



## Exempt Action Final Regulation Agency Background Document

<b>Agency name</b>	Department of Education
<b>Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation</b>	8 VAC 20-131
<b>Regulation title</b>	Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia
<b>Action title</b>	Update for Legislative Changes Made by the 2010 and 2011 General Assembly
<b>Final agency action date</b>	The Board of Education took final action on these amendments on June 23, 2011.
<b>Document preparation date</b>	June 24, 2011

When a regulatory action is exempt from executive branch review pursuant to § 2.2-4002 or § 2.2-4006 of the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), the agency is encouraged to provide information to the public on the Regulatory Town Hall using this form.

Note: While posting this form on the Town Hall is optional, the agency must comply with requirements of the Virginia Register Act, the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual*, and Executive Orders 36 (06) and 58 (99).

### Summary

*Please provide a brief summary of all regulatory changes, including the rationale behind such changes. Alert the reader to all substantive matters or changes. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation.*

[The Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia](#) are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's public schools. Legislative changes enacted by the 2010 and 2011 General Assembly have resulted in a need to amend the regulations. The proposed changes are as follows:

- 1) Delaying the effective date of these regulations as they relate to the establishment of two technical diplomas and an academic and career plan as well as delaying increases in accreditation benchmarks ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 2) Increasing and changing the credit requirements for the Advanced Studies Diploma and changing the credit requirements for the Standard Diploma beginning in the 2011-2012 school year to include, among other changes, a graduation requirement related to economics and personal finance ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), 2011 General Assembly);

- 3) Providing that students who earn a Modified Standard Diploma could be eligible to receive the Virginia Board of Education’s Seal for Excellence in Civics Education ([House Bill 1793](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 4) Permitting the Virginia Board of Education to approve alternative accreditation plans for any public school ([House Bill 2494](#), 2011 General Assembly);
- 5) Recognizing achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by permitting school divisions to be rewarded for increases in enrollments and elective course offerings in STEM ([House Bill 2172](#) and [Senate 953](#), 2011 General Assembly); and
- 6) Ensuring that school boards report annually the number of Virginia Board of Education approved industry certifications obtained, state licensure examinations and national occupational competency assessments passed, Virginia workplace readiness skills assessments passed, and the number of career and technical education completers who graduated ([House Bill 566](#) and [Senate Bill 630](#), 2010 General Assembly).

**Statement of final agency action**

*Please provide a statement of the final action taken by the agency including (1) the date the action was taken, (2) the name of the agency taking the action, and (3) the title of the regulation.*

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The Virginia Board of Education is expected to take final action to amend the effective date of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* on June 23, 2011, pursuant to legislation enacted by the 2011 General Assembly ([House Bill 1554](#) and [Senate Bill 810](#), [House Bill 1793](#), [House Bill 2494](#), and [House Bill 2172](#) and [Senate 953](#)) and legislation enacted by the 2010 General Assembly ([House Bill 566](#) and [Senate Bill 630](#)).

**Family impact**

*Assess the impact of this regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability.*

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This proposal would permit students earning a Modified Standard Diploma to be eligible to receive the Virginia Board of Education’s Seal of Excellence in Civics Education. This action could have a positive effect on the family in terms of recognizing and rewarding community service.