

STANDARDS OF LEARNING TESTS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

I. Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests and Verified Units of Credit

In kindergarten through eighth grade, where Standards of Learning (SOL) tests are administered, each student is expected to take the SOL tests. Schools will use the SOL test results in kindergarten through eighth grade as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students.

Each student in middle and secondary school will take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests. Students who successfully complete the requirements of the course and achieve a passing score on an end-of-course SOL test will be awarded a verified unit of credit in that course. Students may earn verified credits in any courses for which end-of-course SOL tests are available. Middle and secondary schools may consider the student's end-of-course SOL test score in determining the student's final course grade.

Upon recommendation of the superintendent and demonstration of mastery of course content and objectives, qualified students may receive a standard unit of credit and be permitted to sit for the relevant SOL test to earn a verified credit without having to meet the 140-clock-hour requirement. The superintendent by regulation will determine the manner in which a student may demonstrate mastery of course content and objectives, and documentation of such mastery will be maintained in the student's permanent record.

Students may also earn verified credits by taking alternative tests to the SOL assessment. Such tests may only be those approved by the Virginia Board of Education, and the student may earn verified credits only by achieving that score established by the Board of Education.

Participation in SOL testing by students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) will be guided by a school-based committee convened to make such determinations. In kindergarten through eighth grade, LEP students may be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in each of the four core areas. Students with disabilities for whom participation in the SOL testing program is deemed inappropriate according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan will be expected to demonstrate proficiency on an alternative assessment prescribed by the Board of Education in accordance with federal laws and regulations beginning with the school year 2000-2001.

II. Graduation Requirements

A. Generally

In order to graduate from Patrick County Public Schools, a student must meet all applicable requirements set forth in the Standards of Accreditation and the Standards of Quality. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma are those in effect when he or she enters ninth grade for the first time.

PROMOTION CRITERIA BEGINNING WITH 8TH GRADE 1999-2000

- Grade 8: Promotion or placement from Grade 7
- Grade 9: Same as promotion policy shown in previous section. Promotion or placement from Grade 8.
- Grade 10: Earn a minimum of six credits to include passing 3 out of 4 core verified courses (English, math, science, and social studies)
- Grade 11: Earn a minimum of 12 credits to include passing six out of 8 previous verified core courses (English, math, science, and social studies)
- Grade 12: Earn a minimum of 19 credits to include passing ten out of the 12 previous core verified courses (English, math, science, and social studies)

GRADUATION:

Have twenty-six credits for a regular diploma or twenty-eight credits for an advanced study diploma, including the State Board of Education required subjects, and have passed the Literacy Passport test, have met the I.E.P. goals or have passed the GED Prep classes.

In addition, beginning with the eighth grade class of 1999-2000, students will also be required to earn six verified credits (two English, one math, one science, one social studies, and one student choice) for a standard diploma. An advanced study diploma requires nine verified credits (two English, two math, two science, two social studies, and one student choice).

The school board will notify the parent of rising eleventh and twelfth grade students of

- (i) the number of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation pursuant to the Standards of Accreditation and
- (ii) the remaining number of such units of credit the individual student requires for graduation.

B. Types of Diplomas and Certificates

The Patrick County School Board will award the following types of diplomas and certificates in accordance with state laws and regulations.

1. Standard Diploma

A Standard Diploma will be awarded to students who earn the following standard units of credit:

Discipline	Standard units of credit required	Verified units of credit required
English	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History and Social Sciences	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Electives	10	
Student Selected Test		1
Total	26	6

2. Advanced Studies Diploma

An Advanced Studies Diploma will be awarded to students who earn the following standard units of credit:

Discipline	Standard units of credit required	Verified units of credit required
English	4	2
Mathematics	4	2
Laboratory Science	4	2
History and Social Sciences	4	2
Foreign Language	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Electives	6	
Student Selected Test		1
Total	28	9

3. Modified Standard Diploma

Eligibility and participation in the Modified Standard Diploma program will be determined by the student's IEP team and the student, where appropriate, at any point after the student's eighth grade year. The school in which the student is enrolled must secure the informed written consent of the parent or guardian and the student to choose this diploma program after review of the student's academic history and the full disclosure of the student's options.

Students pursuing the Modified Standard Diploma will pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments prescribed by the Board of Education. In addition, students must earn the following standard units of credit:

Discipline	Standard units of credit required
English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	2
History and Social Sciences	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1
Electives	10
Total	24

4. Special Diplomas

A Special Diploma will be awarded to each disabled student who successfully completes the requirements set forth in his/her IEP, but does not meet the requirements for other diplomas.

The school board will notify the parent of students with disabilities who have an IEP and who fail to meet the requirements for graduation of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-213 et seq.

5. Certificates of Program Completion

A Certificate of Program Completion will be awarded to any student who completes a prescribed program of studies defined by the local school board but is not eligible to receive a standard, advanced studies, modified standard, special, or general achievement diploma.

The school board will notify the parent of students who fail to graduate or who fail to achieve the number of verified units of credit required for graduation as provided in the Standards of Accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1st of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the student who does not graduate or achieve such verified units of credit is a student for whom English is a second language, the school board will notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Va. Code § [22.1-5](#).

6. General Educational Development (GED)

a. Generally

The Board of Education has established a program of testing for general educational development (GED) through which persons may earn a high school equivalency certificate or a General Achievement Diploma. The following persons may participate in the testing program:

- persons who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting the school attendance requirements set forth in Va. Code § [22.1-254](#);
- persons 16 years of age or older who have been instructed by their parents in their home pursuant to Va. Code § [22.1-254.1](#) and who have completed such home school instruction;
- persons who have been excused from school attendance pursuant to subsections B and C of Va. Code § [22.1-254](#);

- persons for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § [22.1-254](#); and
- persons 16 through 18 years of age who are housed in adult correctional facilities and who are actively pursuing a GED certificate but who are not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § [22.1-254](#).
- persons 16 year of age or older who have been expelled from school pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-277.07 through 22.1-277.08; and
- persons required by court order to participate in the testing program.

Under no circumstances will anyone under the age of 16 be eligible for the testing program.

Only those entities designated by the Department of Education as official Virginia GED testing centers will determine whether an individual is eligible to take GED tests. GED tests will be administered only at official Virginia GED testing centers or addendum test sites that have been approved by the Virginia GED Administrator and the GED Testing Service.

Official test scores may be accepted from an approved state agency, an official jurisdiction responsible for overseeing GED testing, or an official GED testing center outside of Virginia.

An individual may take the full battery of tests up to three times during a calendar year. Test scores may be combined in accordance with GED Testing Service policy.

b. General Achievement Diploma

A General Achievement Diploma is intended to provide a diploma option for individuals who leave high school without a diploma. It should not be a first option for high school students.

A General Achievement Diploma will be awarded to eligible candidates who satisfy the following requirements.

In order to be eligible for a General Achievement Diploma, an individual must meet one of the following criteria:

- be at least 18 years old and not enrolled in public school;
- not otherwise be subject to Virginia's compulsory school attendance requirements.

In order to be awarded a General Achievement Diploma, candidates must earn a total of twenty standard units of credit including the following:

- four standard units of credit in English;
- three standard units of credit in mathematics;
- two standard units of credit in science;
- two standard units of credit in history and social sciences; and
- nine standard units of credit in electives.

The required standard units of credit may be earned by enrolling in:

- a public school if the candidate meets the age requirements;
- a community college or other institution of higher education;
- an adult high school program; or
- correspondence, distance learning, and online courses.

Candidates for a General Achievement Diploma must participate in GED preparation and must achieve a passing score on the GED examination.

c. General Educational Development (GED) Certificates

GED certificates may be issued to individuals who:

- are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in a public or private high school; and
- achieve the minimum passing score requirements set by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education or such higher score requirements that may be established by the Virginia Board of Education.

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8 VAC 20-131-30.

8 VAC 20-360-10.

8 VAC 20-131-110.

8 VAC 20-360-20.

8 VAC 20-680-10.

8 VAC 20-680-20.

Superintendent's Memoranda No. 36 (Mar. 3, 2000) and No. 39 (Feb. 20, 2004).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Reduced Course Load

Upon presentation of a physician's certificate and with the consent of the principal, a student may be permitted to carry less than a normal class load and to restrict his or her activities to those recommended by a physician.

Dual Enrollment

Eligible students in high school may be offered courses for which the student receives high school credit and may also register for and receive college credit upon satisfactory completion of the course.