

STUDENT SERVICES

Promotion, Retention, Grading, and Graduation Requirements

Requirements for Graduation

This regulation supersedes Regulation 2460.3.

I. PURPOSE

To provide information about graduation requirements, high school credits required for grade placement, and approved ways of earning high school credit.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Updating legal references.
- B. Removing references to class ranking (FCPS no longer ranks pupils).
- C. Bringing the document into compliance with state regulations.
- D. Clarifying language.

III. CREDIT VALUE OF HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

Courses taken in high school for a full session (minimum 140 hours) shall carry one unit of credit. Courses taken in high school for a half session shall carry one-half unit of credit, when authorized as half-credit courses in either the Standard or Optional Course Offerings guide. Credit for study while in summer school or homebound is allowed by policies set forth by the Virginia Board of Education in the *Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, October 25, 2006.

IV. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from high school, students must meet the specific standard and/or verified credit, and, if applicable, testing requirements, for a diploma prescribed by the state of Virginia. A standard credit is earned when a student passes a course. A verified credit is earned when a student passes a course and the associated end-of-course Standards of Learning (SOL) or substitute test. Students seeking the standard diploma may earn locally awarded verified credits in science and social studies.

Grade point average (GPA) is calculated on the basis of all courses for which credit has been earned, attempted, and previously awarded. This calculation includes all high school credit courses taken prior to ninth grade.

Students in grades 7-12 receive credit toward graduation for high school courses taken in middle school. These credits count toward credits in the required sequences as well as toward the total number of credits required for graduation and calculation of the grade point

average. Middle school parents may request that grades for any high school credit-bearing course taken in the middle school be omitted from the student's transcript, and therefore the student will not earn a standard credit for the course nor be eligible for a verified credit in that course. The request to remove a course from the transcript must be made in writing to the middle or high school the student will attend the following year and prior to the end of the first nine weeks.

A. Diploma Requirements and Options

The requirements for a student to earn any diploma shall be those in effect when the student enters the ninth grade for the first time. In order to receive a Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) diploma, a student must meet the Virginia and FCPS requirements for graduation and currently be enrolled in an FCPS school or have received approval for beginning postsecondary education prior to high school graduation. Students may earn either a standard diploma (22 credits, 6 of which must be verified credits) or an advanced studies diploma (24 credits, 9 of which must be verified credits). Certain students with disabilities who are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a standard diploma have the option of working toward a modified standard diploma (20 credits). Eligibility and participation in the modified standard diploma program shall be determined by the student's individual education program (IEP) team and the student, where appropriate.

<u>Standard Diploma (22 Standard Credits, 6 of which must be verified)</u>			
<u>Subject Area</u>	Standard Units of Credit	Verified Units of Credit Students Entering Grade 9 in 2000-01 Through 2002-03	Verified Units of Credit Students Entering Grade 9 in 2003-04 or After
<u>English</u>	4	2	2
<u>Mathematics</u> 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 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra and geometry.***	3	Plus 4 additional verified credits of the student's choosing	1
<u>Laboratory Science</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines: earth science, biology, chemistry, or physics.***	3		1
<u>History and Social Sciences</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement are: U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and World History and Geography 1 and 2.***	4		1
<u>Health and Physical Education</u>	2		Plus 1 additional verified credit of the student's choosing **
<u>Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education</u> Includes courses in dance, music, theater arts, or visual arts that contribute to students' fine arts education or a business, health and medical sciences, technology education, marketing, trade and industrial education, family and consumer sciences, or career and transition course.	1		
<u>Electives</u> Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives.	5		
<u>Total</u>	22	6 **	6 **

* See Attachment A for verified credit requirements for transfer students.

** A student may use additional tests for earning verified credit prescribed by the Board of Education in 8 VAC 20-131-100.

*** The Board of Education may approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.

<u>Advanced Studies Diploma (24 standard credits, 9 of which must be verified)</u>		
<u>Subject Area</u>	Standard Units of Credit	Verified Units of Credit
<u>English</u>	4	2
<u>Mathematics</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall be at or above the level of algebra and shall include at least three different course selections from among: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra 2.**	4	2
<u>Laboratory Science</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma.**	4	2
<u>History and Social Science</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and two courses in either world history or geography or both.**	4	2
<u>Health and Physical Education</u>	2	Plus 1 additional verified credit of the student's choosing *
<u>Fine Arts or Career and Technical Education</u> Includes courses in dance, music, theater arts, or visual arts that contribute to students' fine arts education or a business, health and medical sciences, technology education, marketing trade and industrial education, family and consumer sciences, or career and transition course.	1	
<u>Foreign Language</u> Three years of one language or two years of two languages. Foreign language credits, levels 1 and 2 only, may be earned by passing an oral and written proficiency exam. Applicable languages are determined annually by the FCPS Foreign Language office of the Instructional Services Department.	3	
<u>Electives</u>	2	
<u>Total</u>	24	9

* See Attachment A for verified credit requirements for transfer students.

** The Board of Education may approve additional courses to satisfy this requirement.

<u>Modified Standard Diploma (20 Credits) *Special Populations Only</u>		
Eligibility and participation in the modified standard diploma program shall be determined by the student's individual education program (IEP) team.		
<u>Subject area</u>	Units of Credit	Testing Requirements
<u>English</u>	4	Students shall be required to pass the eighth grade SOL tests in mathematics and English (Reading, Literature, and Research) OR substitute a higher level SOL test, English 11 Reading, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, or Geometry
<u>Mathematics</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include content from among applications of algebra, geometry, personal finance, and statistics in courses that have been approved by the Board of Education.	3	
<u>Laboratory Science</u> Courses completed shall include content from at least two of the following: applications of earth science, biology, chemistry, or physics in courses that have been approved by the Board of Education.	2	
<u>History and Social Science</u> Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include one unit of credit in U.S. and Virginia History and one unit of credit in U.S. and Virginia Government in courses that have been approved by the Board of Education.	2	
<u>Health and Physical Education</u>	2	
<u>Fine or Career and Technical Education</u> Includes courses in dance, music, theater arts, or visual arts that contribute to students' fine arts education or a business, health and medical sciences, technology education, marketing, trade and industrial education, family and consumer sciences, or career and transition course.	1	
<u>Electives</u> Courses to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two sequential electives.	6	
<u>Total</u>	20	

*The student who has chosen to pursue a modified standard diploma shall also be allowed to pursue the standard or advanced studies diploma at any time throughout their high school career. The student may not be excluded from courses and tests required to earn a standard or advanced studies diploma.

Special diplomas are awarded to special education students who have met the requirements of their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) if they do not meet the requirements for other diplomas. Students with disabilities who complete a prescribed program of studies shall be awarded a certificate of program completion if they do not qualify for a diploma. (8VAC-131-50 F)

B. Transfer Students

Students transferring into a Virginia school division shall be required to earn a minimum of 22 units of credit for graduation. Each student's prior transcript shall be evaluated to determine the number and content of specific credits still required for graduation. Students transferring after the tenth grade from states where the student has already met that state's health and physical education (HPE) requirement shall not be required to earn additional HPE credits. Transfer students only able to earn a second world history and geography credit by taking a heavier-than-normal course load or by attending summer school are not required to do so.

Students entering from home instruction shall provide FCPS with a list of courses taken, the objectives for the courses, and evidence of achievement. The courses for which credit is requested must correspond to courses offered by FCPS and must be taught by the parent or under the parent's supervision. The principal may request that the parent submit the curriculum for the course and provide the text used for instruction and may require the student to take an SOL test, take the school's final examination in the subject, and/or demonstrate academic proficiency through a paper or project. The department chair may help determine whether or not the content of the home instruction course compares to the equivalent FCPS course. All grades transferred from home instruction are identified on the FCPS transcript as transferred from home instruction. See the current version of Regulation 2245 for additional information concerning home instruction.

For nonnative speakers of English who transfer to FCPS, two or more years of study in their native language in middle or high school may be counted toward fulfilling graduation requirements. In addition, students whose native language is not English may apply two English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) B1 credits to fulfill the additional foreign language requirements.

See Attachment A for specific verified credit requirements for transfer students.

C. State Diploma Seals

1. Students who complete the requirements for an advanced studies diploma with an average grade of "B" or better, and successfully complete college-level coursework that will earn the student at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, or dual enrollment courses shall receive the **governor's seal** on the diploma.
2. Students who complete the requirements for a standard diploma or advanced studies diploma with an average grade of "A" shall receive a **board of education seal** on the diploma.
3. The **board of education's career and technical education seal** will be awarded to students who earn a standard or advanced studies diploma and complete a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" or better average in those courses; or (i) pass an examination or an occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification or occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, trade or professional association or (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the

commonwealth of Virginia.

4. The **board of education's seal of advanced mathematics and technology** will be awarded to students who earn either a standard or advanced studies diploma and (i) satisfy all of the mathematics requirements for the advanced studies diploma (four units of credit including Algebra 2; two verified units of credit) with a "B" average or better; and (ii) either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association; (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the commonwealth of Virginia; or (c) pass an examination approved by the Board that confers college-level credit in a technology or computer science area.
5. The **board of education's seal for excellence in civics education** will be awarded to students who earn either a standard or advanced studies diploma and: (i) complete Virginia and United States History and Virginia and United States Government courses with a grade of "B" or higher, and (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by School Board policies, and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities.
6. Students may receive other seals or awards for exceptional academic, career and technical, citizenship, or other exemplary performance in accordance with criteria defined by the School Board.

(NOTE: The requirements in the 2006 SOA for seals take effect with the ninth grade class of 2006-07 and beyond. The requirements adopted in the 2000 SOA for the ninth grade classes of 2001 through 2005, as stated here, will remain in effect for the graduating classes of 2007, 2008, and 2009.)

V. HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADE PLACEMENT

Minimum credit requirements for placement in high school grades are as follows beginning with grade 9:

To Be Placed in Grade:

9

10

11

12

The Student Must:

Be promoted from grade 8.

Have 5 standard units of credit.

Have 10 standard units of credit.

Have a planned program providing sufficient credits to ensure graduation the following June or August.

VI. EARNING CREDIT OUTSIDE FCPS FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED FCPS STUDENTS

With prior written approval, students may earn standard credits toward FCPS graduation from non-FCPS programs. Students must submit all required forms to the local school director of student services for approval prior to enrollment in the course. Upon completion of the program, students must submit official documentation to the local school. Students must take the SOL test for courses with an associated end-of-course SOL test during an FCPS test administration.

Programs include the following:

- Public schools outside Virginia (summer programs only)
- Virginia VCPE-accredited private schools (Virginia Council for Private Education)
- Private schools outside Virginia (summer only)
- Virginia private schools not accredited by VCPE
- Colleges or universities
- Correspondence courses
- Non-FCPS online courses
- Credit by objective

A. Earning Credits Toward FCPS High School Graduation From Public Schools Outside Virginia or Virginia VCPE-Accredited Private Schools

Standard credit will be transferred to FCPS upon successful completion of the prior-approved course.

B. Earning Credits Toward FCPS High School Graduation From Non-VCPE-Accredited Private Schools

Under exceptional circumstances, a student may be permitted to transfer a standard credit to FCPS from a non-VCPE-accredited private school when the following conditions are in place:

- For courses with end-of-course SOL tests, standard credit may be granted only after the student passes the SOL test.
- The scope of each course for which credit is awarded under this provision must be comparable to the scope of a corresponding FCPS course meeting the standard of 140 clock hours of instruction.
- Each course for which credit is awarded under this provision must include equivalent objectives and performance standards to the FCPS course.

C. Earning College Credits Toward FCPS High School Graduation

Students shall be encouraged and afforded opportunities to take college courses simultaneously for high school graduation and college degree credit under the following conditions:

- The college must accept the student for admission to the course(s).
- The courses must be given by the college for degree credit (hence, no remedial courses will be accepted).
- An official transcript listing college credits earned in course(s) for which high school credit is to be issued must be submitted to the high school prior to the end of the first year of college.
- The principal of the student's high or secondary school shall approve the issuance of the diploma when all requirements for the high school diploma have been met.

D. Earning Credits Toward FCPS High School Graduation From Supervised Correspondence and Non-FCPS Online Courses

Students may enroll in supervised correspondence or online courses in subjects not available to them through FCPS school-based or FCPS online courses. In such instances, the following guidelines must be followed:

- For courses with end-of-course SOL tests, standard credit may be granted only after the student passes the SOL test.
- The scope of each course for which credit is awarded under this provision must be comparable to the scope of a corresponding FCPS course meeting the standard of 140 clock hours of instruction.
- Each course for which credit is awarded under this provision must include equivalent objectives and performance standards to the FCPS course.
- The coursework must be completed through an accredited institution under the supervision of a licensed teacher, or a person eligible to hold a Virginia license.

E. Earning Credits Toward FCPS High School Graduation by Completion of Performance Objectives

Local school officials may develop an alternative method for granting unit credits based on completion of performance objectives. Schools that elect to exercise this option shall:

- Ensure that the scope of each course for which credit is awarded under this provision is comparable to the scope of a corresponding course meeting the standard of 140 clock hours of instruction.
- Develop a set of performance objectives for a well-defined course of study, which will clearly indicate that, upon completion, the student will have met the aims and objectives of the course, as evidenced through the mastery of certain predetermined skills, knowledge, and values associated with the course.

- Develop procedures for evaluating the progress of students in this program. Such procedures could include criterion-referenced tests or standardized tests.
- Obtain prior approval from the assistant superintendent, Instructional Services Department.

Legal references: Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-253.1

See also the current version of:

Regulation 2466, Issuance of an Advanced Studies Diploma, a Standard Diploma, a Modified Standard Diploma, or a Special Diploma to an Eligible Student With Disabilities.

Regulation 3511, Adult/Alternative High School Program

Regulation 2412, Full-Day Schedule Requirements for Students

Regulation 2245, Home Instruction by Parents and Part-Time Enrollment of Home-Schooled Students

Attachments

**VERIFIED CREDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING INTO FCPS
FROM SCHOOLS OTHER THAN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Diploma Type	Entering Grade	Verified Credits for Graduation	2004, 2005, 2006	2007 and beyond
Modified Standard (Special Populations)	9, 10, 11, or 12	Students shall be required to pass the eighth grade SOL tests in mathematics and English (Reading, Literature, and Research) or substitute a higher level SOL test, English 11 Reading, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, or Geometry		
Standard	During ninth grade* Beginning of tenth	6 Verified Credits Required English Mathematics Science Social Studies Student Choice	2 4	2 1 1 1 1
	During tenth grade* Beginning of eleventh	4 Verified Credits Required English Mathematics Science Social Studies Student Choice	1 3	1 1 1 1
	During eleventh grade* Beginning of twelfth	2 Verified Credits Required English Student Choice	1 1	1 1
	During twelfth grade*	2 Verified Credits Required (see 11 th grade above) <u>or</u> return to original school for diploma <u>or</u> apply for waiver from Virginia Department of Education (Va. DOE)		

* “Beginning” refers to the first 20 instructional hours of a class; “during” is any time after the first 20 instructional hours.

8 VAC 20-131-50: A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time.

**VERIFIED CREDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING INTO FCPS
 From Schools Other Than Virginia Public Schools**

Diploma Type	Entering Grade	Verified Credits for Graduation	2004 and Beyond
Advanced Studies	During ninth grade* Beginning of tenth*	9 Verified Credit English Math History Science Student Choice	2 2 2 2 1
	During tenth grade* Beginning of eleventh*	6 Verified Credits English Math History Science Student Choice	2 1 1 1 1
	During eleventh grade* Beginning of twelfth*	4 Verified Credits English Student Choice	1 3
	During twelfth grade*	4 Verified Credits (see 11 th grade above) <u>or</u> return to original school for diploma <u>or</u> apply for waiver from VA DOE.	

- “Beginning” refers to the first 20 instructional hours; “during” is anytime after the first 20 instructional hours.

8 VAC 20-131-50: A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time.

**Mathematics Courses for Use in Fairfax County Public Schools to
Meet High School Graduation Requirements**

<u>Course Title and Number</u>	<u>Satisfies Standard 22-Credit Diploma</u>	<u>Satisfies Advanced 24-Credit Diploma</u>	<u>Satisfies Modified Standard Diploma</u>
<u>Standard Courses</u>			
Algebra 1, Part 1	Yes*	Yes*	Yes
Algebra 1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Algebra 2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Algebra 2 Honors	Yes	Yes	Yes
Algebra 2 and Trigonometry	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geometry	Yes	Yes	Yes
Geometry Honors	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trigonometry .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Precalculus	Yes	Yes	Yes
Precalculus Honors	Yes	Yes	Yes
Computer Science	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>Optional Courses</u>			
Geometry, Part 1	Yes*	Yes*	Yes
Geometry, Part 2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Probability and Statistics .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Applied Statistics	Yes	Yes	Yes
Discrete Mathematics .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Discrete Mathematics	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individualized Mathematics	No	No	No
Personal and Financial Mathematics	No	No	Yes
AP Calculus AB	Yes	Yes	Yes
AP Calculus BC	Yes	Yes	Yes
AP Statistics	Yes	Yes	Yes
AP Computer Science A	Yes	Yes	Yes
AP Computer Science AB	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Mathematical Studies	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Mathematics SL, I	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Mathematics SL, II	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Mathematics HL, I	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Mathematics HL, II	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Computer Science SL	Yes	Yes	Yes
IB Computer Science HL	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multivariable Calculus .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Matrix Algebra .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elementary Differential Equations .5 Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Students seeking standard (22-credit) and advanced studies (24-credit) diplomas must receive credit for the corresponding part 2 course to receive mathematics graduation credit for part 1. Only one part 1 or part 2 course may be used to meet the mathematics graduation requirements for the advanced studies (24-credit) diploma.

**Science Courses for Use in Fairfax County Public Schools to
Meet High School Graduation Requirements**

<u>Course Title and Number</u>	<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Satisfies Standard 22-Credit Diploma</u>	<u>Satisfies Advanced 24-Credit Diploma</u>
<u>Standard Courses</u>			
Biology	Biology	Yes	Yes
Chemistry	Chemistry	Yes	Yes
Physics	Physics	Yes	Yes
Geosystems	Earth Science	Yes	Yes
<u>Optional Courses</u>			
Active Physics	Physics	Yes	Yes
Physics of Technology	Physics	Yes	Yes
Chemical Technology	Chemistry	Yes	Yes
Engineering Physics	Physics	Yes	Yes
Human Anatomy and Physiology	Biology	No	Yes*
Oceanography	Earth Science	No	Yes*
Astronomy	Earth Science	No	Yes*
Senior Science Investigation		No	Yes*
AP Biology	Biology	Yes	Yes
AP Chemistry	Chemistry	Yes	Yes
AP Physics	Physics	Yes	Yes
AP Environmental Science	Earth Science	Yes	Yes
IB Chemistry SL, HL	Chemistry	Yes	Yes
IB Biology SL, HL	Biology	Yes	Yes
IB Physics SL, HL	Physics	Yes	Yes
IB Environmental Systems SL	Earth Science	Yes	Yes

*Students must have three science credits from three different disciplines to satisfy the science graduation requirements for either the 22- or 24-credit diploma. Those courses marked with * can only be used to satisfy the fourth science credit for the 24-credit diploma.

FCPS Permission Request Form for Transfer Credit

NAME _____ Student ID # _____ High or Middle School _____

As a rule, current students are not permitted to earn credits from non-FCPS courses if the courses are available through FCPS. This request for approval to transfer a credit is being made for the following reason:

During the September-June session

- a schedule conflict.
- a health-related conflict.

During the summer session

- the student is living out of the area and is unable to access FCPS programs.
- the student is repeating the course(s) in order to graduate with his or her class.

The student requests approval to transfer credit from a

- public school outside Virginia.
- private school outside Virginia.
- Virginia VCPE-accredited private school.
- Virginia private school not accredited by VCPE.
- *non-FCPS online course.
- *correspondence course.
- *college or university.

A student may earn credit for a course that has an associated end-of-course Virginia SOL test from other than a public school or Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE) accredited Virginia private school only after earning a passing score on the associated SOL test. SOL tests will be administered during the FCPS test window.

The local school director of student services will review the following required information before approval may be granted.

(*Additional review and approval required per the current version of Regulation 2460.)

Course Title _____ New _____ Repeat _____
 School or Program Offering Course _____
 City _____ State _____
 Accredited by _____ Nonaccredited _____

Published course description provided by the school or program including total hours in class must be attached.

I understand that FCPS provides courses required for graduation and have chosen to enroll in a non-FCPS program. I also understand that for courses other than those from public schools and from VCPE-accredited Virginia private schools, no credit will be granted for courses that have end-of-course SOL tests until the required SOL test is passed.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Date _____

APPROVED _____

DENIED _____

Local School's Director of Student Services' Signature

*Local School's Principal's Signature

This approval to take a non-FCPS course in a subject that has an end-of-course SOL test is not an endorsement that this course will prepare students to pass Virginia SOL tests. A copy of the completed form should be sent to the high school SOL coordinator at Alan E. Leis Instructional Center, and a copy should be filed in the student's cumulative records.