

Current and Future Considerations for State Accountability: Changes to the Standards of Accreditation

Replacing the emergency regulations with permanent regulations:

- To comport with HB 1061 and SB 489, passed by the 2012 General Assembly, the Board of Education approved emergency regulations on June 28, 2013. These regulations have just completed the executive review process and were signed by the Governor on April 9, 2013. They will be published in the Virginia Register on May 6, and will become effective on June 5, 2013. The emergency regulations will expire after one year and are to be replaced with the permanent regulations that the Board will be considering later this spring and this summer.
- As the regulatory review process can be lengthy, there is a provision in § 2.2-4011 of the *Code of Virginia* that emergency regulations can be extended for an additional six months. It is our understanding that virtually all emergency regulations require such an extension. As it is possible that the permanent regulations will not become effective within 18 months because of the lengthy regulatory review process, the Board may wish to consider using the fast-track process permitted by the Administrative Process Act to make the emergency regulations permanent.
- The emergency regulations require, beginning with first-time ninth graders in the 2013-2014 school year, that students earn a career and technical education credential that has been approved by the Board in order to graduate with a Standard Diploma. This credential could include, but not be limited to, the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment.
- The emergency regulations fold the Modified Standard Diploma into the Standard Diploma, and require the Board of Education to establish credit accommodations for students with disabilities through guidelines. The Board of Education approved those credit accommodations on March 28, 2013.
- The emergency regulations require that students pursuing a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course.
- The Standard Technical Diploma and the Advanced Technical Diploma, which have never been implemented, are eliminated.
- Both the legislation and the emergency regulations specify that the Advanced Studies Diploma shall be the recommended diploma for students pursuing baccalaureate study, and that both the Standard and the Advanced Studies Diploma shall prepare students for postsecondary education and the career readiness required by the Commonwealth's economy.

Amending the regulations to comport with 2013 legislation:

- HB 1999, SB 1167, and SB 1207 require the Board to approve student growth indicators to be used in the Standards of Accreditation and in teacher evaluations.
- HB 2028 and SB 986 require students, beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2016-2017, to be trained in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform CPR in order to be awarded a Standard or an Advanced Studies Diploma.
- HB 2346 requires at least two lock-down drills every year, one in September and one in January. The SOA currently requires one simulated lock-down and crisis emergency evacuation activity, to be conducted early in the school year.

Closing the achievement gap and strengthening accountability:

- What changes are needed to close the achievement gap?
- How can student growth indicators be incorporated into accreditation?
- What best practices from Virginia school divisions, other states, or other countries could be incorporated?
- Are other changes needed in the accreditation requirements?

Other changes:

- Which provisions in the SOA are outdated and no longer necessary?
- Which provisions could be simplified or streamlined?
- What new provisions are needed to address changes in technology?
- What technical or editorial changes are needed?