

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to high school graduation requirements; verified units of credit; satisfactory score on the PreACT or PSAT/NMSQT examination.

[H 1982]

Approved

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-253.13:4. Standard 4. Student achievement and graduation requirements.

A. Each local school board shall award 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 may be prescribed by the local school board and approved by the Board of Education. Provisions shall be made to facilitate the transfer and appropriate grade placement of students from other public secondary schools, from nonpublic schools, or from home instruction as outlined in the standards for accreditation. The standards for accreditation shall include provisions relating to the completion of graduation requirements through Virtual Virginia. Further, reasonable accommodation to meet the requirements for diplomas shall be provided for otherwise qualified students with disabilities as needed.

In addition, each local school board may devise, vis-a-vis the award of diplomas to secondary school students, a mechanism for calculating class rankings that takes into consideration whether the student has taken a required class more than one time and has had any prior earned grade for such required class expunged.

Each local school board shall notify the parents of rising eleventh and twelfth grade students of (i) the requirements for graduation pursuant to the standards for accreditation and (ii) the requirements that have yet to be completed by the individual student.

B. Students identified as disabled who complete the requirements of their individualized education programs and meet certain requirements prescribed by the Board pursuant to regulations but do not meet the requirements for any named diploma shall be awarded Applied Studies diplomas by local school boards.

Each local school board shall notify the parent of such students with disabilities who have an individualized education program and who fail to meet the graduation requirements of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Article 2 (§ 22.1-213 et seq.) of Chapter 13.

C. Students who have completed a prescribed course of study as defined by the local school board shall be awarded certificates of program completion by local school boards if they are not eligible to receive a Board of Education-approved diploma.

Each local school board shall provide notification of the right to a free public education for students who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1 of the school year, pursuant to Chapter 1 (§ 22.1-1 et seq.), to the parent of students who fail to graduate or who have failed to achieve graduation requirements as provided in the standards for accreditation. If such student who does not graduate or complete such requirements is a student for whom English is a second language, the local school board shall notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with § 22.1-5.

D. (From Acts 2016, cc. 720 & 750: The graduation requirements established by the Board of Education pursuant to the provisions of subdivisions D 1, 2, and 3 shall apply to each student who enrolls in high school as (i) a freshman after July 1, 2018; (ii) a sophomore after July 1, 2019; (iii) a junior after July 1, 2020; or (iv) a senior after July 1, 2021) In establishing graduation requirements, the Board shall:

1. Develop and implement, in consultation with stakeholders representing elementary and secondary education, higher education, and business and industry in the Commonwealth and including parents, policymakers, and community leaders in the Commonwealth, a Profile of a Virginia Graduate that identifies the knowledge and skills that students should attain during high school in order to be successful contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth, giving due consideration to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

2. Emphasize the development of core skill sets in the early years of high school.

3. Establish multiple paths toward college and career readiness for students to follow in the later

ENROLLED

HB1982ER

57 years of high school. Each such pathway shall include opportunities for internships, externships, and
58 credentialing.

59 4. Provide for the selection of integrated learning courses meeting the Standards of Learning and
60 approved by the Board to satisfy graduation requirements, which shall include Standards of Learning
61 testing, as necessary.

62 5. Require students to complete at least one course in fine or performing arts or career and technical
63 education, one course in United States and Virginia history, and two sequential elective courses chosen
64 from a concentration of courses selected from a variety of options that may be planned to ensure the
65 completion of a focused sequence of elective courses that provides a foundation for further education or
66 training or preparation for employment.

67 6. ~~Graduation requirements shall include a requirement~~ *Require* that students either (i) complete an
68 Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course or (ii) earn a career and technical
69 education credential that has been approved by the Board, except when a career and technical education
70 credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately
71 measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based
72 instruction in the subject area to earn credit. The career and technical education credential, when
73 required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure
74 examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills
75 assessment.

76 7. Beginning with first-time ninth grade students in the 2016-2017 school year, require students to be
77 trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external
78 defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary
79 resuscitation.

80 8. Make provision in its regulations for students with disabilities to earn a diploma.

81 9. Require students to complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course.

82 10. Provide that students who complete elective classes into which the Standards of Learning for any
83 required course have been integrated and achieve a passing score on the relevant Standards of Learning
84 test for the relevant required course receive credit for such elective class.

85 11. Establish a procedure to facilitate the acceleration of students that allows qualified students, with
86 the recommendation of the division superintendent, without completing the 140-hour class, to obtain
87 credit for such class upon demonstrating mastery of the course content and objectives and receiving a
88 passing score on the relevant Standards of Learning assessment. Nothing in this section shall preclude
89 relevant school division personnel from enforcing compulsory attendance in public schools.

90 12. Provide for the award of credit for passing scores on industry certifications, state licensure
91 examinations, and national occupational competency assessments approved by the Board of Education.

92 School boards shall report annually to the Board of Education the number of Board-approved
93 industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations passed, national occupational competency
94 assessments passed, Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments passed, and the number of career
95 and technical education completers who graduated. These numbers shall be reported as separate
96 categories on the School Performance Report Card.

97 For the purposes of this subdivision, "career and technical education completer" means a student who
98 has met the requirements for a career and technical concentration or specialization and all requirements
99 for high school graduation or an approved alternative education program.

100 In addition, the Board may:

101 a. For the purpose of awarding credit, approve the use of additional or substitute tests for the
102 correlated Standards of Learning assessment, such as academic achievement tests, industry certifications
103 or state licensure examinations; and

104 b. Permit students completing career and technical education programs designed to enable such
105 students to pass such industry certification examinations or state licensure examinations to be awarded,
106 upon obtaining satisfactory scores on such industry certification or licensure examinations, appropriate
107 credit for one or more career and technical education classes into which relevant Standards of Learning
108 for various classes taught at the same level have been integrated. Such industry certification and state
109 licensure examinations may cover relevant Standards of Learning for various required classes and may,
110 at the discretion of the Board, address some Standards of Learning for several required classes.

111 13. Provide for the waiver of certain graduation requirements (i) upon the Board's initiative or (ii) at
112 the request of a local school board. Such waivers shall be granted only for good cause and shall be
113 considered on a case-by-case basis.

114 14. Consider all computer science course credits earned by students to be science course credits,
115 mathematics course credits, or career and technical education credits. The Board of Education shall
116 develop guidelines addressing how computer science courses can satisfy graduation requirements.

117 15. Permit local school divisions to waive the requirement for students to receive 140 clock hours of

instruction upon providing the Board with satisfactory proof, based on Board guidelines, that the students for whom such requirements are waived have learned the content and skills included in the relevant Standards of Learning.

16. Provide for the award of verified units of credit for a satisfactory score, as determined by the Board, on the Preliminary ACT (PreACT) or Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) examination.

E. In the exercise of its authority to recognize exemplary performance by providing for diploma seals:

1. The Board shall develop criteria for recognizing exemplary performance in career and technical education programs by students who have completed the requirements for a Board of Education-approved diploma and shall award seals on the diplomas of students meeting such criteria.

2. The Board shall establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal for advanced mathematics and technology for the Board of Education-approved diplomas. The Board shall consider including criteria for (i) technology courses; (ii) technical writing, reading, and oral communication skills; (iii) technology-related training; and (iv) industry, professional, and trade association national certifications.

3. The Board shall establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal for excellence in civics education and understanding of our state and federal constitutions and the democratic model of government for the Board of Education-approved diplomas. The Board shall consider including criteria for (i) successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education; (ii) voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities that includes the types of activities that shall qualify as community service and the number of hours required; and (iii) related requirements as it deems appropriate.

4. The Board shall establish criteria for awarding a diploma seal of biliteracy to any student who demonstrates proficiency in English and at least one other language for the Board of Education-approved diplomas. The Board shall consider criteria including the student's (i) score on a College Board Advanced Placement foreign language examination, (ii) score on an SAT II Subject Test in a foreign language, (iii) proficiency level on an ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) measure or another nationally or internationally recognized language proficiency test, or (iv) cumulative grade point average in a sequence of foreign language courses approved by the Board.

F. The Board shall establish, by regulation, requirements for the award of a general achievement adult high school diploma for those persons who are not subject to the compulsory school attendance requirements of § 22.1-254 and have (i) achieved a passing score on a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education; (ii) successfully completed an education and training program designated by the Board of Education; (iii) earned a Board of Education-approved career and technical education credential such as the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment; and (iv) satisfied other requirements as may be established by the Board for the award of such diploma.

G. To ensure the uniform assessment of high school graduation rates, the Board shall collect, analyze, report, and make available to the public high school graduation and dropout data using a formula prescribed by the Board.

H. The Board shall also collect, analyze, report, and make available to the public high school graduation and dropout data using a formula that excludes any student who fails to graduate because such student is in the custody of the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice, or local law enforcement. For the purposes of the Standards of Accreditation, the Board shall use the graduation rate required by this subsection.

I. The Board may promulgate such regulations as may be necessary and appropriate for the collection, analysis, and reporting of such data required by subsections G and H.