



REPORT ON THE STANDARDS OF QUALITY COMPLIANCE PILOT PROGRAM

Observations and Recommendations from Pilot Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	1
<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
<i>The SOQ and Current Compliance Model</i>	2
<i>The SOQ Compliance Pilot Program</i>	3
Preliminary Analysis.....	3
Phase I: Supplemental Questions Added to the Annual Data Collection	3
Phase II: Collection of Documentation Demonstrating Compliance.....	4
Phase III: On-site Comprehensive Reviews.....	4
Phase IV: Analyzing Noncompliance	5
<i>Reflections and Observations</i>	5
<i>Summary</i>	7
<i>Appendix A: Supplemental Questions Added to the 2020-2021 SOQ Compliance Data Collection</i>	8
<i>Appendix B: Request for Evidence for Phase II</i>	12

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Virginia Department of Education would like to acknowledge Virginia's local school divisions for their participation in and contributions to the Standards of Quality Compliance Pilot Program. School division staff dedicated significant time during their school years towards demonstrating their commitment to meeting the Standards of Quality. Department staff would also like to recognize local school division staff for their professionalism and intentionality in seeking full compliance with the Standards of Quality, beyond even the scope of the pilot. It was evident that school divisions are seeking innovative ways and providing resources to meet all standards, even in the most challenging areas, such as staffing ratio requirements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Constitution of Virginia ([Article VIII, § 2](#)) requires the Virginia Board of Education (Board) to prescribe standards of quality for the public schools of Virginia, subject to revision only by the General Assembly. These standards, codified in [Chapter 13.2 of Title 22.1](#) of the Code of Virginia, are known as the Standards of Quality (SOQ) and set out the minimum requirements for providing a quality public education that must be met by all Virginia public schools and school divisions. In accordance with [§ 22.1-18](#) of the Code of Virginia, the Board is required to annually report which schools and divisions were in compliance with the SOQ. Local school boards submit their compliance status for the preceding school year each summer to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) through the SOQ Compliance Data Collection. A summary of these reports and data are included as part of the Board's annual report to the General Assembly.

In October 2020, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) issued a report titled [Operations and Performance of the Virginia Department of Education](#). One of the recommendations included in this report was for VDOE to direct the creation of a pilot program to more comprehensively supervise school division compliance with a subset of key state standards in the SOQ. In accordance with this recommendation, the 2021 General Assembly included a provision in [Item 143.J of the 2021 Appropriation Act](#) (budget) mandating the pilot program and appropriating funds to support its establishment and execution, as follows:

J. Out of this appropriation, \$120,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for the Department of Education to develop and implement a pilot program to more comprehensively supervise school division compliance with a subset of key standards by requiring (i) the submission of more comprehensive compliance information, (ii) selective independent verification of compliance, (iii) monitoring of corrective action implementation, and (iv) analysis of compliance trends and issues. The Department shall conduct the pilot program during the 2021-2022 school year and submit a report on the results to the Board of Education and House Education and Appropriations Committees and Senate Education and Health and Finance and Appropriations Committees no later than November 30, 2022.

Staff in the VDOE Office of Policy began work on the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program in spring 2021, including the hiring of a SOQ Compliance Project Manager. The following report is a result of this work and provides a synopsis of the issues identified in the JLARC report; an overview of the pilot design; key observations from data and information collected during the pilot; and recommendations for improving the SOQ compliance monitoring model, based on observations from the pilot, that are both practical and meaningful.

THE SOQ AND CURRENT COMPLIANCE MODEL

The SOQ are the foundations of the public education system in Virginia. These standards establish expectations for educational programming, staffing minimums, assessment and accountability, graduation requirements, local school board policies, and more. Additionally, via direct basic aid, the SOQ serve as the basis for the largest stream of state-funding to localities for public education.

The requirements set out in the SOQ are implemented at varying levels of the educational system in Virginia. The Virginia Board of Education, Virginia Department of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and local school boards are each tasked with roles and responsibilities in the SOQ. Local school boards oversee the implementation of the standards that impact the operation of public schools and the classroom experience. This is consistent with the governance structure of public schools in Virginia, set out in the Constitution of Virginia ([Article VIII, § 7](#)), which vests supervision of schools in each school division with the local school board. The language of the SOQ is often broad, giving local school boards the discretion to determine how best to fulfill and implement these mandates in their individual school communities.

The SOQ requires the Board of Education to collect data and report on the compliance of local school boards related to the standards. This is done through the SOQ Compliance Data Collection, administered annually by VDOE's Office of Policy on behalf of the Board. The data is collected through internal data sharing software. A designated contact in each school division (the SOQ liaison) is provided access to a survey in which each standard with a local mandate is itemized. The division indicates compliance or noncompliance with each standard via "yes" and "no" responses. The SOQ does not consider or allow for partial compliance, so the division must be fully compliant to answer "yes." If the division selects "no" for any provisions, a corrective action plan must be provided in the survey. All information contained in the survey is self-certified by the division superintendent and local school board chair. To report the SOQ compliance data to the Board, VDOE provides aggregate data on compliance and also identifies instances of noncompliance by division and standard. The instances of noncompliance are accompanied by the divisions' responses for the same provision for the previous three years. Currently, only one VDOE staff member is assigned to oversee data collection, analysis, and reporting for the SOQ Compliance Data Collection. Given the other responsibilities assigned to the Office of Policy, this is a small fraction of their responsibilities with the agency.

As part of its October 2020 report on the Operations and Performance of the Virginia Department of Education, JLARC reviewed the process by which VDOE assesses and certifies local school board compliance with the standards. JLARC concluded that compliance monitoring would be more effective if there was some degree of independent verification that divisions are meeting key compliance requirements, rather than relying on self-certification.

Specifically, JLARC suggested the following:

1. More detailed reporting by divisions and independent verification by VDOE to help to better identify noncompliance than reliance on broad self-certification across standards;
2. More consistent monitoring of divisions' implementation of corrective action plans could help to determine whether continued noncompliance is due to ineffective plans or poor implementation of them; and
3. Additional analysis of compliance information provided by divisions may allow VDOE to better identify causal or associated factors that explain why divisions are unable to comply.

THE SOQ COMPLIANCE PILOT PROGRAM

The SOQ Compliance Pilot Program was designed to ensure the agency was thorough and comprehensive in responding to JLARC's review and analysis of the current SOQ compliance monitoring program and the resulting budget mandate. Additionally, VDOE staff and the SOQ Compliance Project Manager sought to make this exercise feel collaborative with school divisions, helping them to learn more about and meet compliance standards rather than just highlighting deficiencies. In creating a pilot that was supportive rather than punitive, staff meant to incentivize willing and honest participation, promote a culture of continuous improvement, and create a community of practice and support across divisions. Staff acknowledged that the pilot program examined compliance during the pandemic, a time where some flexibility provisions were in place and compliance was notably difficult.

The SOQ Compliance Pilot Program was implemented in four phases to adequately address the different components of the JLARC recommendations and budget language. With the support of VDOE staff, the SOQ Compliance Project Manager oversaw the execution of the pilot components, including ensuring all divisions complied with the SOQ documentation requests, providing technical support, and analyzing findings. Some of the pilot work was completed remotely and some required the SOQ Compliance Project Manager to conduct on-site visits to hold interviews with staff and participate in a real-time exchange and review of documentation.

Preliminary Analysis

In reviewing the SOQ compliance appendix in the past three years of the Board's [*Annual Report on the Condition and Needs of Public Schools in Virginia*](#), most school divisions reported full compliance with the SOQ:

- For the 2020-2021 school year, 110 school divisions (83%) reported full compliance with the SOQ.
- For the 2019-2020 school year, 81 school divisions (61%) reported full compliance.
- For the 2018-2019 school year, 79 school divisions (60%) reported full compliance.

It should be noted that full compliance was particularly high for 2020-2021, as the requirement that each school board maintain fully accredited schools was not applicable due to accreditation being waived as a result of COVID-19. Generally, the SOQ areas receiving the greatest percentage of noncompliance were accreditation and staffing standards.

Phase I: Supplemental Questions Added to the Annual Data Collection

Phase I was designed to address JLARC's recommendation that VDOE collect more comprehensive compliance information from local school boards. To determine how to best approach this recommendation, staff further analyzed SOQ compliance in school years 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 looking for any patterns and trends in noncompliance. Staff then considered which standards most closely aligned with current initiatives and priorities of the Board and VDOE so that any insights from this phase might inform work underway. Based on compliance trends and state-level priorities, staff identified nine standards related to curriculum; gifted education; special education; prevention, intervention, and remediation; reading and mathematics supports; instructional resource and technology teachers; data collection; and student services.

Staff developed supplemental questions to include as part of the SOQ Compliance Data Collection for the 2020-2021 school year, in order to derive more information about how local school boards understood compliance with the selected standards and allow them to indicate compliance to the more focused questions. Staff elected to keep these questions as yes/no, multiple choice, or select all that apply to ensure standardized answers that would be comparable across divisions.

See Appendix A for the list of supplemental questions added to the 2020-2021 SOQ Compliance Data Collection.

Phase II: Collection of Documentation Demonstrating Compliance

Phase II of the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program required school divisions to submit evidence to demonstrate compliance with select standards for review by the SOQ Compliance Program Manager. This Phase responded to two of JLARC's recommendations: (1) for VDOE to collect more comprehensive compliance information; and (2) for there to be an independent verification of compliance beyond self-certification. The standards identified for the evidence collection in Phase II were separate from those included in Phase I, but the standard selection process did consider compliance trends and state-level priorities. For this phase, staff also considered which standards divisions could reasonably and meaningfully verify through readily-available documentation. The selected standards addressed staffing ratios, notification standards, reading/math instruction and support, professional development, and more.

See Appendix B for the list of selected standards and evidence requested in Phase II.

Phase II, Part I: Trial Collection with Selected Participants

Phase II was implemented in two stages. As a precursor to requesting documentation from all divisions, eight divisions were selected (one from each of the eight Superintendent regions) to submit documentation. This allowed staff to refine what types of evidence were requested and streamline the technical process for submission. In selecting which divisions would participate in the first stage of Phase II, the SOQ Compliance Program Manager evaluated several variables to identify, as reasonably as possible, a representative sample of Virginia's 132 divisions. The selected divisions were: Goochland County; Chesapeake City; King George County; Fauquier County; Rockingham County; Craig County; Washington County; Mecklenburg County

Staff notified division superintendents and SOQ liaisons on November 9, 2021 that their division had been selected to provide evidence on 16 selected SOQ citations for the 2020-2021 school year. These divisions were asked to return their documentation to VDOE by December 1, 2021. VDOE staff provided technical assistance to the divisions in fulfilling this request.

VDOE staff requested feedback from the first eight divisions on how to better execute Phase II for the remaining school divisions. Division representatives suggested more time to compile the requested evidence, noted some redundancies in the evidence being requested, and proposed solutions for streamlining document submission.

Phase II, Part 2: Full Implementation of Phase II

On January 7, 2022, all remaining 124 school divisions were notified of the requirement to submit evidence demonstrating compliance with 11 SOQ citations for the 2020-2021 school year. The number of SOQ citations requested was reduced based on input from the initial eight divisions. School divisions were asked to provide documentation by February 1, 2022, providing three weeks to compile and return the documentation to the SOQ Compliance Program Manager.

Phase III: On-site Comprehensive Reviews

Phase III of the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program consisted of a full audit of SOQ compliance for two school divisions: Williamsburg-James City County and Roanoke City. This included a review of all 122 standards in the SOQ Compliance Data Collection, as well as 17 supplemental questions under the school accountability category. Phase III, like Phase II, allowed VDOE to collect more comprehensive

compliance information and independently verify compliance beyond self-certification. However, by approaching collection and verification differently in Phase III, VDOE staff and the SOQ Compliance Program Manager could better evaluate the different ways VDOE may design an ongoing compliance program in a meaningful and sustainable manner.

Williamsburg-James City and Roanoke City were selected for Phase III by the SOQ Compliance Program Manager based on several division demographics. The SOQ Compliance Program Manager recognized that division size, student demographic, and community make-up, among other factors, have an impact on how SOQ compliance is approached at the division-level and may impact how this data collection phase could be implemented. Phase III examined compliance for the division's current school year (2020-2021), unlike Phase II which reflected on the previous year's compliance.

The on-site review process included additional evidence collection and interviews with staff to determine compliance. In doing so, the on-site reviews demonstrated the amount of time required for local divisions and VDOE staff to prepare for an on-site visit for SOQ compliance verification purposes. Both school divisions indicated that it took approximately 50 hours of staff time to prepare for the visit as the work was distributed among different key central office staff.

Phase IV: Analyzing Noncompliance

Phase IV of the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program was launched after the annual SOQ Compliance Data Collection for the 2021-2022 school year was completed. Using the most recent year's data, the SOQ Compliance Program Manager identified those school divisions that had indicated noncompliance for the same standard two years in a row (2020-21 and 2021-22) in order to follow-up on their corrective action implementation and learn more about ongoing challenges for compliance.

Ten school divisions were identified, representing both large and small divisions, as well as rural, suburban and urban geographical regions. Staff did not monitor divisions with only one year of noncompliance because either the division had not had the opportunity to implement their corrective action plan or their change in compliance status indicated that the corrective action plan was effective.

The SOQ Compliance Program Manager interviewed the SOQ liaisons and other staff of the ten identified school divisions to gauge the barriers to compliance, progress towards compliance and what support, if any, VDOE can provide to reach compliance.

REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Prior to the provision of resources in the 2021 Appropriation Act for the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program, staff capacity at VDOE has been the primary barrier for supporting any additional compliance monitoring and verification work. As noted above, only one staff member in the Office of Policy is assigned to oversee all work related to the SOQ Compliance Data Collection and this assignment represents only a small percentage of their responsibilities.

The following recommendations are contingent upon the allocation of resources and VDOE staff positions (full-time equivalent positions or "FTEs") necessary to create and sustain a new SOQ compliance and verification model. Staff support would also be needed to implement any substantive improvements to the existing collection process. However, findings from the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program indicate that, with the appropriate staffing, the following action items would better support local compliance with the SOQ.

1. VDOE may consider conducting a causal analysis to determine if there is a relationship or pattern between SOQ (non)compliance and performance in the indicator areas of the state accreditation model. Specifically, SOQ standards regarding staffing requirements, professional development, instructional and at-risk programming, student achievement, and evaluation may correlate with or directly impact performance ratings. Analysis of this correlation would help VDOE identify technical support opportunities on how to develop effective strategies that would both address SOQ compliance and accreditation status. VDOE staff could use findings from this analysis to inform and support the Board as part of its biennial review of the SOQ, per § [22.1-18.01](#). **(1 FTE)**
2. VDOE may consider doing a review of existing data collections managed by the agency to determine where compliance data may already be collected and verified through existing resources. This would allow staff to periodically affirm compliance with select standards without any additional burden to the local school boards. However, staff would first need to conduct a thorough crosswalk of the data collections available to confirm what data is collected and whether it can truly be a proxy for compliance with the SOQ. **(0.5 FTE)**
3. VDOE may consider implementing a five-year rotation cycle for onsite visits to each division in order to examine SOQ compliance and review supporting documentation. A five-year cycle would equate to approximately 27 onsite visits per year. With the appropriate time for preparation, a site visit would require approximately seven to ten business days for one staff member. During this time, staff would review available documentation, conduct interviews, prepare a report, and review audit findings with the school division. VDOE staff may use findings from any audit process to inform and support the Board as part of its biennial review of the SOQ. **(2 FTE)**
4. VDOE may consider developing and maintaining a “Best Practice” resource to support school divisions in their SOQ compliance efforts. Sharing exemplary practices would provide school divisions with a better understanding of the SOQ requirements. This work could be supplemented by webinars and technical assistance programs. **(0.5 FTE)**
5. VDOE may consider creating a corrective action plan review schedule where local school boards reporting noncompliance would be expected to confer with VDOE staff in the fall and spring of the following school year to review the status of the division’s corrective action. **(1.75 FTE)**
6. VDOE may consider conducting a feasibility study on how compliance is reported as part of the annual SOQ Compliance Data Collection in order to better reflect the nuances of (non)compliance. The current yes/no self-reporting system is limiting in that it does not capture if a division is “mostly” compliant, compliant for most of the school year, or if it exceeds the standard. The current system also does not consider proportionality in compliance status. For example, a school system may indicate noncompliance if they did not meet a standard at the end of the school year, but had been compliant for most of the year. This would be reported the same as a school system that was noncompliant for the entire school year. **(0.5 FTE)**
7. VDOE may consider conducting a thorough review of the relevancy and value of current SOQ standards to determine if any provisions should be recommended for removal as obsolete or redundant. VDOE staff may use findings from this review to inform and support the Board as part of its biennial review of the SOQ. **(0.25 FTE)**

To execute each of the above recommendations effectively and with fidelity, it is estimated that VDOE would require an additional **6.5 FTEs**.

SUMMARY

The SOQ are a foundational component of Virginia's public school system and, as such, the need to monitor and promote compliance with these standards is a priority. Currently, local school divisions annually self-report compliance on the 122 SOQ standards assigned to local school boards and self-certify that the information submitted is true and accurate. This compliance information is then reported in the Board's annual report to the General Assembly. While compliance monitoring is undeniably important, VDOE staff have been limited in their capacity to execute a more robust verification process due to limited resources and technical ability.

In its October 2020 report on VDOE operations, JLARC identified several issues and opportunities related to the agency's current SOQ compliance program. Following JLARC's recommendations, the General Assembly directed VDOE to implement an SOQ Compliance Pilot Program and provided VDOE with \$240,000 (\$120,000 in FY22 and FY23) to resource the pilot. VDOE hired an SOQ Compliance Project Manager to help design and facilitate the pilot program which was executed in four phases during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years.

Overall, the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program affirmed JLARC's findings that "compliance monitoring would be more effective if there was some degree of independent verification that divisions are meeting key compliance requirements, rather than solely relying on self-certification." Observations from the pilot suggest that the SOQ compliance and verification process would benefit from providing more technical assistance in helping local school divisions understand the SOQ requirements and how to best meet these standards. Additionally, the compliance data collection could be revised to provide a better, more nuanced, evaluation of compliance. While VDOE staff supports these recommendations as meaningful and practical ways to support SOQ compliance, this work is contingent on increasing staff positions at VDOE to implement the recommendations effectively and efficiently.

Again, VDOE staff would like to thank all of the local school division personnel who participated in the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program for their support, time, professionalism, and recommendations.

APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS ADDED TO THE 2020-2021 SOQ COMPLIANCE DATA COLLECTION

SOL Curriculum

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(B.3), which states: "*The curriculum adopted by the local school division is aligned to the Standards of Learning.*"

Did the division provide teacher resource or curriculum documents which map the Standards of Learning to instructional resources within the division?

- Yes
- No

Did the division provide pacing guides that provide evidence of inclusion of all appropriate Standards of Learning?

- Yes
- No

Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(C.2), which states: "*Local school boards shall also develop and implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk including, but not limited to, those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research-based.*"

Which of the following did the division use to determine "educationally at-risk"? (Select all that apply)

- Locally-developed assessment;
- Commercial assessment;
- State assessment - PALS;
- State assessment - SOL tests;
- Student grades/teacher observation;
- Other (please indicate below).

Which of the following did the division use to determine when a student no longer needs prevention, intervention, or remediation programming? (Select all that apply)

- Locally-developed assessment;
- Commercial assessment;
- State assessment - PALS;
- State assessment - SOL tests;
- Student grades/teacher observation;
- Other (please indicate below).

Did the division use research or evidence as the foundation for components of prevention, intervention, or remediation programs?

- Yes
- No

Gifted Student Identification

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(D.1.i), which requires local school boards to implement "*[e]arly identification of gifted students and enrollment of such students in appropriately differentiated instructional programs.*"

Did the division's *Programs for Gifted Education*, required pursuant to 22.1-18.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, establish uniform procedures for screening, referring, and identifying gifted students?

- Yes
- No

Did the division's *Programs for Gifted Education* clearly define how schools can determine and deliver appropriately differentiated instructional programs for identified students?

- Yes
- No

Reading and Mathematics Assistance

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(D.1.p), which requires local school boards to implement "*[e]arly identification, diagnosis, and assistance for students with reading and mathematics problems and provision of instructional strategies and reading and mathematics practices that benefit the development of reading and mathematics skills for all students.*"

How did the division screen for students who may be experiencing difficulty with reading and mathematics? (Select all that apply)

- Locally-developed assessment;
- Commercial assessment;
- State assessment - PALS;
- State assessment - SOL tests;
- Student grades/teacher observation;
- Other (please indicate below).

Student Services

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(D.1.u), which requires local school boards to implement "*[a] program of student services for kindergarten through grade 12 that shall be designed to aid students in their educational, social, and career development.*"

Did the division provide student services and supports to help each elementary school student develop their Academic and Career Plan Portfolio, as required by 8VAC20-131-140?

- Yes
- No

Did the division provide student services and supports help each middle school student complete a locally selected career interest inventory and select a career pathway, as required by 8VAC20-131-140?

- Yes
- No

Did the division administer the Career Interest Assessment in the middle school grades?

- Yes
- No

Did divisions implement the *Standards for School Counseling Programs in Virginia Public Schools*?

- Yes
- No

Data Collection and Analysis

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 1(D.1.v), which requires local school boards to implement "[t]he collection and analysis of data and the use of the results to evaluate and make decisions about the instructional program."

Did the division have an early warning system using a data analytics software?

- Yes
- No

Did the division use software to track and analyze student academic performance at the end of each marking period?

- Yes
- No

Did the division share data analysis at the teacher-level?

- Yes
- No

Did the division implement intervention and remediation plans based on the analysis, including tracking?

- Yes
- No

Special Education, Gifted, and CTE Staffing

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 2(D.1), which states: "*Each local school board shall employ with state and local basic, special education, gifted, and career and technical education funds a minimum number of licensed, full-time equivalent instructional personnel for each 1,000 students in average daily membership (ADM) as set forth in the appropriation act.*"

Did the division meet a minimum ratio of 51 professional personnel for each 1,000 pupils or proportionate number thereof for the provision for driver, gifted, occupational-vocational, and special education, library materials and other teaching materials, teacher sick leave, general administration, division superintendents' salaries, free textbooks (including those for free and reduced price lunch pupils), school nurses in the first year only, operation and maintenance of school plant, transportation of pupils, instructional television, professional and staff improvement, remedial work, fixed charges and other costs in programs not funded by other state and/or federal aid based on the number of student in March 31, ADM?

- Yes
- No

How many of the 51 positions were dedicated to special education? _____

Instructional Technology Resource Teacher

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 2(J.1), which states:

"J. Local school boards shall employ two full-time equivalent positions per 1,000 students in grades kindergarten through 12, one to provide technology support and one to serve as an instructional technology resource teacher.

"To provide flexibility, school divisions may use the state and local funds for instructional technology resource teachers to employ a data coordinator position, an instructional technology resource teacher position, or a data coordinator/instructional resource teacher blended position. The data coordinator position is intended to serve as a resource to principals and classroom teachers in the area of data analysis and interpretation for instructional and school improvement purposes, as well as for overall data management and administration of state assessments. School divisions using these funds in this manner shall employ only instructional personnel licensed by the Board of Education."

Did the division use the temporary flexibility language in the Appropriation Act to fulfill this requirement?

- Yes
- No

Did the division employ a data coordinator position, an instructional technology resource teacher position, or a data coordinator/instructional resource teacher blended position to fulfill this requirement?

- Yes
- No

Special Education Accommodations

This supplemental question is related to SOQ: Standard 4(A.3), which states "*Further, reasonable accommodation to meet the requirements for diplomas shall be provided for otherwise qualified students with disabilities as needed.*"

Did the division meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and provide diploma accommodations to students with disabilities in accordance with each student's individualized education program?

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE FOR PHASE II

The following document was provided to school divisions in January 2022, via [Superintendent's Memo #001-22](#), as part of Phase II of the SOQ Compliance Pilot Program:

SOQ COMPLIANCE PILOT PROGRAM – SUBMISSION OF VERIFICATION DOCUMENTATION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Each school division is required to submit documentation verifying compliance with the selected Standards of Quality (SOQ) listed in the “SOQ Standards for Verification Documentation” table below. **PLEASE NOTE YOU ARE SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR.**

Divisions will organize their documents in a Google Drive parent folder and submit a link to that folder through the [SOQ Compliance Pilot - Document Submission Google Form](#). Please contact Scott Kizner at scott.kizner@doe.virginia.gov or 804-786-0941 as soon as possible if your division is unable to use Google Drive or Form to determine an alternative submission option.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR GOOGLE SUBMISSION:

- Create a Google Drive folder named as your division (e.g. “Craig County”) which will serve as the parent folder for all documentation.
- Within the parent folder named as your division, create 11 subfolders, one for each standard in the chart below. Use the bolded text in the “Subfolder Title” column as the name of each subfolder. For example, all documents being used to verify compliance for the standard listed in the first row should be uploaded into a folder titled “At-Risk Plan.”
- Upload only documentation necessary to confirm compliance with the standard; extra documentation will delay the review process.
- Once all documentation has been uploaded, grant access for scott.kizner@doe.virginia.gov to view your parent folder and submit a link to the folder through the [SOQ Compliance Pilot - Document Submission Google Form](#).
 - o To grant the required permission, right click the parent folder in Google drive and select “Share.” Type scott.kizner@doe.virginia.gov in the “Add people and groups” blank and click “Send” in the bottom right corner of the pop-up box.
 - o To get the link to your parent folder, right click the parent folder in Google Drive, select "Get link" and copy the link from the pop-up box.

Please submit your documentation via the [SOQ Compliance Pilot - Document Submission Google Form](#) as soon as you have compiled and uploaded your verification document but by no later than **February 1, 2022**.

Before submitting the Google Form, you must grant permission for scott.kizner@doe.virginia.gov to access your Google Drive parent folder.

SOQ Standards for Verification Documentation

SUBFOLDER TITLE	SOQ CITATION	STANDARDS OF QUALITY LANGUAGE	SUGGESTED EVIDENCE FOR VERIFICATION
1. At-Risk Plan	§ 22.1-253.13:1(D)(9)	At-Risk Plan: Local school boards must implement a plan to make achievement for students who are educationally at risk a division-wide priority that includes procedures for measuring the progress of such students.	Provide an at-risk achievement plan that addresses achievement gaps and accelerated learning.
2. Elementary Art/Music/PE	§ 22.1-253.13:1(D)(14)	Elementary Art/Music/PE: Local school boards must incorporate art, music, and physical education as a part of the instructional program at the elementary school level.	Provide sample elementary school schedules, one for 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade (total of 3 sample schedules).
3. Kindergarten Teacher's Aides	§ 22.1-253.13:2(C)	Kindergarten Teacher's Aides: Each school board shall assign licensed instructional personnel in a manner that produces divisionwide ratios of students to full-time equivalent teaching positions that are not greater than 24 to one in kindergarten, with no class being larger than 29 students. <i>If the average daily membership in any kindergarten class exceeds 24 pupils, a full-time teacher's aide shall be assigned to the class.</i>	Provide evidence of a full-time teacher's aide assignment for each kindergarten class with more than 24 pupils.
4. Class Size Notification	§ 22.1-253.13:2(C)	Class Size Notification: After September 30 of the school year, anytime the number of students in a class exceeds the class size limit established in Standard 2, the local school division has notified the parent of each student in such class of such fact no later than 10 days after the date on which the class exceeded the class size limit. Such notification states the reason that the class size exceeds the class size limit and describes the measures that the local school division will take to reduce the class size to comply.	Provide a sample notification letter that was sent for classes that exceeded the ratio in the 2020-2021 school year. If available, please provide evidence that the correspondence was sent to appropriate parents.
5. Planning Periods	§ 22.1-253.13:2(C)	Planning Periods: The school division provides all middle and high school teachers with one planning period per day or the equivalent, unencumbered of any teaching or supervisory duties.	Provide samples of two middle and two high school teacher schedules that show designated planning period time (total of 4 sample schedules)..

<p>6. Staffing Ratios Reported</p>	<p>§ 22.1-253.13:2(M)</p>	<p>Staffing Ratios Reported: The school board, annually, on or before December 31, reports to the public (i) the actual pupil/teacher ratios in elementary school classrooms in the local school division by school for the current school year; and (ii) the actual pupil/teacher ratios in middle school and high school in the local school division by school for the current school year.</p> <p>Actual pupil/teacher ratios shall include only the teachers who teach the grade and class on a full-time basis and shall exclude resource personnel. School boards shall report pupil/teacher ratios that include resource teachers in the same annual report. Any classes funded through the voluntary kindergarten through third grade class size reduction program shall be identified as such classes. Any classes having waivers to exceed the requirements of this subsection shall also be identified. Schools shall be identified; however, the data shall be compiled in a manner to ensure the confidentiality of all teacher and pupil identities.</p>	<p>Provide a link where this information is made publicly available or provide a summary of the process through which this information is made publicly available.</p>
<p>7. Assessment Results Reported</p>	<p>§ 22.1-253.13:3(C)</p>	<p>Assessment Results Reported: The local school board analyzes and reports annually the results from the Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth Edition (Stanford Nine) assessment, if administered, industry certification assessments examinations, and the Standards of Learning Assessments to the public.</p>	<p>Provide a link where this information is made publicly available or provide a summary of the process through which this information is made publicly available.</p>
<p>8. Certificates of Program Completion</p>	<p>§ 22.1-253.13:4(C)</p>	<p>Certificates of Program Completion: Students who have completed a prescribed course of study as defined by the local school board shall be awarded certificates of program completion by local school boards if they are not eligible to receive a Board of Education-approved diploma.</p>	<p>Provide the prescribed course of study for students seeking a certificate of program completion.</p>
<p>9. Professional Development Plan</p>	<p>§ 22.1-253.13:5(E) § 22.1-253.13:5(G)</p>	<p>Professional Development Plan: Each local school board shall provide a program of high-quality professional development as part of the license renewal process, to assist teachers and principals in acquiring the skills needed to work with gifted students, students with disabilities, and students who have been identified as having limited English proficiency and to increase student achievement and expand the knowledge and skills students require to meet the standards for academic performance set by the Board of Education.</p> <p>Each local school board shall provide a program of high-quality professional development for principals and supervisors designed to increase proficiency in instructional leadership and management, including training in the evaluation and documentation of teacher and principal performance based on student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of such instructional or administrative personnel.</p>	<p>Provide a schedule of the high quality professional development (PD) program related to following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serving gifted students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. - Instructional leadership and management for principals and supervisors. <p>Provide the agenda, including the presenters, and/or materials, as well as the format and curriculum for the PD program. Explain how these high quality PD programs were vetted and selected.</p> <p>Describe review process and/or evidence of an agenda item from the school board where they conducted a review.</p>

		<p>The school board annually reviews its professional development program for quality, effectiveness, participation by instructional personnel, and relevancy to the instructional needs of teachers and the academic achievement needs of the students in the school division.</p>	
<p>10. Division Comprehensive Plan</p>	<p>§ 22.1-253.13:6(B) and § 22.1-253.13:5(F)</p>	<p>Division Comprehensive Plan: The local school board shall adopt a division-wide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan based on data collection, an analysis of the data, and how the data will be utilized to improve classroom instruction and student achievement. The plan was developed with staff and community involvement and shall include, or is consistent with, all other division-wide plans required by state and federal laws and regulations.</p> <p>Each local school board shall review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. Prior to the adoption of any division-wide comprehensive plan or revisions thereto, the local school board shall post the plan or revisions on the division's Internet Web site if practicable, and, in any case, shall make a hard copy of the plan or revisions available for public inspection and copying and shall conduct at least one public hearing to solicit public comment on the division-wide plan or revisions.</p> <p>The division-wide comprehensive plan shall include, but shall not be limited to, <i>(i) the objectives of the school division, including strategies for first improving student achievement, particularly the achievement of educationally at-risk students, then maintaining high levels of student achievement; (ii) an assessment of the extent to which these objectives are being achieved;</i> (iii) a forecast of enrollment changes; (iv) a plan for projecting and managing enrollment changes including consideration of the consolidation of schools to provide for a more comprehensive and effective delivery of instructional services to students and economies in school operations; (v) an evaluation of the appropriateness of establishing regional programs and services in cooperation with neighboring school divisions; (vi) a plan for implementing such regional programs and services when appropriate; <i>(vii) a technology plan designed to integrate educational technology into the instructional programs of the school division, including the school division's career and technical education programs, consistent with, or as a part of, the comprehensive technology plan for Virginia adopted by the Board of Education;</i> (viii) an assessment of the needs of the school division and evidence of community participation, including</p>	<p>Provide the latest comprehensive (strategic) plan and a link where this information is made publicly available or provide a summary of the process through which this information is made publicly available for review.</p> <p>Please also highlight where the plan addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (i) the objectives of the school division, including strategies for first improving student achievement, particularly the achievement of educationally at-risk students, then maintaining high levels of student achievement; - (ii) an assessment of the extent to which these objectives are being achieved; - (vii) a technology plan designed to integrate educational technology into the instructional programs of the school division, including the school division's career and technical education programs, consistent with, or as a part of, the comprehensive technology plan for Virginia adopted by the Board of Education; and - (ix) any corrective action plan required pursuant to § 22.1-253.13:3.

		parental participation, in the development of the plan; <i>(ix) any corrective action plan required pursuant to § 22.1-253.13:3</i> ; and (x) a plan for parent and family involvement to include building successful school and parent partnerships that shall be developed with staff and community involvement, including participation by parents.	
11. School Comprehensive Plan	§ 22.1-253.13:6(B)	School Comprehensive Plan: Each school in the division prepared a comprehensive, unified, long-range plan that was considered by the local school board in developing the division-wide comprehensive plan.	<p>Verify that each school in the division has a comprehensive, unified long range plan. Provide a table that affirms the school has a plan or provides a link to access the school plan.</p> <p>Provide a summary of the process that is used by the local school board in developing the division-wide comprehensive plan.</p>