

**Standard Diploma
Credit Accommodations
for
Students with Disabilities**

Office of Special Education Program Improvement

Diploma Options

- **The Modified Standard Diploma (MSD) is no longer an option for first time 9th graders beginning in 2013-14 SY and beyond who have IEPs**
- **Students prior to first time 9th graders beginning in 2013-14 SY still have the MSD as an option.**
- **Students with disabilities (IDEA/504) may use credit accommodations as alternate pathways to the standard diploma**

New Requirements for a Standard Diploma 2013-14 SY

- **Students pursuing a Standard Diploma must earn a career and technical education credential that has been approved by the Board of Education to graduate with a Standard Diploma.**
- **A student must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be noncredit-bearing, to graduate with a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma; and**
- **The Modified Standard Diploma is folded into the Standard Diploma, with credit accommodations for students with disabilities.**

STANDARD DIPLOMA

Standard Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50.B)

Discipline Area	Standard Credits: effective with first-time ninth graders in 2003-2004 through 2010- 2011	Standard Credits: effective with first-time ninth graders in 2011- 2012 and beyond	Verified Credits: effective for first-time ninth graders in 2003-2004 and beyond
English	4	4	2
Mathematics [Note 1]	3	3	1
Laboratory Science [Notes 2 & 6]	3	3	1
History & Social Sciences [Notes 3 & 6]	3	3	1
Health & Physical Education	2	2	
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1		
Foreign Language, Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education [Note 7]		2	
Economics and Personal Finance		1	
Electives [Note 4]	6	4	
Student Selected Test [Note 5]			1
Total	22	22	6

NOTE 1

- **For students entering the ninth grade for the first time in 2003-2004 through 2010-2011:** Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall be at or above the level of algebra and shall include at least two course selections from among: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra and geometry. The Board may approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.
- **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 2003-2004 through 2010-2011:** Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least two different science disciplines: earth sciences, biology, chemistry or physics. The Board may approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.
- **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 2003-2004 through 2010-2011:** 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 may approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.
- **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 2003-2004 through 2010-2011:** A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.
- **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.
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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** – Effective with the graduating class of 2003, students who wish to receive a Standard or Modified 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 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, Advanced Studies, and Modified Standard 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.

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REMEMBER
ALWAYS READ THE FOOTNOTES!!!

QUESTIONS

Which class or grade will no longer have the option of earning a Modified Standard Diploma?

First time 9th graders SY2013-14

Are credit accommodations available to students with 504 plans?

YES

What are two additional requirements for the Standard Diploma?

CTE Credential and Virtual Course

Credit Accommodations

- **Credit Accommodations provide alternate pathways for students with disabilities to earn standard and verified credits required to graduate with a Standard Diploma**
 - 🗑 **Assessments**
 - 🗑 **Locally Awarded Verified Credit**
 - 🗑 **Instruction/Coursework Offerings**
- **Documentation!**
- **9th, 10th, 11th, 12th graders and**
- **Returning Students**



Assessments - Substitute Tests

- **The Board of Education has approved a number of substitute tests that students may take to earn verified credits toward graduation (ALL STUDENTS)**

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/substitute_tests_verified_credit.pdf

The VDOE may partner with a local school division in the procedure to nominate an additional test.



Assessments - VMAST

- **The Virginia Modified Achievement Standards Test (VMAST) will remain part of Virginia's accountability system through 2013-2014**
- ❖ **Beginning in 2014-2015, the VMAST assessments will no longer be part of Virginia's accountability system; however, End-of-Course (EOC) reading and Algebra I VMAST will continue to be available as a credit accommodation for eligible students with disabilities**



Assessments - VMAST

- **Permit the continued use of the VMAST for verified credit purposes for Algebra I and End-of-Course (EOC) Reading**
- **The student must meet of the following criteria to be eligible to take the VMAST for verified credit purposes:**
 - ✓ **Student must pass the high school course;**
 - ✓ **Score 374 or below on the end-of-course Standards of Learning test (SOL) after taking the test at least twice; and**
 - ✓ **All eligibility requirements in effect for the 2013-2014 school year. ONLY available to students with IEPs**



Questions

Can all students make use of substitute assessments?

YES

Where can you find a list of the substitute assessments?

On the VDOE Website

When will the VMAST become available as a credit accommodation?

2014-15 SY

Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- **To be eligible to earn locally awarded verified credits a student must:**
 - ✓ **Pass the high school course;**
 - ✓ **Score within a 375-399 scale score range on any administration of the Standards of Learning test after taking the test at least twice; and**
 - ✓ **Demonstrate achievement in the academic content through an appeal process administered at the local level**
- **Contact your division's central office to learn about any additional local level policy regarding locally awarded verified credits.**



Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- **VDOE has set no maximum number of locally awarded verified credits that a student with a disability (IDEA/504) may earn towards a standard diploma**
- **Local school divisions must ensure that this flexibility to offer locally awarded verified credits in reading, writing and math only applies to students with disabilities (IDEA/504) who are eligible for credit accommodations as stipulated in each students IEP/504 plan**



Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- **Only scaled scores from regular End-of-Course (EOC) SOL assessments may be considered**
- **Alternate/substitute assessments, such as VMAST and WorkKeys, may not be used to determine if a student can receive a locally awarded verified credit**



Locally Awarded Verified Credits

- **Locally awarded verified credits, as credit accommodations, are only allowable for students with disabilities pursuing a Standard Diploma**
- **Students with disabilities pursuing an Advanced Studies or Modified Standard Diploma are not eligible to receive locally awarded verified credits**



Questions

Can students without disabilities appeal to receive a LAVC in Science and History Social Sciences?

YES

LAVCs can be awarded to students with disabilities ONLY for what content areas?

Math and English

Only one diploma option is available to students using credit accommodations, and that is?

Standard Diploma

Instruction/Courses

The student must successfully complete:

➤ **English**

- ✓ **4 standard credits in English and 1 verified credit each in Reading and Writing**

➤ **Mathematics**

- ✓ **3 standard credits in mathematics and 1 verified credit in mathematics**

➤ **Science**

- ✓ **3 standard credits in science from 2 disciplines and 1 verified credit in science**

➤ **History/Social Science**

- ✓ **3 standard credits in history and social science that include Virginia and U.S. History and Virginia and U.S. Government, and 1 verified credit in history and social science**



Instruction/Courses

- **Allow parts I and II of certain required courses to each earn a standard credit towards the total number required in the subject area**

- **It is not necessary to create self-contained classes, there are current examples in both general and special education**

- ✓ **Student with a Disability**
Example → Algebra I Part I = 1 standard math credit,
Algebra I Part II = 1 standard math credit

- ✓ **Student w/out a Disability**
Example → Algebra I Part I = 1 elective credit
Algebra I Part II = 1 standard math credit



Economics and Personal Finance

- **Most students will take Economics and Personal Finance (6120)**

- **Some Students with disabilities may take Personal Living and Finances (3120) with the 21 Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) for the Commonwealth embedded; earn at least 3 standard credits in history and social science; and take the WRS assessment to earn the Board-approved Workplace Readiness Skills for the Commonwealth credential, must pass the assessment!**
 - ✓ **This approach would satisfy the graduation requirements for economics and personal finance, history and social sciences, and the industry credential**

 - ✓ **Superintendent's Memorandum No. 105-13, April 19, 2013.**
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2013/105-13.shtml



Forms/Documentation/Procedures

- **Each IEP team/504 committee should determine the credit accommodations needed by the student on a subject by subject basis. A student might use credit accommodations for one subject or all subjects**
- **The team/committee is responsible for determining and documenting those determinations**



Forms/Documentation/Procedures

- **A sample eligibility form to assist IEP teams/504 committees in documenting the eligibility process is available on the VDOE web site**
- **A sample transition IEP that provides the minimum requirements to document credit accommodations on the IEP**
- **Until online IEP vendors produce the changes to local forms, procedures to document the use of credit accommodations in the IEP (*i.e., present level of performance (PLOP), prior notice, accommodations page, etc.*) will be left to individual divisions**



Forms/Documentation/Procedures

- **Divisions may change the appearance, level of detail, or order of the information in the document, but the eligibility criteria must remain intact.**
- **The level of detail required in the eligibility form is a local decision; however, the specificity must be sufficient for individuals responsible for implementation of the approved credit accommodations to proceed as the IEP team intended.**
- **An IEP team/504 committee may use one form to document all credit accommodations.**
- **For IDEA eligible students at the secondary level the discussion must occur at the annual IEP meeting and more often if the need arises. 504 committees should consider accommodations on an as needed basis.**



Forms/Documentation/Procedures

- **Credit accommodations that are available exclusively to students with disabilities must be documented in accordance with the Board of Education approved guidelines for standard diploma credit accommodations for students with disabilities**
- **Informed written consent of the parent or age of majority student is required for the use of credit accommodations.**
- **Although a 504 plan does not require consent, the eligibility form for credit accommodations does. Therefore, informed written parental/student consent for credit accommodations applies to 504 students as well.**



Returning Students

- **Students with disabilities through the age of eligibility (through 21st birthday) who received anything other than a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma remain eligible for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and therefore may return school**



Returning Students

- **In light of the additional pathways to the Standard Diploma with credit accommodations, divisions are encouraged to contact recipients of any diploma other than a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma through the age of eligibility and inform them of the change in policy and remind them that they may return;**
- **How these students are contacted is a local decision**



Questions

Who will determine whether a student with a disability is eligible for a credit accommodation?

IEP Team or 504 Committee

Must eligibility for credit accommodations be documented?

Yes

How will we know that there has been informed consent?

Signature of parent or age of majority student

VDOE Resources

VDOE Credit Accommodations

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/credit_accommodations.shtml

Substitute Tests

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/

VDOE Career and Technical Education

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/index.shtml



VDOE Contact Information

➤ **Special Education and Student Services**

Marianne Moore, Marianne.Moore@doe.virginia.gov
(804) 225-3252

➤ **Career and Technical Education**

Joseph Wharff, Joseph.Wharff@doe.virginia.gov
(804) 225-3370

➤ **Standards of Learning and Testing**

Email, Student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov
(804)225-2102



VDOE Contact Information

➤ Science

Email, Eric.Rhodes@doe.virginia.gov

(804)786-2481

➤ Mathematics

Email, Michael.Bolling@doe.virginia.gov

(804)786-6418

➤ English

Email, Tracy.Robertson@doe.virginia.gov

(804)371-7585

➤ History/Social Science

Email, Christonya.Brown@doe.virginia.gov

(804)225-2893



A few tips

- **It is important to view these changes through the lens of existing graduation requirements**
- **Pay particular attention to the footnotes**
- **Pay particular attention to the year your student was a first time 9th grader**
- **Visit the VDOE Graduation requirements page often**

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/standard.shtml>

