

## **LOCALLY AWARDED VERIFIED CREDITS**

### **Generally**

The Gloucester County School Board awards verified credits in English, mathematics, science and history and social science in accordance with Board of Education regulations and guidance.

To be eligible to earn locally awarded verified credits, a student must

- pass the high school course and not pass the related Standards of Learning test
- take the Standards of Learning test at least twice
- score within a 375-399 scale score range on any administration of the Standards of Learning test
- demonstrate achievement in the academic content through the appeal process described below.

### **Locally Awarded Verified Credits as Credit Accommodations**

In addition to verified credits in science and history/social sciences, the School Board may also award verified credits toward a standard diploma in reading, writing and mathematics to students with disabilities as credit accommodations for the standard diploma. To be eligible for such credit accommodations, students with disabilities must meet all criteria established by Virginia law or regulation and eligibility for such credit accommodations must be established in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan. There is no maximum number of locally awarded verified credits that a student with a disability may earn toward a standard diploma.

### **Appeal Process**

The Gloucester County School Board shall appoint a review panel comprised of at least three educators. Different panels may be appointed for individual schools or groups of schools.

The review panel will review information which provides evidence of the student's achievement of adequate knowledge of the Standards of Learning content. The panel will have discretion in determining the information it will consider. That information may include, but is not limited to, results of classroom assignments, division-wide exams, course grades, and additional academic assignments (e.g. papers, projects, essays or written questions) as the panel deems appropriate.

Based on the review of evidence, the review panel may:

- award the verified credit,
- deny the verified credit,
- suggest participation in a remedial program and retesting; or
- make additional academic assignments prior to determining whether to award the verified credit.

The decision of the review panel may be appealed to the School Board in accordance with regulations developed by the Board.

### **Locally Awarded Verified Credits under Emergency Guidelines, April 2020**

Under the Emergency Guidelines for Locally-Awarded Verified Credits adopted by the

Virginia Board of Education on April 2, 2020, school divisions may grant adopt policies to govern procedures used to confer locally-awarded verified credit under these emergency guidelines. These guidelines are in effect for students enrolled in any high school credit-bearing course eligible for verified credit in which a student was enrolled in spring 2020, and will remain in effect for the duration of its impact on any affected student's graduation.

The verification process shall include:

- The appointment by the local school board of a local review panel comprised of at least three educators.
- The local review panel will review information that provides evidence of the student's mastery of the standards, competencies, and objectives. The panel shall have discretion in determining the information to be considered and may include, but not be limited to: results of classroom

- assignments, division-wide exams, course grades, and additional academic assignments (e.g., papers, projects, essays, or written questions) as deemed appropriate.
  - Per these emergency guidelines, local review panels are able to consider whether a locally-awarded verified credit may be awarded to all students in a particular course, rather than on a student-by-student basis, based on:
    - their successful completion of a locally-developed or nationally-normed summative assessment; OR
    - the student's grade in the course. If schools choose to award locally-awarded verified credits in this limited instance based solely on a student's grades in the course, then the local review panel may review the teacher's course expectations and award verified credit to all students in the course with passing grades;
  - School divisions choosing to award locally-awarded verified credits based solely on samples of student work or portfolios must review those samples on a student-by-student basis.
- Based on the evidence reviewed, the local review panel may award the verified credit, deny the verified credit, suggest participation in a remedial program and retesting, or make additional academic assignments as deemed appropriate prior to determining whether to award the verified credit.

### **Impact on Cap of Locally-Awarded Verified Credits for 2019-2020 under the Emergency Guidelines**

Any locally-awarded verified credit awarded to students affected by the 2019-2020 extended school closures **will not count toward the cap on locally-awarded verified credits**. The Superintendent of Public Instruction will exercise the authority granted to him in Executive Order Fifty-One (2020) to ensure that locally-awarded verified credits for courses students were enrolled in during spring 2020 do not count toward the cap on locally awarded verified credits included in the Standards of Accreditation, as provided in 8VAC20-131-110.

### **Additional Considerations under the Emergency Guidelines**

Students eligible for a special permission credit accommodation should continue to use the IEP/504 process.

**ADOPTED:** November 12, 2002

**REVISED:** January 9, 2007  
 September 10, 2013  
 November 12, 2013  
 August 12, 2014  
 October 13, 2015  
 February 21, 2019  
 May 12, 2020

**LEGAL REFERENCES:** Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, 22.1-253.13.3.

8 VAC 20-131-5.

8 VAC 20-131-50.

8 VAC 20-131-100.

Guidelines for Standard Diploma Credit Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (Virginia Department of Education March 28, 2013) (attachment to Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Memo No. 105-13 (Apr. 19, 2013)).

Additional Guidance on Credit Accommodations for Students with Disabilities July 2013 (Attachment A to Superintendent's Memo No. 191-13 issued July 26, 2013).

Guidance Document Governing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia 8 VAC 20- 131 (as amended by the Board of Education January 13, 2011).

Revised Guidance Governing the Use of Locally-Awarded Verified Credits (Virginia Department of Education May 11, 2018) (attachment to Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Memo No. 130-18 (May 11, \ 2018)).

Emergency Guidelines on Locally-Awarded Verified Credits (as adopted by the Board of Education, April 2, 2020), Pursuant to *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:4.