

Profile of a Graduate and Virginia's Effort to Redesign High School

Background and Purpose

Based on current estimates, by 2021 about 500,000 new jobs will be created in Virginia—many in scientific, technical or healthcare areas. To be eligible and competitive for these jobs, Virginia public school students will need to have opportunities to learn about multiple subject areas and to use personal skills during their educational years. The need to reconsider how Virginia children are educated stems from the evolution of the economy into one that is complex and multi-faceted, with diverse and rapid change.

In 2014 the Board of Education committed to conducting a comprehensive review and revision of their regulations governing student achievement and graduation requirements, as well as the School Performance Card and school accreditation. This was consistent with legislative changes to the state's accountability system, including the General Assembly's elimination of five Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments with a move to local alternative assessments.

The SOL Innovation Committee, created in 2014 by the General Assembly, provided support and recommendations for the development of a Profile of a Graduate in its November 2015 report, stating: "The Virginia Board of Education (VBOE), in collaboration with stakeholders representing K-12 education, institutions of higher education, business and industry, policymakers and community leaders should develop a Profile of a Virginia Graduate. In the development of such a Profile, the BOE should consider the "5 Cs" – critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship – needed for success in the Virginia economy."

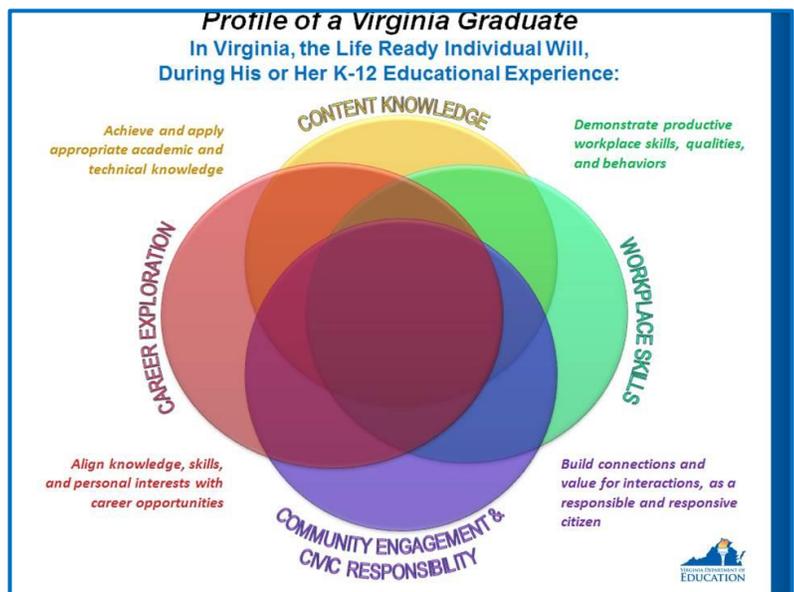
The Governor and 2016 General Assembly further supported the development of a Profile of a Virginia Graduate through the introduction and adoption of legislation which directed the Board to redefine the expectations of high school graduates in the Commonwealth, incorporate the 5 Cs, and revise high school graduation requirements to provide flexibility for multiple career pathways. The Board is also statutorily mandated to involve diverse stakeholders through public meetings as it completes this work.

Profile of a Virginia Graduate

The "Profile of a Graduate" refers to the Virginia Board of Education's determination of the knowledge and competencies a student graduating from high school should have achieved in order to be prepared for job opportunities in tomorrow's economy and to be successful in work and in life. The "Profile" is the framework for the Board's current revision of graduation requirements that will go into effect for freshman entering high schools in the fall of 2018, or the graduation class of 2022.

A Virginia high school graduate will:

- achieve and apply appropriate academic knowledge;
- align knowledge, skills, and personal interests with career opportunities;
- attain and demonstrate productive workplace skills, qualities, and behaviors;
- value and build connections with diverse communities; and



- understand personal and civic responsibility.

The diagram above represents the four domains for the Profile of a Graduate: Content Knowledge; Workplace Skills; Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility; and Career Exploration. Integrated within these areas are the skills of critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship—the 5C's.

Redesigning the High School Experience

The Board has considered a variety of strategies for redesigning the high school experience of students. Their considerations are outlined below, though none of these have been finalized yet.

1. The Board supports using three categories for graduation expectations:
 - Standard Credits: earned by successful completion of coursework by meeting the 140 clock hour standard or utilization of the Board's *Guidelines for Alternatives* to 140 clock hours to demonstrate mastery of academic content. Standard credits are earned and accounted for by local schools/school divisions and certified as accurate prior to graduation.
 - Verified Credits: earned by successful completion of standard credit and completion of Standards of Learning end-of-course assessment, a substitute assessment approved by the Board of Education, or awarded locally according to Board of Education guidelines and criteria.
 - Requirements: These expectations may be added by the State Board of Education or the General Assembly. They are not standard or verified credits, and are certified as completed by the local school/school division by criteria established by the local School Board. These expectations currently include:
 - Completion of a virtual course
 - Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators
 - Earning a career and technical education credential
 - Completion of two sequential electives chosen from a concentration of courses.
 - The acquisition and demonstration of the 5C's, critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship have been added to diploma requirements.
2. The Board explored merging the Advanced Studies and Standard Diploma into a single Virginia Diploma but did not endorse moving ahead with this action.
3. The Board endorsed expanding Career Exposure, Exploration, and Planning for students. VDOE staff will complete a sequential compilation of tasks/expectations to include elementary exposure; middle grades exploration (including the Career Investigation Course), and high school focus. Student career exploration, exposure, and planning activities will be documented in the Academic Career Plan.
4. The Board endorsed the reduction of and additional flexibility for earning verified credits, which will ultimately result in students taking fewer SOL tests. Currently students earn verified credits by achieving a passing score on SOL tests. An advanced diploma requires nine verified credits, and a standard diploma requires six. The Board is considering adjusting the number of verified credits needed for both the Advanced Studies and Standard Diploma to four (one in each core content area), and adding flexibility to how a student may earn a verified credit in history and social science.

The chart below provides information on current testing requirements and proposed changes under consideration.

Discipline Area	Number of Verified Credits under <u>Current Graduation Requirements: Standard Diploma</u>	Number of Verified Credits under <u>Current Graduation Requirements: Advanced Studies Diploma</u>	<u>Proposed Number of Verified Credits: Both Diplomas</u>	End-of-Course SOL Tests that will be available to students	ESSA High School Assessment Requirements
English	2	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End-of-Course Reading End-of-Course Writing 	1 Reading/Language Arts
Mathematics	1	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra I Geometry Algebra II 	1 Mathematics <i>**Under ESSA students must be assessed annually in mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school. To allow accelerated middle schools students to meet this requirement using the end-of-course mathematics tests, continuing the availability of the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II tests will be necessary.</i>
Science	1	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earth Science Biology Chemistry 	1 Science
History/ Social Science	1	2	1 The Board is considering allowing students to earn this verified credit either via the completion of a local authentic assessment with focus on some or all of the “5 Cs”; or with an end of course SOL test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Geography World History to 1500 World History: From 1500 to the Present VA and US History 	N/A
Student Selected Test	1	1	N/A		N/A

- The Board endorsed support for student participation in opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in the “5 Cs” as a requirement for graduation, which will be documented by the school division. The Board will recommend use of a Capstone Project to certify this requirement but will allow local school boards the option to substitute other means of verification to meet this requirement.
- The Board endorsed the use of Internships and Externships as a viable means to meet graduation requirements and to earn standard credits.

7. The Board expressed interest in increasing the expectations in mathematics for all students but does not anticipate taking action on this item this year.
8. The Board expressed an interest in further exploration of alternative approaches to science coursework design but does not anticipate taking action on this item this year.
9. The Board has taken no action on a proposal to develop career specific courses/competencies for delivery within traditional core content areas for standard credits.

Timeline of Work

- Fall 2015: The SOL Innovation Committee recommends state policy makers develop a Profile of a Virginia Graduate and redesign high school experiences to better prepare students. The Board of Education begins exploring this concept.
- Spring 2016: Virginia General Assembly passes HB 895/ SB 336 directing the Board of Education to develop a Profile of A Graduate and subsequently, high school graduation requirements. Governor McAuliffe signs the bill into law.
- May 2016: The Board of Education holds a day long work session to refine the Profile and begin discussing new graduation requirements.
- Summer 2016: The Board of Education holds 4 public hearings and solicits public feedback online, at Board meetings, in writing, etc. The Board and Department staff met with a wide variety of stakeholders, including:
- Superintendents
 - The SOL Innovation Committee
 - School division recipients of high school innovation grants
 - Higher Education deans, professors, and admission representatives
 - Governor’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Academies
 - Career and Technical Education Centers
 - Seniors who have completed capstone and applied learning projects as a local requirement for graduation
 - School division English Language Learner Coordinators
 - Military Leaders representing all service branches
 - The department’s Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education
 - Secondary and elementary school principals
 - Secondary and elementary school counselors
 - Secondary and elementary teachers (including gifted, special education, and general education)
 - Business representatives from multiple career clusters
 - Parents
 - Representatives of local school boards
- Fall 2016: VBOE will revise the Profile and graduation requirements based on summer public feedback and continue to receive public comment.
- Dec. 2016: A status report will be provided to the chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.
- 2017: Regulations make their way through the Administrative Process Act, to include additional public comment and Executive Branch Review.
- Fall 2018: Revised graduation requirements will go into effect for freshman entering high schools in the fall of 2018, or the graduating class of 2022.