



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2120
RICHMOND, VA 23218-2120

March 17, 2025

The Honorable Ghazala F. Hashmi
Chair, Senate Education and Health
201 North 9th Street, Room 910
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Sam Rasoul
Chair, House Education
North 9th Street, Room 910
Richmond, VA 23219

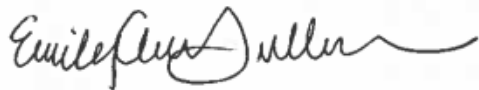
Dear Chair Hashmi and Chair Rasoul:

Please accept the Virginia Department of Education's Recommendations to Prioritize Dual Enrollment Programs pursuant to the requirements outlined in Chapter 479 Enactment Clause 2. (Regular Session, 2023) and § 22.1-206.3 of the *Code of Virginia*.

The Board shall develop guidelines and policies for prioritizing to the maximum extent practicable dual enrollment programs, including the Passport Program, the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program, the New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program, and other such programs that allow high school students to receive credit toward the completion of an undergraduate course, degree, or credential offered in the Virginia Community College System. Such guidelines and policies shall include recommendations strategies on how to ensure the prioritization of such programs to the maximum extent practicable, including ways to direct prioritization of funding to such programs." and 2. "That the Department of Education shall convene a work group of appropriate stakeholders, including representatives from the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and the local school boards, for the purpose of making recommendations on policies for prioritizing dual enrollment programs as required by this act. The work group shall submit its recommendations to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by November 1, 2024.

If you have questions or require additional information relating to this transmittal, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Andy Armstrong, Associate Superintendent of Programs, at andy.armstrong@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Anne Gullickson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Emily Anne Gullickson, M.Ed. J.D.

EAG/aa

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRIORITIZE DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

Chapter 479 Enactment Clause 2. (Regular Session, 2023)
Va. Code § 22.1-206.3



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Background</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Legislative Directive</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stakeholder work group</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stakeholder policy recommendations</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>5</i>

BACKGROUND

Dual enrollment is a program that allows high school students to take college-level courses at a participating Virginia college or university. Dual enrollment allows students the ability to save money, get ahead academically, explore interests related to their career interests, and facilitates a smooth transition into the college environment. Prioritizing the availability and accessibility of dual enrollment programs aligns with Priority 4 of the Board's Comprehensive Plan 2024– 2029: to create innovative pathways for every learner.

The benefits and positive outcomes for earning a postsecondary degree or credential have been well researched by the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. Graduates with postsecondary education (degree or credential) have higher average earnings for each level of college degree; are more likely to have health insurance, pay taxes, vote, and volunteer; and are less likely to receive unemployment benefits or need public assistance benefits. According to research from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, out of the 11.6 million jobs created in the post-recession economy, 11.5 million went to workers with at least some college education. Of these jobs, 8.4 million went to workers with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Ensuring every student has access to high-quality dual enrollment courses is essential to the alignment of Virginia education to workforce needs. Virginia schools must prepare students for success in life and guarantee that every pathway leads to a high-demand credential, workforce experience, college credit, and/or military preparedness aligned with 3E Readiness as detailed in the Board-approved School Performance and Support Framework.

Collaboration across Education Sector to Support Pathways

Virginia benefits from shared commitment and readiness from key workforce leaders and employers across regions and stakeholder groups. Stakeholders from K-12, postsecondary, government, and the workforce across the state are all committed and willing to work together to improve conditions across the state's college and career readiness landscape, with dual enrollment being a key feature among improvements for success.

Ongoing collaboration among the VDOE, Virginia Community College System (VCCS), Virginia State Council of Higher Education (SCHEV), and Virginia Works is intended to align key systems on behalf of all Virginia students to prepare every graduate for success. This collaboration helps to ensure seamless pathways, prioritize regional workforce and industry needs, provide access to quality information and data, strengthen student advising, and plan for continuous improvement in the prioritization of dual enrollment across the Commonwealth.

In August of 2024, the Virginia Board of Education approved a new statewide School Performance and Support Framework, which has a significant weighting towards middle school and high school readiness, including the high school 3E Readiness indicator, a measurement index developed around employment, enlistment, and enrollment student attainments that assigns weight based on the rigor of student success, including the earning of high-demand industry-recognized credentials, associate degrees, transferable credits, and ASVAB achievement prior to high school graduation. The 3E Readiness indicator leverages recent work with Virginia Works, the Virginia Workforce Agency, and the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) to refine VDOE's current high-demand occupation list.

The 2024 General Assembly session resulted in successful passage and enactment of HB1087, establishing the College and Career Ready Virginia Program and Fund, which will support consistent, no cost access for all Virginia public high school students to transferable dual enrollment courses (as approved by the Uniform Certificate and General Studies Passport that was defined in HB1087) as well as associated advising resources from both K-12 and postsecondary systems. This new law builds upon HB1299 (2022) that was designed to ensure that all Virginia students are aware of available postsecondary pathways. The three leading Secretary of Education agencies, including VDOE, Virginia Community College System (VCCS), and State Council of Higher Education Virginia (SCHEV), are collaborating closely to implement this law now.

Additionally, Governor Glenn Youngkin has prioritized innovation and elimination of unnecessary regulatory burdens during his Administration. In 2024, the Governor signed into law HB1477, which permits alternative instructional time models and allows schools and school divisions to focus on mastery-based learning and meaningful work-based learning experiences without 140-clock hour artifact requirements of the Carnegie Unit, implementation of which will realize flexibility for students pursuing stackable credential and high-quality work-based learning experiences. This flexibility will also benefit the redesign efforts of middle school towards more advanced end-of-course offerings and more robust career exploration and development, as well as more personalized learning opportunities in elementary school.

The Governor's vision and leadership has made Virginia home to 15 Virginia College Partnership Lab Schools. Dual enrollment, work-based learning, and workforce and industry partnerships will be featured in all lab schools, 6 of which were operational in fall of 2024, and that were all designed closely with industry leaders to meet high-demand workforce needs. Virginia's Lab Schools are a result of the Governor's investment of \$100 million for start-up and operations awarded to community colleges, public, and private 4-year universities in Virginia to develop workforce-responsive innovative K-12 schools, including extensive employer exposure and engagement.

Virginia as a National Leader

In recognition of its leadership in the pathways area, Virginia was invited to join the national LAUNCH career pathways initiative to strengthen Virginia's commitment to and investment in responsive, sustainable pathways to high-quality, high-wage employment at all levels: K-12, postsecondary, and the workforce.

In fall of 2023, the VDOE established the Office of Innovation to spearhead an analysis of historic practice and design of the 3E Readiness indicator in coordination with secretariats of education, labor, and commerce & trade, other state agencies, employers, higher education leaders, Board of Education, parents, and K-12 educators to inform this transformation. Participation in the needs assessment and opportunity analysis through LAUNCH supported the Virginia team in reflecting on needs and clearly articulating current barriers so that the department could effectively launch a "re-design" that establishes and defines the implementation process for Virginia's new 3E Readiness indicator that defines high quality employment, enlistment, and enrollment pathways, as well as ensures opportunity, scaling, and sustainability.

Virginia is also one of seven states selected for a new national cohort with the College in High School League Alliance to help with policy implementation of the new dual enrollment law. Virginia’s team is focused on eliminating access barriers and improving outcomes in dual enrollment, especially for rural and economically disadvantaged public school students.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTIVE

As provided in § 22.1-206.3 of the *Code of Virginia*, “the Board shall develop guidelines and policies for prioritizing to the maximum extent practicable dual enrollment programs, including the Passport Program, the Uniform Certificate of General Studies Program, the New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program, and other such programs that allow high school students to receive credit toward the completion of an undergraduate course, degree, or credential offered in the Virginia Community College System. Such guidelines and policies shall include recommendations strategies on how to ensure the prioritization of such programs to the maximum extent practicable, including ways to direct prioritization of funding to such programs.” Second, “That the Department of Education shall convene a work group of appropriate stakeholders, including representatives from the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and the local school boards, for the purpose of making recommendations on policies for prioritizing dual enrollment programs as required by this act. The work group shall submit its recommendations to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by November 1, 2024.”

STAKEHOLDER WORK GROUP

In 2024, enactment of HB1087 and SB627 established the College and Career Ready Virginia Program and Fund (CCRV). The purpose of CCRV is to offer consistent, structured opportunities for all qualified public high school students in the Commonwealth to enroll in postsecondary coursework offered by a comprehensive community college that is creditable toward high school completion and a certificate or degree from a public institution of higher education. Academic credits earned through the Program shall enable students to complete a postsecondary credential in less time and at lower cost.

Administration of CCRV requires VDOE and VCCS to establish and administer a stakeholder work group for the purpose of making recommendations on policies for prioritizing dual enrollment programs. The stakeholder work group will provide guidance to the Department and the System to ensure that the CCRV fulfills its purposes as prescribed in HB1087 and SB627.

The CCRV stakeholder work group convened on October 3, October 16, and October 31, 2024, and continues to refine its recommendations for effective implementation to include:

- Establishment of a strong, sustainable governance framework;
- Ensured access to valuable, quality CCRV program courses;
- Improved guidance, information, and communication related to meaningful pathways; and
- Publicly reported timely, actionable, quality information on CCRV Program inputs and outcomes.

VDOE convened an additional work group pursuant to the requirements of SB1281(2023) to include representatives from the Virginia Education Association (VEA), the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS), and the local school boards, for the purpose of making recommendations on policies for prioritizing dual enrollment programs. The work group convened on November 21, 2024. Work group members included a current dual enrollment teacher representing the VEA, the deputy executive director of VASS, and VSBA members of two Virginia school boards.

STAKEHOLDER POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The SB1281 stakeholder work group recommendations are aligned and consistent with the broader HB1087 Workgroup Recommendations. The following recommendations will strengthen dual enrollment opportunities:

- 1. Establish more consistency and ease in staffing dual enrollment instruction through flexibility in dual enrollment instructor credentialing.**

Work group feedback noted that credentialed dual enrollment staffing is currently a barrier for both community colleges and public schools, and that current Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) guidance on faculty credentials has not been updated since 2018 ([Faculty Credentials \(sacscoc.org\)](https://www.sacscoc.org)). All work group members referenced greater flexibility for school divisions in assigning staff to teach dual enrollment courses at the local high school as a need to prioritize and support dual enrollment opportunities.

- 2. Enhance collaboration and consistency among K-12 school divisions and community colleges in dual enrollment processes.**

Work group feedback noted that discrepancies exist in the degree of collaboration and the contractual agreements generated by state community colleges that guide dual enrollment tuition rates, course offerings, and practice among community colleges and their partner K-12 school divisions. Work group members suggested more explicit guidance regarding designated responsibilities for community colleges and school divisions with regard to collaboration as well as more uniform agreements to create more equitable access to dual enrollment courses and programs for all school divisions.

- 3. Improve advising, information, and communication on meaningful pathways.**

Work group feedback noted that the variations in existing K-12 school division and community college contracts and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) create difficulty in providing staff, students, and families with consistent advising resources. Work group members suggested creation of aligned digital and technical assistance resources to ensure that advisors are equipped with accurate, up-to-date information and resources to engage students in accessing dual enrollment coursework.

Feedback from the SB1281 work group was provided to the CCRV stakeholder work group to inform ongoing efforts to prioritize dual enrollment across the Commonwealth and improve outcomes on behalf of all students and Virginia's workforce by ensuring high school graduation

prepared for employment, enlistment, and/or enrollment with seamless pathways to high-demand careers.

NEXT STEPS

As VDOE works to implement the redesign of K-12 readiness experiences outlined in [HB1087](#), the 3E Readiness indicator of the School Performance and Support Framework, career exploration, Academic and Career Plan (ACP), and high-quality work-based learning, VDOE will work to provide training, resources, and technical assistance to school divisions. These opportunities will be in close coordination with SCHEV and VCCS. This includes better preparing students as early as middle school on scholarships and grant opportunities for technical training, dual enrollment options, college, apprenticeships, and other upskill experiences that they can use in high school and beyond to support their pathway goals.

The current vision of Virginia is that all students graduate having earned high-demand, high-quality industry credentials, transferable college credits, and/or qualified for enlistment through ASVAB performance as indicated in the Virginia 3E Readiness indicator measured in the new 2024 Virginia School Performance and Support accountability system. Through Virginia's participation in LAUNCH, the following key areas have been identified for strategic action toward long-term scalability and sustainability of career pathways:

- Systematic and coordinated alignment of high-demand industry-recognized credential offerings with regional workforce demand in collaboration with postsecondary and workforce systems, employers, and a cross-functioning group of stakeholders;
- Use of VOEE data base to determine regional labor market demand and Prioritization among K-12, postsecondary, and workforce systems of quality and demand of industry credentials, transferable dual enrollment and other college credit bearing course offerings, and qualifying standards for high-quality careers within military enlistment;
- Redesign of Virginia's work-based learning framework to better align with workforce needs toward meaningful, high-quality, and connected experiences that facilitate the "warm hand off" to enrollment, employment, and/or enlistment post-secondary life experiences;
- Creation of consistent, systematic advising resources for K-12 and postsecondary advising staff that includes clear, accessible information that engages students in pursuit of postsecondary opportunities through dual enrollment; and
- Development of common language for key workforce terms throughout K-12, higher education and workforce.

