

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2019 SESSION

CHAPTER 576

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-253.13:9 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program; Exemplar School Recognition Program.

[H 1868]

Approved March 18, 2019

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-253.13:9 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-253.13:9. Exemplar School Recognition Program.

A. Schools and local school divisions shall be recognized by the Board of Education in accordance with guidelines it shall establish for the Virginia Index of Performance (VIP) incentive program *Exemplar School Recognition Program (the Program)*. The ~~VIP incentive program~~ Program shall be designed to recognize and reward fully accredited (i) schools and school divisions that make significant progress toward achieving advanced proficiency levels in reading, mathematics, science, and history and social science, and on other indicators of school and student performance that exceed Board-established requirements or show continuous improvement on academic and school quality indicators and (ii) schools, school divisions, and school boards that implement effective, innovative practices that are aligned with the Commonwealth's goals for public education. Such recognition may include:

1. Public announcements recognizing individual schools and divisions;
2. Tangible rewards;
3. Waivers of certain board regulations;
4. Exemptions from certain reporting requirements; or
5. Other commendations deemed appropriate to recognize high achievement.

In addition to Board recognition, local school boards shall adopt policies to recognize individual schools through public announcements or media releases as well as other appropriate recognition.

In order to encourage school divisions to promote student achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, the Board of Education shall take into account in its guidelines a school division's increase in enrollments and elective course offerings in these areas.

B. A school that maintains a passing rate on Virginia assessment program tests or additional tests approved by the Board of 95 percent or above in each of the four core academic areas for two consecutive years may, upon application to the Department of Education, receive a waiver from accreditation. A school receiving such a waiver shall be fully accredited for a three-year period. However, such school shall continue to annually submit documentation in compliance with the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements.

C. Schools may be eligible to receive the Governor's Award for Outstanding Achievement. This award will be given to schools rated fully accredited that significantly increase the achievement of students within student subgroups in accordance with guidelines prescribed by the Board of Education.

D. In its guidelines for calculating an award under the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program pursuant to this section, the Department of Education shall take into account the number of high school students who earn the one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies or an associate degree from a comprehensive community college in the Commonwealth concurrent with a high school diploma.

2. That pursuant to the provisions of this act, the Board of Education shall replace the existing Virginia Index of Performance (VIP) incentive program with the Exemplar School Recognition Program.