albemarle County Public Schools

School Address: 1200 Forest St, Charlottesville, VA 22903

Contact Person: Chad Ratliff

Phone Number: 434-296-3090

Email: cratliff@k12albemarle.org

Proposed Duration of Plan: 3 years

Grade Levels Served: 6-8

Number of Students Enrolled by Grade: 6th – 26, 7th – 18, 8th - 12

1. Explain why the purpose and rationale of the individual accreditation plan justifies the need for an individual alternative accreditation plan.

The purpose of Community Public Charter School’s alternative accreditation plan is to emphasize growth of students who do not pass Virginia’s Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. Traditional assessments such as the SOL tests are not always reflective of their academic growth and achievement. Not only will we emphasize and track individual student growth for each year, we will be able to use growth measures over more than one year to validate continued success and progress. CPCS has a student population under 60 students, and as a result there are only a small number of students across various membership groups. Alternative accreditation allows us to focus on the growth of these students.

2. Describe the characteristics of the student population.

Community Public Charter School serves students in grades 6-8 who may benefit from a smaller environment with an arts-infused focus. All Albemarle County Public School students entering grades 6-8 are eligible to apply for enrollment. Students are identified by their teachers, counselors, administrators or parents and with parent/guardian support, apply for admission to CPCS. We accept, but do not specifically target, students who are identified as needing special education services. If there are more applicants than spaces, students will be selected by lottery. Current enrollment demographics provide for a fully diverse school with percentages within the range of demographics found in other Albemarle County Public Middle Schools.

Group	Number of Students	Percent of Population
Economically Disadvantaged	15	26.8%
Special Education	8	14.3%
English Learner	2	3.6%
African American or Black	1	1.8%
Hispanic	5	8.9%
Multi-race	7	12.5%
White	42	75%

3. Describe how the program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a comprehensive curriculum to ensure success in achieving the Standards of Learning.
Community Public Charter School uses an inter-disciplinary, project-based approach to instruction. Students apply their own interests to their projects that center around mastering the Virginia Standards of Learning. Projects regularly incorporate technology, design, and the arts. There is a focus on communication, collaboration, and social-emotional learning. Students regularly reflect on their progress mastering academic and social-emotional competencies. Feedback is provided based on master of standards, approaching mastery of standards, or not mastered standards. Students work continuously until they have mastered each standard. Students are instructed in the core content areas just as they would be at one of the comprehensive middle schools in Albemarle County.

4. Describe the strategies used to evaluate student progress—include standards-based academic achievement measures.
Student progress is measured through reading and math MAP testing, which is administered at the end of August and again in May to monitor growth. Albemarle County alternative assessments will be administered in appropriate grade-level courses. Students will be regularly assessed on mastery of Virginia Standards of Learning standards. Math progress will be monitored through IXL online practice.

5. Describe how students will be taught by teachers who meet the Board of Education’s licensure requirements for instructional personnel.
Community Public Charter School is staffed with highly qualified teachers certified to teach all core areas as well as a full time art teacher. Currently, teacher/pupil ratio is 12-1 in core classes. We have one full-time special education teacher.

6. For each of the following categories, describe measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school:
 - a. Academic achievement measures for all students;

The alternative accreditation index model will hold the Community Public Charter School accountable for increasing the achievement levels of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) in reading and mathematics and use science and history and social science and other indicators of school and student performance that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school as value-added components. The plan includes academic achievement measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school.

Student achievement is a fundamental component in determining the accreditation status of Virginia’s public schools. The alternative accreditation index model will measure student achievement based on students’ progress in moving from proficient to advanced levels of performance on Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. The index will have a primary focus on reading and mathematics achievement. The index is based on a set of core achievement objectives and measures (SOL test scores and other indicators).

An alternative accreditation index score (0 to 150) will be calculated primarily based on the total number of students performing at each proficiency level in reading and mathematics.

Standards of Learning index points are assigned for student performance on the SOL tests by multiplying the number of student scores at each level by the points awarded, adding the total points earned, and dividing by the total number of student scores. Additional index points may be earned for meeting performance measures in the core “other academic” and optional objectives categories.

The alternative accreditation index score for each content area (English and mathematics) is calculated by combining the SOL index score and the additional index points.

An alternative accreditation composite index score of at least 75 points must be earned in both reading and mathematics in grades 6-8 to achieve *Fully Accredited* status. Due to the small student population, a composite pass rate is necessary to create a larger number of student scores upon which to calculate state accreditation.

Basis for Accreditation:

Strategies used to evaluate student progress are aligned to the mission and purpose of our school and include academic achievement measures for all students.

If the Community Public Charter school does not meet full accreditation based on the SOA, then for the purposes of calculating state accreditation, test results for all students in reading and mathematics will be included as follows:

- A scale score of 500-600 will be weighted at 150 points
- A scale score of 426-499 will be weighted at 120 points
- A scale score of 375-425 will be weighted at 100 points

Additionally the school will receive recognition in the calculation for core or other academic indicators for improvement in the following categories measuring reading:

- MAP growth in reading
- Curriculum Based Measurements

The school will receive recognition in the calculation for core other academic indicators for improvement in the following categories measuring math:

- Algebra and Geometry passing SOL scores from Murray High School
- Science passing SOL scores from Murray High School
- MAP growth in math
- IXL Math
- Curriculum Based Measurements

MAP is a research based assessment program that is nationally normed and provides a “Rasch unIT” (RIT) score as well as a growth goal target score. MAP assessments provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on his/her unique learning path. It is information teachers can use in the classroom to help every child, every day. Understanding each student’s academic level gives teachers the power to help them excel. MAP computerized adaptive assessments are the tools that make it possible to build curriculum and meet students’ needs, one child at a time. RIT is a unit of measure that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement. RIT scores create an equal-interval scale. This score is independent of the age or grade of the student, and reflects the instructional level at which the student is currently performing.

Growth is defined as the change in a student's score and improvement in achievement over time.

Individual growth targets are defined as the average amount of RIT growth observed for students who started the year with the same RIT score as the individual student.

The spring assessment in both reading and math will provide evidence of the number of students who are able to meet or exceed their growth goal.

Other Academic Indicators :

- Students in “Recovery”

Current Reading 23 of 50 (46%)
 Current Math 29 of 50 (48%)

- 8th Grade science SOL pass rate
- Social Studies SOL pass rate
- 8th Grade writing SOL pass rate

Base Formula

TABLE A – Individual Student Achievement

SOL Scaled Score	SOL Proficiency Level	Points Awarded Each SOL Score
500 - 600	Pass Advanced	150
426 - 499	Pass Proficient	120
375 – 425	Fail/Bubble	100
Optional Objectives		
Recovering students pass rates in mathematics and reading Current number of students in recovery	Each student in recovery will be counted a second time in both the numerator and the denominator of our original calculation (as in the normal state accreditation system)	

TABLE B – Individual Student Growth

Core Other Academic Objectives - Reading (Students counted only counted once in this category)	
MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in Reading administered 2 /yr.	Each student who meets or exceeds their Rasch unIT (RIT) growth goal will earn 1 point
Core Other Academic Objectives - Math	
MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in Mathematics administered 2 /yr.	Each student who meets or exceeds their Rasch unIT (RIT) growth goal will earn 1 point
Algebra/Geometry SOL scores for students taking classes at Murray High School	Same as scoring for Math 6,7, 8

Bonus Points (Maximum of 10 points)

Table C – School-Wide Results

Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)	
8th Grade Science SOL pass rate	70% pass rate 1 point

	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)		
Social Studies SOL pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)		
8th Grade Writing SOL pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points

The Calculation:

Step One: Calculate points from Table A

If points exceed 75: Stop here.

Step Two: Calculate points from Table A and Table B

If points exceed 75: Stop here.

Step Three: Add bonus points for overall pass rate in social studies, science, and writing.

Example:

Table A

SOL Scaled Score	SOL Proficiency Level	Points Awarded Each SOL Score
500 - 600	Pass Advanced	2 x 150 = 300
426-500	Pass Proficient	11 x 120 = 1320
375 – 425	Fail	14 x 100 = 1400
Below 375	Fail	21 x 0 = 0
0 students in recovery		+0 for recovery
		Total Points 3020/48 = 62.9%

Table B

MAP Growth Goal	Points Awarded Each SOL Score
Met	32 x 1 = 32
Not Met	16 x 0 = 0
	Total Points = 32%

Tables A & B = 94.9 points

STOP HERE: If points were below 75 we would continue.

- b. Academic achievement gap measures for prevalent student groups; and Economically disadvantaged, SWD, white
- c. Student engagement and outcome measures related to absenteeism for all schools and dropouts and graduation for high schools. Alternative accreditation plans for high schools that extend through 2021-2022 should also include measures related to the college and career readiness.

7. Describe how statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics will be used to support instruction.

Virginia SOL testing results from the previous school year will be used to plan instruction for remediation, support, and extension.

8. Describe how the plan meets the testing requirements of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.

The tests used in this Alternative Accreditation plan are the State Standards of Learning and use a similar methodology for calculating pass rates for Reading and Mathematics. The adjustments made to the methodology are designed to reflect the small student population and the diverse population served, which may not be accounted for in the traditional accreditation calculations.

9. Describe how the plan meets the testing requirements in federal law.
Federal Indicators measure students' understanding of the grade-level curriculum, and that schools will continue to improve students' understanding, which will be evident in their SOL test pass rates.

Students will complete all necessary and appropriate Standards of Learning assessments in accordance with federal law to guarantee that they have been instructed on the Standard of Learning and mastered those standards.

10. Describe how the plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria ([8 VAC 20-131-390.A](#)) are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.
We have requests waivers for all standards.

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