

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: July 23, 2009

**Topic:** First Review of Revised *Guidelines for Awarding the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma* in Response to HB 1767 Adopted by the 2009 General Assembly

**Presenter:** Dr. Margaret N. Roberts, Executive Assistant to the Board of Education

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**Origin:**

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by  
 State or federal law or regulation  
 Board of Education regulation  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Action requested at this meeting  
 Action requested at future meeting:

**Previous Review/Action:**

No previous board review/action  
 Previous review/action  
date:  
action:

**Background Information:** In recognition of the efforts and sacrifices of veterans who served in World War II and the Korean War, the 2001 and 2002 General Assembly adopted legislation to authorize the Virginia Board of Education to award the Honorary High School Diploma to veterans of World War II and the Korean War who, upon returning home after discharge, were unable to complete their high school education. The Board of Education subsequently authorized awards to be made to Vietnam War veterans; however, this provision was not specifically codified until 2009.

The 2009 General Assembly, in recognition of the service of Vietnam veterans, codified the issuance of the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma to Vietnam War veterans who served between 1959 and 1975 and who were also unable to continue their education upon returning home.

Pursuant to §§ [2.2-3309.1](#), [2.2-3310](#), and [22.1-17.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War who were unable to complete their high school education may apply for a Veteran Honorary Diploma, if they were subsequently honorably discharged and meet the criteria specified by the Board of Education.

Any World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam War veteran may apply for a Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Board of Education a written statement declaring that:

1. The veteran served in a branch of the United States Armed Forces during the years specified as follows: World War II between 1939 and 1945; Korean War between 1950 and 1953; and Vietnam War between 1959 and 1975.
2. The veteran was drafted or enlisted in the United States Armed Forces;
3. The veteran was subsequently honorably discharged; and
4. The veteran was unable to resume his or her high school education upon returning to civilian life.

The information may be submitted by the veteran, by his or her family, or by any individual or veterans' organization on behalf of the veteran. The Virginia Board of Education will issue the honorary diploma to eligible veterans upon request at any time during the year. The Board also honors requests from families for posthumous awards.

Information on the Veteran Honorary Diploma program and the process for making a request is posted prominently on the Virginia Department of Education's Web site and has been disseminated to veterans' organizations in Virginia.

Since the Veteran Honorary Diploma program began in 2001, more than 2,000 veterans have received this recognition.

The Virginia Department of Education has defined the term *veteran* to mean a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable (38 USC § 101).

**Summary of Major Elements:** The 2009 amendments to the *Code* require that the Board of Education's procedures be modified slightly to reflect the latest legislative changes. Thus, the public information and the application form have to be modified to reflect the following:

- The award of the Veteran Honorary Diploma to Vietnam War veterans as codified; and
- The *Code* specifically states that the veteran must have an honorable discharge from military service.

The following information is attached:

- Revised *Guidelines for Awarding the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma* showing provisions of recent legislative amendments in bold print;
- Revised honorary diploma request form showing provisions of recent legislative amendments in bold print;
- Copy of the relevant legislation authorizing the Veteran Honorary Diploma program;

**Superintendent's Recommendation:** The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education waive first review and adopt the revised *Guidelines for Awarding the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma* and the revised honorary diploma request form to reflect legislative changes adopted by the 2009 General Assembly.

**Impact on Resources:** The Honorary Diploma program is conducted using existing fiscal and administrative resources of the Virginia Department of Education.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:** Upon final adoption by the Board of Education, the revised *Guidelines for Awarding the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma* and the request form will be posted on the Department of Education's Web site and broadly disseminated to appropriate veterans' organizations, community groups, and interested individuals.

**DRAFT:**

**Guidelines for Honorary Diplomas for World War II,  
Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans**

**Requirements of the Code of Virginia**

Pursuant to §§ [2.2-3309.1](#), [2.2-3310](#), and [22.1-17.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, veterans of World War II, the Korean War, **and the Vietnam War** who were unable to complete their high school education may apply for a Veteran Honorary Diploma, **if they were subsequently honorably discharged** and meet the criteria specified by the Board of Education.

Any World War II, Korean War, or **Vietnam War** veteran may apply for a Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Board of Education a written statement declaring that:

1. The veteran served in a branch of the United States Armed Forces during the years specified as follows: World War II between 1939 and 1945; Korean War between 1950 and 1953; and **Vietnam War between 1959 and 1975**;
2. The veteran was drafted or enlisted in the United States Armed Forces;
3. **The veteran was subsequently honorably discharged**; and
4. The veteran was unable to resume his or her high school education upon returning to civilian life.

The information may be submitted by the veteran, by his or her family, or by any individual or veterans' organization on behalf of the veteran. The Virginia Board of Education will issue the honorary diploma to eligible veterans upon request at any time during the year. The Board also honors requests from families for posthumous awards.

The term veteran means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. 38 USC § 101.(5) SB 1210, supra.(6) Id.

**Virginia Board of Education Requirements**

Any veteran of World War II, the Korean War, **or the Vietnam War** who is interested in receiving the Commonwealth of Virginia Veteran Honorary High School Diploma may submit the honorary diploma request form or a statement that includes the following information:

1. The veteran's full name as it should be printed on the diploma;
2. Dates of service;
3. Statement affirming that the veteran:
  - a. Was drafted or enlisted in the United States Armed Forces;
  - b. Was unable to complete his education upon returning to civilian life; and
  - c. **Was subsequently honorably discharged from military service.**

The information may be submitted by the veteran, by his or her family, or by any veterans' organization on behalf of the veteran.

# VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Request for Veteran Honorary High School Diploma

Any military veteran of World War II, the Korean War, **or the Vietnam War, who was subsequently honorably discharged**, may receive the Commonwealth of Virginia World War II, Korean War, **or Vietnam War** Veteran Honorary High School Diploma. If you wish to receive the Veteran Honorary High School Diploma, please complete the following information. This information may be submitted by the veteran, by his or her family, or by any individual or veterans' organization on behalf of the veteran.

Veteran's name as it is to appear on the Honorary Diploma (please print)			
Dates of active duty service			
Location of last school attended			
Type of Honorary Diploma requested (check one)			
<input type="checkbox"/> World War II (1939-1945)	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean War (1950-1953)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Vietnam War</b> <b>(1959-1975)</b>	
I hereby certify the above-named veteran was drafted or did enlist in the United States Armed Forces, served during the above dates, <b>was subsequently honorably discharged</b> , and was unable to resume his or her high school education upon returning to civilian life.			
Signature:		Date:	
Person requesting Diploma:		Telephone:	(     )
Mail Diploma to:			

**Return signed, completed form two weeks in advance to:**

Veteran Honorary High School Diploma Program  
 Virginia Department of Education  
 P. O. Box 2120  
 Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120  
 Ph: (804) 225-2924 / Fax: (804) 225-2524  
[Margaret.Roberts@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Margaret.Roberts@doe.virginia.gov)

## CHAPTER 66

An Act to amend and reenact §§ [2.2-3309.1](#), [2.2-3310](#), and [22.1-17.4](#) of the Code of Virginia, relating to certain honorary diplomas.

[H 1767]

Approved February 25, 2009

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ [2.2-3309.1](#), [2.2-3310](#), and [22.1-17.4](#) of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ [2.2-3309.1](#). Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week; Virginia Korean War Veterans Appreciation Week; honorary diplomas to be awarded under certain circumstances during such weeks.

A. In recognition of the sacrifice of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II, the first full week in September, i.e., the week that was the first full official week of peace in 1945, shall hereby be designated the Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, beginning in September 2001.

In accordance with the Board of Education's guidelines as authorized by § [22.1-17.4](#), any veteran of World War II may apply for a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Virginia Board of Education a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1939 and 1945, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces *and was subsequently honorably discharged*;
2. He was drafted or did enlist in the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and
3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

B. In recognition of the sacrifice of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served during the Korean War, the first full week in November shall hereby be designated the Virginia Korean War Veterans Appreciation Week, beginning in November 2002.

In accordance with the Board of Education's guidelines as authorized by § [22.1-17.4](#), any veteran of the Korean War may apply for a Commonwealth of Virginia Korean War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Virginia Board of Education a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1950 and 1953, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces *and was subsequently honorably discharged*;
2. He enlisted in or was drafted into the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and
3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

C. Upon receiving a statement in compliance with this section and § [22.1-17.4](#) that has been filed in accordance with its guidelines, the Board of Education shall award the veteran described in subsections A or B, a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma or a Commonwealth of Virginia Korean War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma, as appropriate. Such diploma shall also be delivered during Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week or Virginia Korean War Veterans Appreciation Week, as appropriate.

§ [2.2-3310](#). Vietnam War Memorial Dedication and Veterans' Recognition Week.

A. The first full week of November of each year shall be designated as Vietnam War Memorial Dedication Week and Veterans' Recognition Week in the Commonwealth, to honor in perpetuity the men and women who have served their country as members of the armed forces during the Vietnam ~~Conflict~~ War.

B. In accordance with the Board of Education's guidelines as authorized by § [22.1-17.4](#), any veteran of the Vietnam War may apply for a Commonwealth of Virginia Vietnam War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing with the Virginia Board of Education a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1959 and 1975, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces and was subsequently honorably discharged;

2. He enlisted in or was drafted into the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and

3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

C. Upon receiving a statement in compliance with this section and § [22.1-17.4](#) that has been filed in accordance with its guidelines, the Board of Education shall award the veteran described in subsection B a Commonwealth of Virginia Vietnam War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma. Such diploma shall also be delivered during Virginia Vietnam War Memorial Dedication and Veterans' Recognition Week in the Commonwealth.

§ [22.1-17.4](#). Certain honorary diplomas to be issued under specific circumstances.

A. Any veteran of World War II may apply to the Board of Education for a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing, in compliance with Board guidelines, a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1939 and 1945, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces and was subsequently honorably discharged;

2. He was drafted or did enlist in the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and

3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

B. Any veteran of the Korean War may apply to the Board of Education for a Commonwealth of Virginia Korean War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing, in compliance with Board guidelines, a statement declaring that:

1. During the years between 1950 and 1953, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces and was subsequently honorably discharged;

2. He enlisted in or was drafted into the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and

3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.

C. Any veteran of the Vietnam War may apply to the Board of Education for a Commonwealth of Virginia Vietnam War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma by filing, in compliance with Board guidelines, a statement declaring that:

*1. During the years between 1959 and 1975, he served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces and was subsequently honorably discharged;*

*2. He enlisted in or was drafted into the United States Armed Forces while still enrolled as a secondary school student in any school in any state or territory of the United States or any school located on or associated with a United States military base or embassy; and*

*3. He was unable to resume his secondary education upon returning to civilian life.*

€D. The Board of Education shall establish guidelines setting forth the timelines and procedures for applying for such diplomas. Upon the filing of the required statement in accordance with its guidelines, the Board of Education shall award the veteran either a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma, or a Commonwealth of Virginia Korean War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma, *or a Commonwealth of Virginia Vietnam War Veteran Honorary High School Diploma*. Such diplomas shall be delivered to eligible veterans during the first full week in September that has been designated, in accordance with § [2.2-3309.1](#), as the Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, or during the first full week in November that has been designated, in accordance with § [2.2-3309.1](#), as the Virginia Korean War Veterans Appreciation Week, *or during the first full week in November that has been designated, in accordance with § [2.2-3310](#), as Vietnam War Memorial Dedication Week and Veterans' Recognition Week in the Commonwealth.*