

## 1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to high school*  
 3 *graduation requirements; work experience; capstone project.*

4 [H 2662]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 **1. That § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**8 **§ 22.1-253.13:4. Standard 4. Student achievement and graduation requirements.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 Each local school board shall provide notification of the right to a free public education for students  
 37 who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1 of the school year, pursuant to Chapter 1  
 38 (§ 22.1-1 et seq.), to the parent of students who fail to graduate or who have failed to achieve  
 39 graduation requirements as provided in the standards for accreditation. If such student who does not  
 40 graduate or complete such requirements is a student for whom English is a second language, the local  
 41 school board shall notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance  
 42 with § 22.1-5.

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

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

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

55 3. Establish multiple paths toward college and career readiness for students to follow in the later  
 56 years of high school. Each such pathway shall include opportunities for internships, externships, and

57 credentialing.

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

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

66 6. (Effective until July 1, 2019) Require that students either (i) complete an Advanced Placement,  
67 honors, or International Baccalaureate course or (ii) earn a career and technical education credential that  
68 has been approved by the Board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular  
69 subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency,  
70 in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to  
71 earn credit. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful  
72 completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency  
73 assessment, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills  
74 assessment.

75 6. (Effective July 1, 2019) Require that students either (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors,  
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79 in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to  
80 earn credit. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful  
81 completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency  
82 assessment, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills  
83 assessment. The Department of Education shall develop, maintain, and make available to each local  
84 school board a catalogue of the testing accommodations available to English language learners for each  
85 such certification, examination, assessment, and battery. Each local school board shall develop and  
86 implement policies to require each high school principal or his designee to notify each English language  
87 learner of the availability of such testing accommodations prior to the student's participation in any such  
88 certification, examination, assessment, or battery.

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

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

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

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

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

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

105 School boards shall report annually to the Board of Education the number of Board-approved  
106 industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations passed, national occupational competency  
107 assessments passed, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery assessments passed, and Virginia  
108 workplace readiness skills assessments passed, and the number of career and technical education  
109 completers who graduated. These numbers shall be reported as separate categories on the School  
110 Performance Report Card.

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

114 In addition, the Board may:

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

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

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

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

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.

17. Permit students to exceed a full course load in order to participate in courses offered by an institution of higher education that lead to a degree, certificate, or credential at such institution.

18. Permit local school divisions to waive the requirement for students to receive 140 clock hours of instruction after the student has completed the course curriculum and relevant Standards of Learning end-of-course assessment, or Board-approved substitute, provided that such student subsequently receives instruction, coursework, or study toward an industry certification approved by the local school board.

19. Permit any English language learner who previously earned a sufficient score on an Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate foreign language examination or an SAT II Subject Test in a foreign language to substitute computer coding course credit for any foreign language course credit required to graduate, except in cases in which such foreign language course credit is required to earn an advanced diploma offered by a nationally recognized provider of college-level courses.

20. *Require students to complete a senior capstone project, portfolio, performance-based assessment, or structured experiment that relates to a work-based learning, service-learning, or community engagement activity. Such capstone project, portfolio, performance-based assessment, or structured experiment shall align with and further develop the knowledge and skills attained through such work-based learning, service-learning, or community engagement activity. Local school boards shall develop and implement any such capstone project, portfolio, performance-based assessment, or structured experiment in accordance with Board guidelines.*

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 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) for the Board of Education-approved diplomas. The Board shall consider including criteria for (i) relevant coursework; (ii) technical writing, reading, and oral communication skills; (iii) relevant 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

179 Board.

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

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

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

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

199 **2. That the provisions of the first enactment of this act shall not become effective unless reenacted**  
200 **by the 2020 Session of the General Assembly.**

201 **3. That the Board of Education shall develop and submit to the Chairmen of the House**  
202 **Committee on Education and the Senate Education and Health no later than November 1, 2019,**  
203 **guidelines for local school boards to develop and implement a senior capstone project, portfolio,**  
204 **performance-based assessment, or structured experiment. In developing such guidelines, the Board**  
205 **of Education shall consult with stakeholders representing a variety of local school divisions,**  
206 **industries, and education organizations and shall consider (i) the diversity of school divisions**  
207 **across the Commonwealth, (ii) the need for local flexibility, and (iii) the needs of communities and**  
208 **industries across the Commonwealth.**