

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN –  
GRADUATION COHORT OF FIFTY OR FEWER STUDENTS**

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):

*. . . 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.*

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.

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Date Approved by the Local School Board

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Signature – Chairman of the School Board

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Submission Date

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Signature – Division Superintendent

**ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN TEMPLATE**  
**GRADUATION COHORT OF FIFTY OR FEWER STUDENTS**

**School Name: Murray High School**

**Division Name: Albemarle County Public Schools**

**School Address: 1200 Forest Street**

**Contact Person: Chad Ratliff**

**Phone Number: 434-296-3090**

**Email: cratliff@k12albemarle.org**

**Proposed Duration of Plan: 3 years**

**Grade Levels Served: 9-12**

**Number of Students Enrolled by Grade:**

**9<sup>th</sup> – 31**

**10<sup>th</sup> – 19**

**11<sup>th</sup> – 14**

**12<sup>th</sup> - 21**

**Rationale:**

If this school has a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students and the school does not meet the 88% Graduation Completion Index (GCI) benchmark, the school is applying for an alternative accreditation plan as indicated in 8 VAC 20-131-420.D of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.

Due to the small cohort size, one student can make a significant difference in the index. For this reason, the GCI alone is not an appropriate measure for the school; additional criteria are needed to determine accreditation.

**List the additional performance criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a proposed points award for meeting each criteria. The GCI cannot be changed. Additional criteria proposed must be objective, measurable, and directly address the school's graduation rate. This will be different for each school.**

<b>Description of Additional Criteria</b>	<b>Points Added to GCI for Meeting Criteria</b>
GCI bonus points for when 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job.	+1
GCI bonus for increased percentage of students scoring advanced Proficient on EOC reading, writing and/or math SOL assessments.	+1
GCI bonus for earning at least 80 VIP Achievement Index Points in English.	+1

GCI bonus for earning at least 80 VIP Achievement Index Points in math.	+1 +1
GCI bonus for increased percentage of students enrolled in college credit bearing courses.	+1

The criteria listed above will be applied to the GCI only if: a) the school fails to meet the GCI benchmark for full accreditation, and b) the cohort size for the graduating class is 50 or fewer students according to the On-Time Graduation Rate cohort formula. If the criteria are applied, the maximum number of GCI points allowable according to cohort size will be:

- No bonus points assigned for 0-14 students. A written appeal to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction will be submitted.
- Maximum of five (5) points for cohorts of 15-20 students.
- Maximum of four (4) points for cohorts of 21-40 students.
- Maximum of three (3) points for cohorts of 41-50 students.

The division will submit a written appeal of the accreditation rating to the State Superintendent of Instruction for cohort sizes of less than 15 students or in cases where special circumstances warrant explanation and consideration in addition to the maximum point values outlined above.

**List those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.**

Chad Ratliff, Principal  
Stephanie Passman, Head Teacher  
Chris Gilman, Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation