

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

PROFILE OF A VIRGINIA GRADUATE

The Profile of a Virginia Graduate comprises the course and credit requirements students must meet to earn a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma and the skills, experiences, and attributes essential for success in college and the workforce.

Students meeting the Profile of a Virginia Graduate achieve the commonwealth's high academic standards and graduate from high school with workplace skills, an understanding of their responsibilities as citizens, and career plans aligned with their talents, interests and experiences.

For freshmen entering high school in 2018 and beyond, the following requirements must be met in addition to the diploma requirements:

- **Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate Course or Career and Technical Education Credential** - In accordance with the Standards of Quality, students shall either (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course, or (ii) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the standard diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.
- **Virtual Course** - Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.
- **Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED)** - Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement, as provided in [8VAC20-131-420 B](#).
- **Demonstration of the five Cs** - Students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the Board..

REQUIREMENTS FOR A STANDARD DIPLOMA

To graduate with a Standard Diploma, a student must earn at least 22 standard units of credit by passing required courses and electives, and earn at least five verified credits by passing end-of-course SOL tests or other assessments approved by the Board of Education. Your school counselor can advise on available courses to fulfill the requirements for the Standard Diploma.

DISCIPLINE AREA	STANDARD CREDITS: Effective with first time 9 th graders in 2011-2012 and beyond	VERIFIED CREDITS: Effective with first time 9 th graders in 2018/2019 and beyond
English	4	2
Mathematics [Note 1]	3	1
Lab Science [Note 2 & 6]	3	1
History & Social Science [Notes 3 & 6]	3	1
Health & Physical Education	2	
World Language, Fine Arts, or CTE [Note 7]	2	
Economics & Personal Finance	1	
Electives [Note 4]	4	0
Student Selected Test [Note 5]	22	5

NOTE 1 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among: Algebra I; Geometry; Algebra, Functions and Data Analysis; Algebra II or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 2 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 3 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one course in either world history or geography or both. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 4 - Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

NOTE 5 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, economics or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

NOTE 6 - Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association or acquires a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification, competency credential or license for (1) the student selected verified credit and (2) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification, license or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the Board of Education as an additional test to verify student achievement.

NOTE 7 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Pursuant to Section 22.1-253.13:4, Code of Virginia, credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine or performing arts or career and technical education.

ELECTIVES

Sequential Electives – Students who wish to receive a Standard Diploma must successfully complete two sequential electives. On February 5, 2002, the Board of Education approved Guidelines for Sequential Electives for the Standard and Modified Standard Diploma (PDF).

- Sequential electives may be in any discipline as long as the courses are not specifically required for graduation.
- Courses used to satisfy the one unit of credit in a fine arts or career and technical education course may be used to partially satisfy this requirement.
- For career and technical education electives, check with the Office of Career and Technical Education and Adult Education at (804) 225-2051.
- An exploratory course followed by an introductory course may not be used to satisfy the requirement.
- An introductory course followed by another level of the same course of study may be used.
- Sequential electives do not have to be taken in consecutive years.

Fine Arts and Career and Technical Education – The Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas each contain a requirement for one standard unit of credit in Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education. The Standards of Accreditation do not require that courses used to satisfy the requirement of Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education be approved by the Board. Therefore, local school officials should use their own judgment in determining which courses students take to satisfy this requirement.

STANDARD DIPLOMA CREDIT ACCOMMODATIONS

Credit accommodations provide alternatives for students with disabilities in earning the standard and verified credits required to graduate with a Standard Diploma. A student's transcript would not reflect the use of credit accommodations.

Credit accommodations are determined by the IEP team or 504 committee at any point after the student's eighth-grade year. The school must secure the informed written consent of the parent/guardian and the student to choose credit accommodations after a review of the student's academic record and full disclosure of the student's options. IEPs and 504 plans must specify which credit accommodations are allowed and under what circumstances.

A student must meet the following criteria to be eligible for Standard Diploma credit accommodations:

- The student must have a current IEP or 504 plan with standards-based content goals.
- The student must have a disability that precludes him or her from meeting grade-level expectations but is learning on-grade-level content.
- The student must need significant instructional supports to access grade-level SOL content and to show progress.
- The student, based on multiple objective measures of past performance, might not be expected to achieve the required units of credit within the standard time frame.

Credit accommodations for students with disabilities may include:

- Alternative courses to meet the standard credit requirements
- Modifications to the requirements for locally awarded verified credits
- Additional tests approved by the Board of Education for earning verified credits
- Adjusted cut scores on tests for earning verified credits
- Allowance of work-based learning experiences through career and technical education (CTE) courses

While credit accommodations provide alternate pathways and flexibility, students receiving accommodations must earn the 22 standard credits and five verified credits for the classes of 2022 and beyond are required to graduate with a Standard Diploma.

One credit accommodation is allowed for a Standard diploma for the classes of 2022 and later.

Credit accommodations are not available for the Advanced Studies Diploma.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA

To graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma, a student must earn at least 26 standard units of credit and at least five verified units of credit. Your school counselor can advise on available courses to fulfill the requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma.

Students must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be non-credit bearing, to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma.

DISCIPLINE AREA	Standard Credits: Effective with the 9 th graders in the 2018- 2019 and beyond	Verified Credits: Effective with first time 9 th graders in 2018/2019
English	4	2
Mathematics [Note 1]	4	1
Laboratory Science [Note 2]	4	1
History & Social Science [Note 3]	4	1
World Languages [Note 4]	3	
Health & Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or CTE	1	
Economics and Personal Finance	1	
Electives	3	
Total	26	5

NOTE 1 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 2 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 3 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

NOTE 4 - Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

NOTE 5 - For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012 and beyond: A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

ELECTIVES

Fine Arts and Career and Technical Education – The Standard and Advanced Studies Diplomas each contain a requirement for one standard unit of credit in Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education. The Standards of Accreditation do not require that courses used to satisfy the requirement of Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education be approved by the Board. Therefore, local school officials should use their own judgment in determining which courses students take to satisfy this requirement.

World Language—the Advanced Studies Diploma contains a requirement for either three years of one World language or two years of two languages. In March 1998, the Board of Education approved the provision of three years of instruction in American Sign Language (ASL) for World language credit toward an Advanced Studies Diploma; other World languages will satisfy this requirement as well. Details of this action are available in: Superintendent's Memo, Interpretive, #1, June 12, 1998.